



Old-lore Miscellany
OF
Orkney Shetland Caithness
and Sutherland'

VOL. VIII.

OLD-LORE SERIES

VOL. IX.

OLD-LORE MISCELLANY
OF
ORKNEY SHETLAND CAITHNESS
AND
SUTHERLAND.

EDITED BY
ALFRED W. JOHNSTON and AMY JOHNSTON

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in the *Year-Book*.

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND.

VOL. VIII.

PART I.

JAN., 1915.

NOTES.

ALMS-DISHES, ST. MAGNUS' CATHEDRAL.—By the courtesy of Mr. T. Kent, Kirkwall, illustrations of these dishes are given here. Sir Henry Dryden describes them, as follows, in his *Description of the Church dedicated to St. Magnus* (Wm. Peace and Son, Kirkwall, 1878), p. 65: "They are of brass, and of Dutch work. One is 2^f 5ⁱ diameter, with Adam and Eve, the tree, serpent, etc., and 'HAD · ADAM · GEDAEN · GODS · WOORT · WYS · SOO · WAER HY · GEBLEVEN · INT · PARADYS · ANNO · 1636'—('Had Adam obeyed God's Word, so had we then lived in Paradise.') The other is 2^f 4¹/₄ⁱ diameter, with Adam and Eve and the tree, but without inscription."

These dishes are usually "made of brass, latten, or even costlier metals. Ancient examples frequently contain representations in relief of the Temptation of Eve or the Return of the two Spies from Canaan; modern specimens are commonly adorned with texts of Scripture" (*Lee's Gloss. of Lit. and Eccl. Terms*, s.v.).

PARISH REGISTERS OF CANISBY.—The Scottish Record Society are printing in the January issue of their records, the parish registers of Canisby (Caithness) for the years 1652—1666. The registers are edited by

Rev. D. Beaton, Wick, with introduction and indexes. They consist of register of baptisms, matrimonial contracts and marriages for the above-mentioned years. To genealogists interested in northern families, the registers will be of some importance, as they contain entries in connexion with such families as the Sinclairs of Canisby, Dunbeath, Brabster and Mey, the Mowats of Freswick, the Groats, and the Kennedys of Stroma.

AN ORKNEY WITCH.—The following verses are believed to have been copied from an Aberdeen newspaper more than thirty years ago. Can any reader give particulars as to the paper, author, etc.? The MS. copy of the verses was given to Mrs. Drever, of Sunderland, by her mother, who had lived in Aberdeenshire, and was lost sight of until recently, when it was discovered among a collection of old letters. Mr. James Nicolson, of Sunderland, is thanked for communicating a copy of the verses, and he points out that “the Hope” mentioned is Longhope in Waas (*Walls* of the maps), Orkney and “Gills” is Gills Bay on the Caithness coast, opposite. “Harrow bay” is evidently the same as “Mey bay” of the maps; the place Harrow is near Barrogill Castle—is it Gaelic *Aroch*, a hamlet, dwelling? The writer’s father, over 40 years ago, was accosted by a witch in Hoy, and asked to buy a fine day for the hill which his party was about to climb. On being rebuked as to her unholy calling, the old dame responded in appropriate language, and her prophecy of bad weather was partly fulfilled.—A. W. J.

Came Magnus Meason down to the shore,
And jesting at our distress,
“Why don’t you trade for a wind,” asked he,
“With our neighbour, canny Jess?”

Said the skipper, “I’ve sailed for sixty years,
And whistled the breezes in,
I’ve ne’er been beholden to witches’ wind,
And I’m now too old to begin.”

But Magnus Meason's cousin, frae Gills,
My elder brother and I,
Stept to the shop for a quarter of tea,
And visited Jess on the sly.

We asked a light for our pipes—the witch
Invited us then to step ben,
And we saw before us a wrinkled wife,
Of a good threescore and ten.

A wrinkled hag with a stragglng beard,
And a threatning nose and chin,
And a cast in her eye which plainly said,
“I'm in league with the ‘man of sin.’”

She then went to the but-end of the house and made
some weird sounds, and brought in a basket with three
small wisps of straw, each girt with a worsted band.

“This basket,” she croaked, “you'll place in your boat,
As close to the prow as you may,
And all be ready to start from the Hope,
At the earliest peep of day.”

“A favouring wind will fill your sails,
Till you've rounded Cantick Head,
Till the flood has run and the slack begun,
But the breeze will then drop dead.”

“And then you must throw a wisp of straw,
A single wisp, in the sea,
And another breeze will fill your sails,
Till Gills be under your lee.”

“A second wisp must then be flung,
And you'll scud to Harrow bay,
But keep, as you love your life, the third,
Till you're landed safe in Mey.”

Following the witch's instructions, they fared, as she
said, till they slackened sail at a cable's length from
the wished and welcome shore.

Then laughed the skipper, a scornful laugh,
“A snuff for the witch,” said he,
And catching the hindmost wisp of straw,
He pitched it into the sea.

Crack, crack, went the thunder overhead,
 Thick darkness fell on the deep,
 And round the boat like famishing fiends
 The billows began to leap.

We rowed like men in the grip of death,
 Still heading, we thought, for land,
 But the angry demons of the deep
 Had taken our yawl in hand.

And still the more that we urged ashore,
 The further they forced us off,
 Heaving us high on the mountain waves,
 And deep in the dreadful trough.

* * * * *

But, just when the strength of all was spent,
 And the hopes of all but o'er,
 She suddenly stranded, a cable's length,
 From the witch's cottage door.

We left the Hope with the breeze of heaven,
 And not for the Orkney's worth,
 Would we try again with a witch's wind
 To ferry the Pentland Firth.

CAITHNESS ESTATE RENTAL.—The following is a rental of the estate of Brabster, or Brabster-myre, in the parish of Canisby, for the year 1697. Sir John Sinclair of Geannies and Dunbeath acquired the estate from the Mowat family, and on Decr. 2, 1650, disponed it to his nephew, John Sinclair. The latter married, 1st Elizabeth, daughter of Patrick Sinclair of Ulbster, by whom he had a son, Alexander, who succeeded him, and 2nd, *circa* 1683, Sibella Halcrow, to whom he left an annuity of 500 merks. After 1762, the estate passed, by marriage, to the Sinclair Sutherlands of Brabster, by whom it was sold, in 1865, to the earl of Caithness, for £16,500. (See Henderson's *Caithness Family History*.).

The rental is written on paper, and is in the possession of Mr. John Nicolson, of Nybster, Caithness. Part of the first page is torn away, hence the lacuna.

Insertions, in a different contemporary hand and ink, are indicated by an asterisk. Contracted words have

been extended in italics. A glossary of words and terms will be given at the end, but the editor will be glad to receive information as to the local meaning of unusual words and terms, such as "tallow silver." Was *tallow*, or its equivalent in money, paid in rent; or is "tallow silver" a corruption of Old Norse *talið silfr*, counted silver, *i.e.*, the *vaðmál* or cloth-standard (as used in Shetland, where 1 ell wadmal = 2d. wadmal) as opposed to *vegit-silfr*, weighed silver? Skatt, which was paid in Caithness, would have been (as in Orkney) paid by the tenants, and possibly "tallow silver" may be skatt. *Bannock* is explained in Jamieson's *Dict.* "as one of the thirlage duties exacted at a mill."

The transcription and notes are by.—A. W. Johnston.

[RENTAL.]

Att Brabster the th . . . Sleikly, Scoullary, Feilds and Brabster . . . when destinct laboureings, the particullar soumes . . . victuals, customes and casuælies and others dew and . . . terme of Mertimes last bypast and all for . . . bond debt) and thereafter wntill the terme . . . excepteing the teind sheaff payable out the . . . small customes att or about the said terme . . . carriage wsed and wont and the proportion . . . -es resting in former compt bookes or . . . or may be dew and payable till the said . . . Notta. I have led the teind sheaff this yeir of the whol . . .

[Marginal] Nota. I charge noe geise in this count book, because ther is a list made of the old rest, and because the number they are to pay att Mertimes nixt is yet wncertaine, I refer itt till the said terme come.

Sleiklie.

WILLIAM READ, ther, laboures ane pennyland and payes therf[or of] Mertimes debt and tallow-silver - - - - - 13: [16: 8]

In payment wherof he hes delyvered to the merchand ane ox and ane cowe att 15lb. 06s. 8d, the ballance,

being ane pound ten shillings, is allowed to him out of his bond debt. Mair, he payes of fearme mill multer and banack - - -						01 : 2 : 2 : 0
Item, of seed bear - - - - -						02 : 2 : 0 : 0
Item, of dry bear and bear meall - -						00 : 1 : 2 : 2
Item, of oatt meall - - - - -						01 : 1 : 0 : 0
Inde, of bought victuals given to him -						4 : 0 : 2 : 2
Summa is -						5 : 3 : 0 : 2
*Hierof receaved from Wm. Read his fearme meall being - - - - -						*1 : 2 : 2 : 0
*rests yet -						*4 : 0 : 2 : 2
Mair, he rests of this yeirs poultrie, 7,						
Mair, he rests, at Beltaine nixt, a wodder and his fleice, and a meat lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have itt.						
Mair, he rests two [this line deleted].						
Item, he hes of my beasts, in his custodie, a black rigged ox, sex year old, come Beltaine, with a read horned cowe, wanting a peice of the right luge, fyve yeirs old, come Beltaine.						
DONALD READ, ther, laboures ane pennyland, and payes therfor off Mertimes debt and tallow silver - - - - - (i3 : 06 : 8 ¹						
This payed, att count, in mony.						
Mair, he payes of fearme mill multer and bannack - - - - -						1 : 0 : 1 : 0
Item, of bear - - - - -						0 : 2 : 0 : 0
Mair, of dry bear and bear meall - -						0 : 1 : 2 : 2
Mair, of oat meall - - - - -						1 : 1 : 0 : 0
Inde is -						2 : 0 : 2 : 2
Summa is -						3 : 0 : [3 : 2]

¹ Sum deleted.

*Payed hierof in meall, 1 boll, 1 peicke, heirof he rests yet, 2 bolls, 2 p[ecks], 2 l[ippies].

[p. 2.] [One line torn away] . . . [Mair, he rests ane] wodder and his fleice, at Beltaine nixt, and a meat lamb [att Lambes nixt if] he have itt.

[Item, he hes of my] beasts in his custodie, a black horned cowe steirk, two . . . [come] Beltaine, with a gray spreckled cowe steirk, a year old . . . ne. 22th Agust, receaved from Wm. Reid, in Sleiklie 7lbs. to . . . be inclowed in his bond, so rest her in this booke & . . .

[DON]ALD CALDELL, ther, laboures ane pennyland and payes therfor, [of Mer]times debt and

tallow silver	-	-	-	-	-	13 : 16 : 8
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

[Mair, he pay]es for viccarrage	-	-	-	-	-	09 : 00 : 0
---------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

Inde is	-	-	-	-	-	22 : 16 : 8
---------	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

. . . r]eceaved in mony, preceiding counts	-	-	-	-	-	17 : 18 : 0
--	---	---	---	---	---	-------------

Rests	-	-	-	-	-	(04 : 18 : 8 ¹)
-------	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------------

*. . . hi]erof in money 4lb., and 4 lipies is 2s. . . .
the *which*, in money, 16s. 8d., inde is 4lb. 18s. 8,
rests - - - - - *00 : 00 : 0

Mair, he payes of fearme mill multer and
bannack - - - - -

1 : 1 : 3 : 2

Mair, he rests of bear	-	-	-	-	-	0 : 3 : 2 : 0
------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall	-	-	-	-	-	1 : 1 : 0 : 2
---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

Mair, he rests of oatt meall	-	-	-	-	-	1 : 1 : 1 : 0
------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

Inde is	-	-	-	-	-	3 : 1 : 3 : 2
---------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

Summa is	-	-	-	-	-	4 : 3 : 3 : 0
----------	---	---	---	---	---	---------------

*22th Agust, 1698, receaved from Dd. Calyell (till compt) in money, 13lbs., to be allowed in his bond debt.

¹ Sum crossed out.

*Peyed heirof in meall - - - - *1 : 1 : 3 : 2

*rests yet - 3 : 1 : 3 : 2

Mair, he rests for this yeir, poultrie, 13.

Mair, he rests, at Beltaine nixt, a wodder and his fleice,
with a meat lamb at Lambes, if he have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his coustodie, a whyt
humbled dinn spotted cowe, 5 yeir old, come Bel-
taine, with a broun hacked ox steirk, a yeir old,
come Beltaine; mair, he hes a broun flecked horned
ox, nyne yeir old, come Beltaine, hyred to him for
a firLOT of victual.

ALLEXR. MILLER, ther, laboures ane halfpennyland and
payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (06 : 18 : 4 ¹

Wherof, payed, be a beast to the merchand, 5lb.

Rests yet - (01 : 18 : 4 ¹

*Dec. the 20th, 1697, receaved in money, 11b. 17s. 6d.,
rests yett 10d.

Mair he payes of fearme mill multure and

bannock - - - - - 0 : 2 : 1 : 3

Item, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 1 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall 0 : 0 : 3 : 3

Mair, he rests of oatt meal - - - 0 : 3 : 2 : 0

Inde is - 3 : 1 : 1 : 3

Summa is - 3 : 3 : 3 : 2

*peyed hierof - 0 : 2 : 1 : 3

*rests yet - - 3 : 1 : 1 : 3

[p. 3.] Mair, he rests, for this yeirs poultrie, 10.

¹ Deleted.

Mair, he rests, half a wodder and half a fleice att Beltaine nixt, with a meatt lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have it.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his custodie, a broun humbled ox steir, 4 yeir old, come Beltaine.

WILLIAM MILLER, ther, laboures ane halfpennyland, and payes, therfor, of Mertimes debt and tallow silver - - - - - 06 : 18 : 4

Wherof payed, be a beast to the merchand, 5lb. 6s. 8d.,

Rests - 01 : 1j : 8

*Feb. the 25th, 1698, receaved hierof, 17s.

Rests yet - 00 : 14 : 8

Mair, he payes of fearme mill multure and bannack - - - - -

0 : 2 : 1 : 3

Mair, he rests of bear - - - - - 2 : i : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall 0 : 2 : 1 : 1

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - - - 0 : 3 : 3 : 0

Inde is - 3 : 3 : 0 : 1

Summa is - 4 : 1 : 2 : 0

*payed hierof - 0 : 2 : 1 : 3

*rests yet - 3 : 3 : 0 : 1

Item, ther resting to him, for workeing of a 112 ells of plaides and grayes, att 1s. per ell, is, 5lb. 12s.

Mair, he rests, for this yeirs poultrie, 10.

Mair, he rests, half a wodder and half a fleice, att Beltaine nixt, with a meat lamb, att Lambes nixt, if he have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his custodie, a black humbled starned steir, sex yeir old, come Beltaine.

Sconllary.

DAVID GUNN, ther, laboures ane halfpennyland, and
payes, therfor, of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (5 : 05 : 0¹

Wherof payed, be a beast to the mer-
chand, 4lb. 6s. 8d.

*Dec. the 13, receaved in money, 18s. 4d.,
rests nothing for Mr. G.

Rests—*payed - (0 : 18 : 4¹

Mair, he payes of fearme mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 3 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall 0 : 3 : 2 : 1

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 1 : 0 : 0 : 2

Inde - 4 : 1 : 2 [3]

Summa is - 5 : 0 : 3 : 3

*peyed hierof, 3 firloths, 1 pecke, and rests yet, 4 bolls,
1 firloth, 2 ps., 3 leps.

p. 4.] Item, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, 10.

Item, he rests (half¹ a woder and (half¹ a fleice att Bel-
taine nixt with a meat lamb att Lambes nixt, if he
have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his coustodie, a read
flecked humbled, 3 yeir old, come Beltaine, cove
steirk.

MARGARATT MILLER, ther, laboures ane half pennyland,
and payes, therfor, of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (5 : 05 : 0¹

Wherof payd, be a beast to the merchand, 7lb. 6s. 8d.
the ballance resting to hir is, ane pound, 1s. 8d.,
to be allowed out of hir bond debt.

¹ Deleted.

Mair, shoe rests of fearme mill multer and bannack - - - - -	0 : 3 : 1 : 0
Mair, shoe rests of seid bear - - -	2 : 1 : 0 : 0
Mair, shoe rests of dry bear and bear meall	0 : 2 : 2 : 1
Mair, shoe rests of oat meall - - -	0 : 3 : 1 : 2
Inde is -	3 : 2 : 3 : 3
Summa is -	4 : 2 : 0 : 3
*payed heirop -	0 : 3 : 1 : 0
*rests yet -	3 : 2 : 3 : 3
Mair, shoe rests for this yeirs poultrie, io.	
Item, shoe rests, a woder and a fleice, att Beltaine nixt, with a meatt lamb, at Lambes nixt, if shoe have itt.	
Item, shoe hes of my beasts, in hir coustodie, a broun humbled spotted cowe, sex yeir old, come Beltaine.	
MAGNUS ALLAN, ther, laboures ane half pennyland, and payes, therfor, of Mertimes debt and tallow silver - - - - -	
	5 : 05 : 0
Wherof payed, be beasts given to the merchand, 9lb. 6s. 8d., the ballance being, four pound, 1 shilling, 8d., to be allowed in his bond debt.	
Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and bannack - - - - -	0 : 2 : 0 : 2
Mair, he rests of seid bear - - -	0 : 2 : 2 : 0
Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall	0 : 2 : 2 : 1
Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - -	1 : 0 : 0 : 2
Inde is -	2 : 0 : 0 : 3
Summa is -	2 : 2 : 1 : 1
*payed heirop -	*0 : 2 : 0 : 2
*rests yet -	*2 : 0 : 0 : 3

[p. 5.] Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, io.

Mair, he rests, half a woder and half a fleice, att Beltaine nixt, with a meatt lamb, att Lambes nixt, if he have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his coustodie, (a broun cowe calf¹ a broun horned cowe steirk, 2 yeir old, come Beltaine.

GEORGE ALLAN, ther, laboures ane half pennyland and payes, therfor, of Mertimes debt and

tallow silver - - - - - (5 : 08 : 0¹

Wherof payed, be a beast to the merchand, 5lb. 6s. 8d., the ballance to be allowed in his bond debt, *which* is 1s. 8d. [1s. 4d.].

Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and

bannack - - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 2

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 1 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall 0 : 2 : 3 : 1

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 1 : 0 : 2 : 2

Inde is - 2 : 3 : 3 : 3

Summa is - 3 : 2 : 0 : 1

*payed hierof - *0 : 2 : 0 : 2

*rests yet - *2 : 3 : 3 : 3

*22th Agust, 1698, receaved from George Allane till compt of his bond debt, or rest in the book, 8lbs.

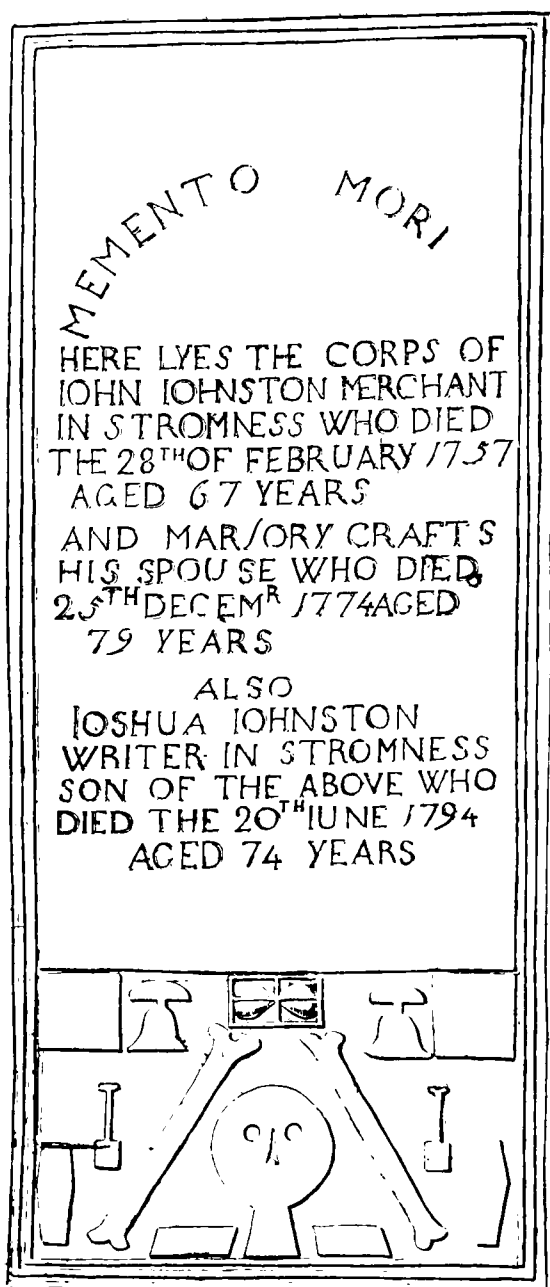
Mair, he rests for the yeirs poultrie, io.

Mair, he rests, a woder and his fleice at Beltaine nixt, with a meatt lamb, at Lambes nixt, if he have it.

Item, he hes of my beasts, in his coustodie, a broun starned horned cowe steirk, four yeir old come Beltaine.

¹ Deleted.

(To be continued.)



JOHNSTON GRAVESTONE, STROMNESS.

2' 3" × 5' 4".

*From a rubbing of the original made in 1884 by
C. S. S. Johnston, Edinburgh.*

ORKNEY GRAVESTONES.—Mr. C. S. S. Johnston proposes to give a series of illustrations of old Orkney gravestones, with their inscriptions. The first is that of the Johnston stone, formerly in Stromness graveyard. The grave was last disturbed in 1877, when Miss Margaret Jane Lavinia Johnston (of Coubister) was buried there. Mr. Johnston made the rubbing, of which the illustration is a reproduction, on September 19th, 1884, and took the following particulars: stone of dark blue slate, about 3in. or 4in. thick, in perfect condition, without any cracks, chipping or other damage, and only slightly weather-worn; lying flat on the ground, with its face slightly raised above it; its position being about due east of the south end of the old wall, or ruin, in the centre of churchyard, and N.E. by N. of the monument of Moodie of Breckness, near the south wall of the yard, and lying near a number of stones to the Clouston family. Mr. Johnston again saw the stone, *in situ*, in 1887. In 1908, Mr. Johnston visited the yard, when he found the stone missing, and in the neighbourhood of its original position there were a number of recently renovated gravestones. Subsequent careful searches made by the sexton and others have failed to find the stone. The Johnstons of Coubister, like other branches of the family in Scotland and Ireland, trace their descent, by family tradition, from Annandale, from which the first fled as an outlaw. Robert, the first known of this family, appears in Birsa, in Orkney, when one of the same name disappears from Annandale, and has been unaccounted for. Birsa would have been an ideal retreat for a fugitive Johnston, in the 17th century, when there were a number of land-owners and tenants of that name resident there; but the exact genealogist will prefer to conclude that Robert was a member of the Swannay branch of the Orkney family. As the genealogy of the family will be given in Mr. Roland St. Clair's forthcoming *Orkney Families*, it

need only be mentioned here that "Robert Johnston, in Swannay, in Birsay," is mentioned in 1679, and must have died shortly after. He had two sons, James, of Outbrecks, Stennes, and Richard, merchant, Stromness. James acted as procurator and attorney (for James Baikie, of Tankerness), in 1679, when he was servitor or clerk to Patrick Murray, N.P., Kirkwall, and again in 1681 (Coubister Charters), and he is mentioned as servitor to the same notary in 1677 (*Miscellany*, I., 23, 168). He died, s.p., *circa* 1698, and was succeeded by his younger brother Richard, who died c. 1707. Richard's son and grandson are described in the illustration; the latter, Joshua, married Margaret Halcro, heiress of Coubister, and was succeeded by John, James, and James now of Coubister. The property of Outbrecks was disposed of by Joshua Johnston. Besides owning one-third of the old town of Stromness, the family had numerous small properties in Harra, Stennes, South Ronaldsey, etc., which were all sold by Joshua and his son John. John, mentioned on the stone, was the originator of the famous litigation between Stromness and Kirkwall, as to the freedom of the trade of Stromness from any interference on the part of the royal burgh of Kirkwall, which was, after John's death, carried to a successful conclusion by Alexander Graham, the benefits of which were ever after enjoyed by all the other trading towns in Scotland. While Graham has recently had a memorial erected to him in Stromness, Johnston, who began the process, has had his own monument sacrilegiously done away with.

SHEEP-THIEF'S STORY.—A well-known sheep-thief once lived in Birsay, whose trained dog greatly assisted him during darkness to capture sheep. This man killed, dressed, and carried his sheep to Kirkwall during the night-time. On one such occasion, before the middle of last century, he proceeded to Kirkwall in

time to arrive before daylight. The purchaser of his stolen mutton lived near the foot of Albert Lane, and arriving there so early he was unable to arouse one of the inmates to admit him. Laying his burden in a safe corner he had a stroll up street to see if any guardians of the public safety were near. When in Broad Street he saw some moving objects in the churchyard which aroused his curiosity. He ventured nearer and saw they were busy removing the earth from a newly-made grave. On the assurance that none but criminals were abroad at such an hour, he approached four disguised men, who told him not to venture nearer. They were then screwing two iron fastenings, one in each end of the coffin. On approaching nearer, the threats were so overwhelming that he considered retreat the better part of valour. This seems an imprudent story for a thief; but we must remember he had from ten to fifteen sheep of his own at large in the Birsay hills, and when he disposed of one openly, it was always one of his own. He was not aware that suspicion rested on him. There are several living who heard the story from a former generation.—M. S.

ORKNEY LAWYERS.—In a MS. book of juridical forms in the writer's possession occur the following: "Carolus Stewart me jure poss. Anno 1698." "Carolus Stewartus, scriba Edinburgensis." "Pat Boag." "Stowt." "This book was gifted to me, Joshua Johnston, writer in Kirkwall, by Mr. John Riddock, the last owner."

HOOK-BUTTER.—The name given to the *foy* held when the corn is cut.

FAIRY MOUND.—When the late Mr. Fortescue, of Swanbister, was about to excavate the "Fairy-brae of Congesquoy," "Congesquoy Hillock," or "Kongers Knowe," in Orfir, he desisted, after being warned by

James Flett in Lerquoy, "not to dig into an old landmark." This was related by the late Mr. Groundwater, of Souie, to Mr. Tom Tait.

ORFIR FAIRIES.—Ann Velzian and her husband in Grundwater had intercourse with the fairies. She turned a wheel on a nail in the wall when she saw an eneiny passing. It also prevented milk being churned when her husband was with James Short.—A. W. J.

ORFIR DIALECT.—*Tirlick*, a game played by two persons, who, facing, and holding each other by the shoulders, try to trip each other over by means of their toes. *Plushney*, a catapult. "*Leeloley*," the command given when to run, in a game of tig.—(Communicated by Mr. J. HALCRO JOHNSTON.)

QUERY.

THE SLOOP "GEORGE."—About the year 1835 a most peculiar shipwreck seems to have occurred at the mouth of the Tees. The information I have been able to gather is that the principal owner of the sloop was a Mr. Corse, father of Capt. Corse of Nistigar in Westray. She was commanded by a Capt. Miller, and the remainder of her crew—three in number—were named Rendall, Cormack and Leslie. Her last voyage was from Orkney to Newcastle with a cargo of kelp. One evening when off the Tyne a pilot went on board and offered his services, which were declined, in respect the fee asked was considered too high. The pilot accordingly left and the sloop stood off the land. The following morning she was found wrecked at the mouth of the Tees, with her whole crew of four dead, but none of them had been drowned. The cabin was perfectly dry, and in it Capt. Miller was still sitting, leaning against the table with his Bible open on his knees. The cause of the deaths was never fully explained. Can any of your readers give further particulars regarding this peculiar wreck?—J. T. S. L.



2' 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ " diameter.

2' 5" diameter.

ALMS-DISHES, ST. MAGNUS' CATHEDRAL, KIRKWALL.

From a photograph by T. Kent, Kirkwall.

REPLY.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND FOLK (VII., 192).—If Dufnjáll had been a great-grandson of king Malcolm and Ingibiörg, and if each of his forefathers had married when sixteen years of age, he himself would only have been fifteen years of age in 1116, the year St. Magnus was martyred. As he was slain apparently some years before this, when Hákon and Magnús were on friendly terms, he would have been very young to have been slain as a troublesome viking. There is still another explanation. Although earl Þorfinnr hinn ríki was early in coming to full growth, he did not marry Ingibiörg until 1040-44, when she was about 20-24 years of age, and when he was 40-44. It is improbable that he would have remained unmarried till so late in life. In fact, the Saga, in speaking of Ingibiörg, in 1044, remarks that she was *then* his wife, as though he had had a former wife. And further, Munch was of opinion that “Dolfinn son of Finntur,” who was slain, in 1054, fighting with the Saxons against the men of Alba (king Macbeth),¹ was Dólgfinnr, probably a son of earl Þorfinnr of Orkney—Finntur being a transposition of Turfinn. In that case Dólgfinnr must have been born between 1019 (when Þorfinnr was 19) and 1034 (so as to allow of his being at least 20 in 1054), and consequently some years before Þorfinnr married Ingibiörg. A remarkable corroboration of Munch’s guess is to be found in “Notitiae of grants by Macbeth and Gruoch, king and queen of Scots, to the church of St. Serf A.D., 1040—1057” (Lawrie’s *Early Scottish Charters*, 5, 6). Here we find king Macbeth, at the end of his reign, (c. 1054-7, the time when Dólgfinnr was slain), granting “Bolgyne filii Torfyny” (described in 1152—1153 as “Bolgin filii Thorfini”) to the church. Lawrie’s emendation is “*terram* Bolgyne filii Torfyny,” and he suggests that Bolgyn was the son of Torfyny

¹ Annals of Ulster.

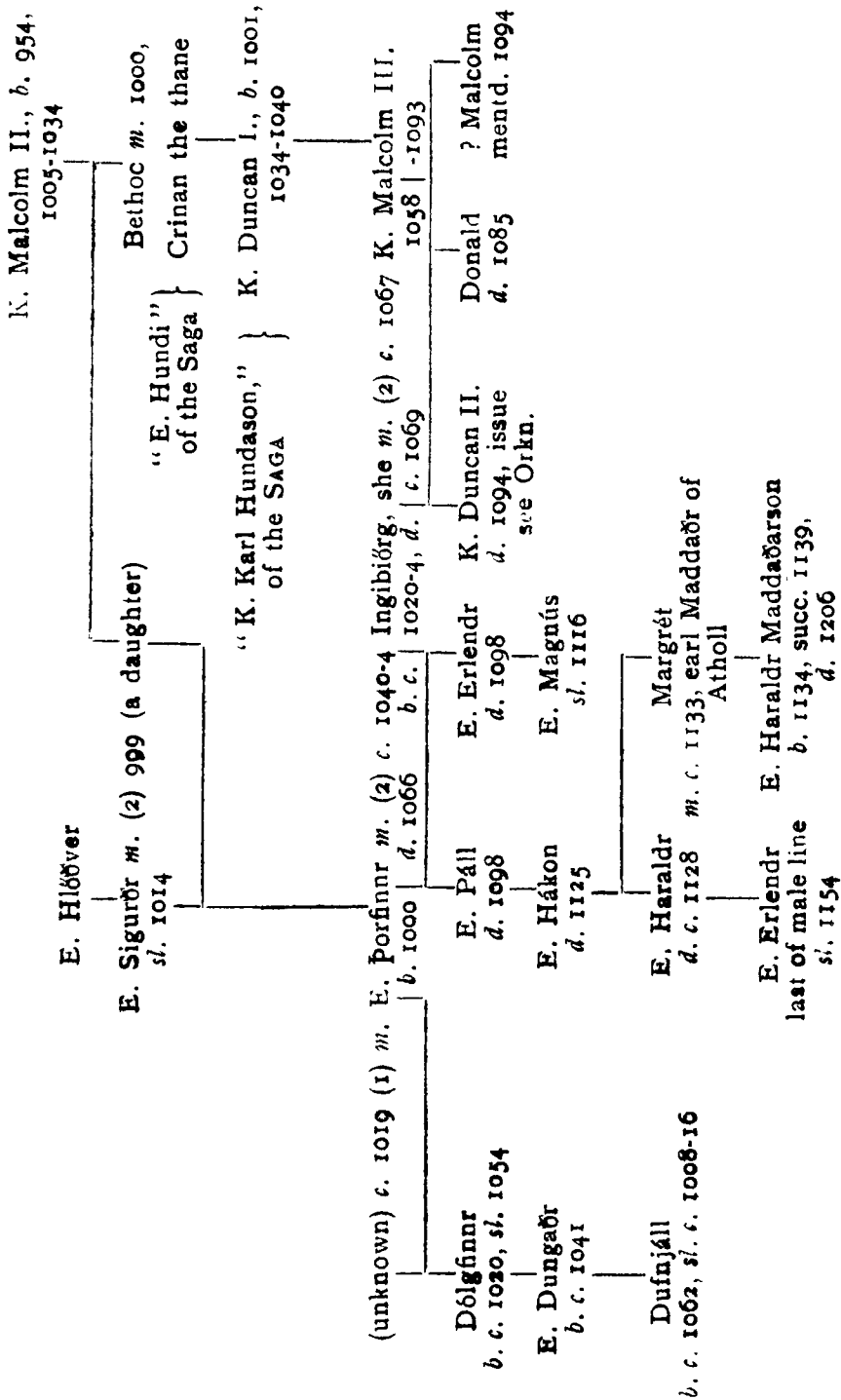
and that the land was called after him. Bolgyn, now Bolgie, in the parish of Abbotshall is apparently a genuine place-name, and the explanation appears to be, clearly, that the place-name Bolgyn has been confused with the person-name Dölfinn, or Dólgfinnr; and the writer would suggest the following emendation: "*terram Bolgyne Dölfinni filii Torfyny*," "the land of Bolgyn, which belonged to Dólgfinnr, son of Þorfinnr." We can weave a little romance around these relics. Þorfinnr must have married first *circa* 1019, when he was 19, an unnamed wife, probably a Gael, and a son, Dólgfinnr, was born in 1020. In 1034-5, on the death of king Malcolm (Þorfinn's grandfather), Þorfinnr came to blows with the succeeding king, Duncan I. (king Karl Hundason of the Saga), and made an expedition into Scotland as far south as Fife. Dólgfinnr, who would have been 14-15 years old at this time, probably accompanied his father, and remained behind and acquired the lands of Bolgyn. Dólgfinnr took sides with earl Siward of Northumberland and the Saxons in supporting Malcolm in his attempt to oust king Macbeth from the throne in 1054—the same Malcolm who afterwards married Dólgfinn's stepmother, Ingibiörg—Dólgfinnr was killed in this battle, and his estate, which would of course have been confiscated by Macbeth, was bequeathed by that king to the Church. In 1054, Dólgfinnr would have been 34, and if he had married at 20 he might have had a son, 13 years of age at that time. This would be earl Dungaðr (Duncan), father of Dufnjáll who is mentioned in the Saga. As Dólgfinnr fell in the cause of Malcolm, it seems probable that Malcolm, on his succession to the throne in 1058, rewarded Duncan Dólgfinnsson, for the loss of his father and estates, with an earldom. The history of the earldom of Fife at this period is very obscure, and there is a possibility that Duncan was made earl of Fife. There were two later Duncans, earls of Fife, the

daughter of one of whom married earl Haraldr Maddaðarson, the great-great-grandson of Þorfinnr. Or, Duncan may have been created an earl by king Malcolm on his marriage to Ingibiörg (Duncan's step-grandmother), *circa* 1067; or otherwise Duncan may have assumed the title of earl of Orkney, *de jure*. Dufnjáll (Donald) Dungaðsson would be, at the most, 50 years of age when he was slain, *circa* 1112, by his cousins earls Hákon and Magnús. There can be little doubt that he was slain quite as much as a possible claimant to the earldom as on account of his being an alleged viking.

The Orkney Saga (from *Flateyjarbók*) states that the following events occurred 5 years after Svöldr (1000+5): Þorfinnr, 5 years old, sent to his grandfather, king Malcolm II.; battle of Clontarf fought; Þorfinnr made earl of Caithness. Whereas the *Annáll* (*Flateyjar-*, and *Konungs-*) date these events and the succession of king Knútr, 1004, 4 years after Svöldr. Svöldr was fought in 1000, while (1) Clontarf was fought, (2) Þorfinnr succeeded to the earldom of Caithness, and (3) Knútr succeeded to the throne of Denmark, in 1014. The only event, therefore, which took place 4 or 5 years after Svöldr, was the sending of Þorfinnr, aged 5, to be fostered by his grandfather, king Malcolm II. (in 1005, the year in which he succeeded to the throne of Scotland). The Saga has run all these events together, and hence the conflicting statements as to the number of years of Þorfinn's rule—*Flateyjar Annáll*, 52 years [1014+52=1066], *Konungs Annáll*, 62 [1004+62=1066]. The Rolls text of *Orkneyinga* (edited by Vigfússon), which is taken from *Flateyjarbók*, gives 60 years, which is an arbitrary alteration of the original 70 as a "conjecture" on the part of Vigfússon [because it resulted in 1004+70=1074, whereas Þorfinnr appeared to have died in 1064]. That Þorfinnr was born in 1000, and not in 1009 (5 years before 1014), is also

proved by the statement, in the Saga, that he was full-grown before earl Einarr was slain in 1019-20.

The true sequence of events then appears to be that Earl Sigurðr married the youngest daughter of Malcolm (afterwards king M. II.), "litlu síðarr," a little after, 995, viz., in 999, and their son Þorfinnr was born in 1000, the year in which Svöldr was fought. Five years after this (when Malcolm had defeated his cousin, king Kenneth III., on March 25th, 1005, and had succeeded to the throne, as king Malcolm II.), earl Sigurðr, whose wife had presumably died, sent his son Þorfinnr, aged 5, to his grandfather, king Malcolm, to be fostered. Þorfinnr would thus have learned Gaelic, the court language, and his grandfather would undoubtedly have had his ward betrothed to a Gael. On earl Sigurð's death at Clontarf, in 1014, king Malcolm made Þorfinnr earl of Caithness, and he ruled for 52 years, until he died in 1066, or 1065, if 1014 is reckoned as one of the 52 years. The reason why the annalists have given $1004 + 62 = 1066$, as the date of his death is because the Saga tradition relates that he died "á ofanverðum dögum," towards the end of the days, of king Haraldr harðráði, who was slain in 1066. The English and Scottish chronicles differ as to the date of the marriage of king Malcolm III. to St. Margaret, it being variously given as 1067 and 1070, while his first marriage to Ingibiörg is entirely ignored. The explanation appears to be that he married Ingibiörg in 1067 and St. Margaret in 1070.



Dólgfinnr was a half-brother of earls Páll and Erlendr, who were half-brothers of king Duncan II., Donald and Malcolm.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

FOYS AND FANTEENS.

(SHETLAND FEASTS AND FASTS).

BY JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

THE Shetlanders of olden time were a cheerful people, fond of amusements, and with a keen sense of humour. They did not indulge in many "fanteens" (fasts), their sins sat lightly on them, but of "foys" there were no lack, each one characterised by appropriate observances.

Before saints' days and masses came in they had their festivals dedicated to the jolly gods of Scandinavia, whose good-will the folk hoped to propitiate in the bonfire, the bumper, the dance and song.

The church took possession of our old feast-days and fast-days, and apportioned them among a host of Christian saints; a system which has greatly confused our traditions. I have tried to disentangle a few of these, with, I must admit, not much success. Still, here they are.

Buggle-day was the 17th of March,¹ and on it the folk went out with spade and hoe, and dug over a small rigg. Having prepared the ground, the patch was sown with corn, which was carefully watched over during spring and summer, for on *its* success depended the prosperity of the whole crop (so folk believed). The ripe grain shorn from that rigg was carefully preserved and ground into meal, and that was used on next year's Buggle-day for the buggle cakes.

The last three days of March brought the Buggle-ree, a tempest of wild weather, when "au man sat idda shimley-neuk an wrocht we dir lines" (when all men wisely remained indoors and overhauled their fishing-tackle).

¹Old Style. All "marked days" are still "held" according to the Old Style.

Early in May was held the Beltane-foy. Large bon-fires were lit, and the boys danced round these, singing sea-carols. He was considered the best man of the lot who could jump over the fire, and many a "half-lang" strove to win that honour ("through the fire to Bael?").

The fishermen had a foy. Usually each party consisted of a six-aern's crew. The chief toast on this occasion was not drunk to the sovereign's honour, but was one of grim signification and interest to the men themselves, "Death to the head that wears no hair" (death to fish). The final toast was not so ominous, "Gude hadd His haund aboot da corn, an blaw da bait idda fishes mooth."

Beltane had its three days-ree, like Buggle-day, and during that time fires were heaped and kept blazing, and the sun was respectfully greeted with a "gude morneen, and shaw your ee."

Without doubt the Beltane ceremonies were a survival of sun-worship, the adoration of Bael. In a land where the sun is chary of his light, folk clung long to anything which seemed likely to propitiate the Power from which came all good gifts.

Next after Beltane-foy came that of Simmer-mill (mid-summer. "Simmer-mill" comes from an old Norse word *mil*, meaning *between* or *in the middle*). This festival was one of the most important, and seems to have been what nowadays would be styled a thanksgiving ceremony. The folk gave thanks for small as well as great mercies. "Never mind," they'd say, if the fishing had been scanty, "Da Loard 'il send some kind o blessin someday." "Roogues" of stones were piled, and on these were cast bones of fish and animals, peats, straw, sea-weed, flowers, feathers, even a "tet o oo." To these would be added the *ormals* (broken remains) of any household article, and *pells* (rags) of no use. On top of all was set a small wooden

kapp (basin) containing a little fish oil. A glorious blaze would rise from that bonfire, and its burning to the foundation without any replenishment meant good luck indeed.

I remember being taken to the Pate-hill to join a Simmer-mill Foy being held by the young women and pate-boys employed about the peats. We had a roaring peat fire, and there were a number of odd charms as well, as "saining" and "laying up o goadiks" (spells for protecting one from trows, and asking riddles), but a great number of these antics were clearly of Scottish origin, and belonged to the British St. John's Mass, with which Simmer-mill had been incorporated.

The Lammas Foy was chiefly concerned with the ending of the summer white-fishing season. Thereafter any fishing done had no part in the regular industry engineered by the lairds and their factors.

The whole seamen of a toon would often join together for this foy, and each man brought a wife or sweetheart to the feast.

The haaf-boats were hauled up, and "weel pitten about" against the winter. As much variety as possible was shown in the viands, and "a drap oot o da bottle" was indispensable. Cup-reading went the round, as did "laying up o goadiks." Healths were drunk, and songs were sung, but "never was a fit lifted to dance at a Simmer-mill foy."

The Hallowmass Foy came on the 13th of November, and was considered one of the most important foys of the year. On Hallow-eeen the *greuliks* went a-guizaring. The Greuliks were usually the young men of a toon dressed in most fantastic costumes; tall, graceful straw hats, adorned with many-coloured ribbons, were the favourite head-gear. Their leader was termed the *skuddlar*. One of their number carried a *buggie* (bag formed from the skin of a sheep drawn intact off the carcase). Another member of the party would be the

fiddler. Their faces were veiled, or otherwise disguised. They went from house to house dancing and singing, and having their buggie well filled with all sorts of dainties. Next evening they resorted to the home of one of their number and held their foy.

On Hallow morning every beast in the byre got a whole *hallow* (sheaf of corn) for its breakfast, in addition to the usual meagre allowance, but the day was observed as a "fanteen" until the evening.

"Fill-afore-ye-fant" was the motto of Fastrens-een (the night before Lent), and that evening was spent in revels of no ordinary sort. One might call that a carnival indeed. It might well be followed by a fant.

Fastren's E'en began Lantern (Lent), and was the first Tuesday of the first new moon after Candlemass.

There was a man who declared that he would fast all through Lent; he would not touch food, and thus it was with him—

"A'm had me fun till Up-helly-au,
I mean ta fast lang Lantern awau."
He hadna fasted a day bit een,
"I wiss lang Lantern had been geen."
He hadna fasted a day but twa,
"I wiss lang Lantern wid geng awau."
He hadna fasted a day but three,
"I tink lang Lantern ill mak me dee."
He hadna fasted a day but fower,
"I tink lang Lantern maks me glower."
He hadna fasted a day but five,
"I tink lang Lantern maks me ill-trive."
He hadna fasted a day but sax,
When lang lang Lantern his ee-string brakks.
He hadna fasted a day but seevin,
"I hoop lang Lantern ill bring me ta Heevin."

These rhymes are evidently a satire on the fasts of the church, and indicate how little sympathy our people had with the creeds which tried to turn their old foys into fanteens. There is something of grim Scottish

humour in the rhymes which leads me to fancy that they are not original Shetlandic.

There was no Yule-foy proper. The folk talked of "The Yules," and it was a whole month of feasting and frolic. All the mirth, all the mystic observances of all the year seemed to culminate in The Yules.

The Yules began with Tulya's e'en, which was seven days before Yuleday. On that night the trows received permission to leave their homes in the heart of the earth and dwell, if it so pleased them, above ground. One of the most important of all Yule observances was the "saining" required to guard life and property from the trows. At dayset, on Tulya's e'en, two straws were plucked from the stored provender and laid in the form of a cross at the *stiggie* (stile) leading to the yard where the stacks of hay and corn were kept. A hair from the tail of each cow, or other beast about the place, was pleated and fastened over the byre door, and a *lowin taund* (blazing peat) was carried through all outhouses. Helya's nicht followed Tulya's e'en. On Helya's nicht hot "milk-an-mel" was eaten, and children were committed to the care of Midder Mary. The rhymes used on that occasion are pretty—

Mary midder, haud de haund
Roond aboot fur sleepin-baund,
Hadd da lass an hadd da wife,
Hadd da bairns au dir life.
Mary midder haud de haund
Roond da infants o wir laund.

Mary mother hold your hand
Round about for sleeping-band,
Hold the lass and hold the wife,
Hold the bairns all their days.
Mary mother hold your hand
Round the infants of our land.

Tammasmass e'en was five nights before Yuleday. In some localities the more ancient name of Tunderman's nicht was given to it. Possibly this was a period dedicated to Thor, and appropriated by the church to St. Thomas. The evening was considered peculiarly given to rest. No work was done after day-set, and—unlike all other evenings of Yuletide—no amusements were allowed. The smallest deviation from what was

orthodox on this occasion was sure to bring bad luck, for the old rhyme said—

The very babe unborn cries oh, dul, dul,
For the brakkin o Tunderman's nicht,
Five nights afore Yule.

The Sunday preceding Yuleday was called Byaena's day. That evening half a cow's head was boiled and eaten for supper. The fat skimmed off the water was made with bursteen (highly-dried oatmeal) into brose. The skull was cleaned and a candle stuck in the eye-socket, and then it was set aside to be lighted and carried through house and byre on Yule morning.

Though a family might be poor indeed they always contrived to have a morsel of "flesh-mate" to cook on Yule e'en.

Yule cakes were significant. One was made for each member of the household. They were round, pinched into points round the outer edge, and a hole was made in the centre. They were never made at any other time, and were emphatically "The Yule cakes." I do not doubt that a reminiscence of the "shining wheel" brought these cakes into existence—a wheel being the symbol of the sun, whose return from the southlands was rapturously welcomed in our cold north at Yule.

Each member of a family washed their whole person, and donned a clean, if possible new, garment, in which they slept on Yule e'en. When the hands or feet were put into the water "tree livin kolls wiz drappit ata da sae o watter, else da Trows took da pooer o da haund or fit."

The house was heedfully tidied, no "unkirsin" thing was left in sight, and all soiled water thrown away. All locks were opened, a lamp was left burning all night, and an "iron blade, weel scoored" was ostentatiously exposed near the door.

Before daylight on Yule morning the gudeman of the house got up and lit the candle, which had been

stuck in the eye-socket of the cow's skull. Then he proceeded with this unique candlestick to the byre and fed the beasts, giving to all a little more food than usual, which they were expected to eat by the light of the candle, and which no doubt they did. Then the gudeman went round to the folk of the house—often to special neighbours also—with the Yule dram. Even the bairns were bound “ta pit da lip till it, if nae mair,” and the man said—

“Yule gude an Yule gear
Follow de troo da year.”

Breakfast was eaten by artificial light, and on this occasion many a bit of secretly hoarded candle was produced by the youngsters, who had conserved those morsels for months, that they might contribute their “blink” to the lighting of Yule morning.

No work of any kind was done on Yule day, for the old rhyme said—

Nedder bake nor brew,
Shape nor shew,
Upo gude Yule
Else mukle dul
Will be dy share
Dis year an mair.

Neither bake nor brew,
Shape nor sew,
On good Yule
Else much trouble
Will be your share
This year and more.

Although the sun had turned in his track he was a late riser at Yuletide, and the fiddlers were at one's door long before daylight playing the old Yule “spring,” called “The Day Dawn.” Football was the amusement of the men while the brief day lasted, dancing and *veesicks* (impromptu rhymes) the fun of the evening.

Trows, being excessively fond of dancing, always tried to join the revels, but this they can only do in the guise of a mortal. Woe betide the man, woman, or child who has not been “sained,” and by that omission left for the trows to do with as they will.

There are innumerable stories told of the mischief which the trows have done at this period through the thoughtlessness of sceptical and foolhardy individuals.

Yule week proper is the time between Yule day and New'r'day (new year's day), and during that week no person ought to prosecute their ordinary employment; the penalty for so doing is bad luck for a year.

Two fishermen went to sea on the fourth day of Yule, and the first thing they brought up on the line was a hideous monster—half fish, half horse. This creature said—

“Man wha fished in Yule week
Fortune never mair did seek.”

On New'r'day work of every kind was begun. Men fished, if only for an hour, from the craigs; girls began a bit of knitting, if only a few stitches; a yard of *simmand* was woven, a turf was turned, a stone set up, a shilling laid by, a torn garment mended, and a new one shaped; the byre was “redd up”; the fishing gear was repaired; “everything pertaining ta trift was got under weigh to begin the year wi' a blessin.”

From that day until “Up-helly-au” (Twenty-fourth-night) work and play went hand in hand, and the merry season, the three winter moons, given of old to the worship of the Day-god, given now to the memory of our Sun of Righteousness, sped to its end amid much enjoyment.

All marriages were celebrated (if possible) during the three winter moons. On Twenty-fourth-night the small family parties became enlarged, and lost much of their domestic element. The young people of many hamlets clubbed together and spent the evening in the house of someone who owned a big barn, where dancing was vigorously carried on. The rhyme says—

Mak da maist o ony shance,
Yule is time ta drink an dance.
New'r'smas lucky lines sood bring,

Twenty fourth nicht get da ring.
Gie da lass a kiss an mind,
Time an tide are aisly tined.

Make the most of any chance,
Yule is time to drink and dance.
New Year lucky lines should
bring,

Twenty fourth night get the ring.
Give the lass a kiss and remember,
Time and tide are easily lost.

On Up-helly-au, shortly before midnight, doors were all opened, and a great deal of pantomimic chasing and driving and dispersing of unseen creatures took place. Many pious ejaculations were uttered, and iron was again much in evidence, "fur, ye keen, trows canna bide da sicht o iron." The Bible was read and quoted. People moved about in groups, or couples, never singly, and infants were most carefully guarded as well as sained by vigilant "wise women."

Young men and boys, disguised as *greuliks*, formed processions, and marched through the *toons* with lighted torches. These, at midnight, were piled with other material into a huge bonfire, and amid noise and hearty congratulations the trows were banished to their homes in the hillsides. When day dawned after Twenty-fourth-nicht every trow had disappeared, and "the Yules" were ended.

The Lerwick boys have of late years revived the old "Up-helly-au," and have elaborated the torchlight procession, the bonfire, the dance, the disguises, into a pretty pageant. They burn a beautiful model of a viking ship with the torches—a queer modern travesty of an old Norse custom. In ancient times Shetland men kept their old boats to make their coffins from. A literal translation of Up-helly-au would be "Holiday time all up."

GLOSSARY OF SOME WORDS BY THE EDITOR.

Buggle-day. Jakobsen and Edmondston date Bugla-, or Bogel-day the 29th of March (N.S.) when earthwork began (*de vor*), upon which occasion bogel cakes were baked. In Orkney *boglo* is a clotted piece. Can a possible ON. **Bú-gleði-dagr*, bú-, or farm-festival, have become Shetland, *Bugla-day*?

Buggle-ree, ON. *hvið*, a tempest.

Byaena's-day, ON. *bæn*, *bón*, prayer.

fanteen, from Eng. *faint*.

goadiks, ON. *gáta*, a riddle.

greuliks, guisers, ON. *Grýla*, a kidnapping ogress, whose sons, *Jólasveinar*,

Yule swains, were let loose during Yule.

kapp, basin, ON. *koppur*.

ormals, ON. *örmul*, broken remains.

roogue, ON. *hrúga*, a heap.

saining, ON. *signa* (1) to sign the goblet with the sign of Thor's hammer, before drinking, and later (2) to sign with the cross; Germ. *segnen*, OE. *segnian*.

Simmer-mill. Jakobsen gives April 14th as the date in Shetland. ON. *sumar-mál*, the last days of winter and the first of summer, April 20th and after; *sumarmála-dagr* = *sumar-dagr fyrsti*; *sumarmála helgv*, the Sunday that falls in the beginning of summer.

stiggie, ON. *stigi*, a stile.

Tunderman's night, "older name of St. Thomas' mass." Compare 'T. Andrew, (in form *Tander*) an Eng. and Sco. contracted form of St. Andrew, EDD.

Tulya's E'en. Manson's *Shetland Almanac* gives: Tolyigis-day, January 4, O.S., December 23, N.S.; Tolyigis-e'en, the day before T.-day EDD. This must be St. Thorlak, the Icelandic saint and bishop, whose day is December 23. Thorlak has got corrupted into Tulya, Tulyig.

veesik, ON. *vísa*, a strophe, stanza.

NOTES FROM THE TONGUE PRESBYTERY RECORDS.

V.

(Continued from Vol. VII., p. 177).

5th April, 1777.—At Farr. Mr. Sage, teacher at Tongue, appears before the Presbytery for trials, being a student in divinity.

[1st April, 1778.—At Tongue Manse. Adjourned to 2nd April when Mr. Alexander Sage was licensed.

At same meeting Robert Finlayson candidate for parochial school of Eddrachillis was examined and found capable to teach English, writing, arithmetic, and church music.]

21st August, 1779.—At Thurso. Mr. Munro, Farr, died 1st May last; he was in ill health for some years. ["His failings," says his co-presbyter, Rev. Murdo McDonald, in his MS. Diary, "are greatly drowned in that one consideration of his shining benevolence."]

30th March, 1780.—At Farr. Mr. Dingwall inducted

to Farr. [Certificate of Mr. James Dingwall's birth, son of Alexander Dingwall, tenant in Seafeld, born there on 26th May, 1743.]

[26th November, 1780.—At Tongue. The scheme of missionaries was tabled, the tenor whereof follows that for 1st November, 1780, to November, 1781, Mr. Urquhart be employed in the parish of Farr and also Hallidale with £25 salary, and Alexander MacKay be continued in Eddrachillis.]

[12th June, 1781.—At Tongue. Mr. Alexander Urquhart ordained.]

[26th November, 1783.—At Tongue. "The Presbytery taking it to their serious consideration how seasonably this country has been supplied with victual from abroad when the scarcity which prevailed among themselves was of a most alarming nature and threatened most awful consequences have appointed a thanksgiving day in their bounds on the 25th December for this merciful interposition of Providence." [At the Synod of 1784 the Presbytery of Tongue reported that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper could not be administered at Durness or Eddrachillis this year "owing to the extraordinary scarcity of the times."]

[12th January, 1786.—At Tongue. Mr. Hugh MacKay, formerly schoolmaster at Tongue, is licensed and appointed to preach at Tongue next Sabbath.]

[At the Synod of 1787 the minister of Tongue reported that he could not administer the Lord's Supper that year because he had no manse.]

[23rd July, 1787.—At Durness. Hugh Ross, student in divinity, produced his credentials from the Presbytery of Caithness. The Presbytery unanimously recommend him to the Synod for licence.]

[22nd May, 1788.—At Kirkiboll. Mr. Hugh Ross licensed.]

[First Wednesday of April, 1789.—Mr. John Robertson licensed.]

At same meeting letters were produced from Mr. Gun, Latheron, and Mr. Hugh MacKay, missionary in the highlands of the parishes of Halkirk and Latheron, intimating that the latter had received a call to be assistant to the minister of Croy. The ministers of Halkirk and Latheron, after consulting the people of the Mission, were resolved to call Mr. Robertson,]

[25th June, 1789.—At Farr. Mr. Robertson produced a letter from Revs. J. Cameron, minister of Halkirk, and Robert Gun, minister of Latheron, bearing that they with the people of Halkirk and Latheron had made choice of him in place of Mr. Hugh Mackay who is now Mr. Calder's assistant at Croy. Messrs. Cameron and Gun request that the Presbytery would ordain Mr. Robertson as he has recently been licensed by them. The Presbytery accordingly proceeded to his ordination.]

[12th May, 1791.—At Durness. Mr. Thomas Ross examined in Latin as a candidate for Durness school; his examination was sustained.]

[28th November, 1792.—At Tongue. Two petitions from two different districts in the heights of the parish of Farr praying for a presbyterial application to the S.P.C.K. for schools. The Presbytery recommend that an application be made for a teacher for Rhiloisgt and Rossall district as that part of the parish never had the benefit of a charity school.]

[30th November, 1792.—At Tongue Manse. Mr. Hugh Mackenzie licensed.

[3rd April, 1793.—At Farr. John Rose, Esq., Sheriff-Substitute of Strathnaver, appointed Commissioner to the General Assembly. Alexander MacKay was catechist at Eddrachillis at this date.]

When designing a glebe for the minister of Farr, Mr. Fraser, factor for the House of Sutherland, excused his absence as he was with Col. Wymes that day recruiting men on Strathnaver for H.M. service.

[1st May, 1793.—At Farr. Lieutenant Hugh MacKay of Clibrick produced a mandate from Mr. Fraser, factor, to act for him in regard to Farr Manse, etc. In his statement to the Presbytery he said “that several years ago the lands of Ardbeg were designed as a glebe to the minister of Farr in lieu of the old glebe at Skail when the kirk and manse were situated there: that Ardbeg was for many years possessed by Mr. MacIntosh and other missionaries of that parish until it was illegally taken possession of by Lord Reay, who, and his successor unjustly usurped the possession of it ever since. . . . That what was formerly possessed as a glebe are church lands: evidence of which I offer to produce.” To which Mr. Dingwall answered “That with regard to the lands of Ardbeg he was convinced no evidence could be procured to prove that they were either a designed glebe or church lands. That the original glebe lay in Skail. . . . That Mr. MacPherson, once minister of Farr, was dispossessed of Ardbeg. . . . His successor, Mr. Robertson, could not obtain Ardbeg either as a glebe or farm; but the family of Sutherland gave him a tack which he and his successors in office had in their possession till Whitsunday last giving an acknowledgment for a glebe equivalent to the rent of a pennyland there; by which it is evident the family of Sutherland consider themselves bound to give the ministry of Farr a compensation for a glebe.”]

[26th November, 1794.—At Eriboll. “The Presbytery find to their great satisfaction that the Mission of Erribol in which Old Shores in Edrachyllis, and Melness in Tongue, has taken place, have ordered the clerk to engross in their register the proceedings which obtained this appointment.” These follow:—“Mr. Anderson, Captain Forbes, and Erribol in concert with the Presbytery.”]

In Dr. Kemp's letter addressed to Mr. MacKenzie, Tongue, it is stated “That the missionary will need

to have a comfortable dwelling-house, a kitchen, a cow-house, a stable, and a barn, arable ground and pasture sufficient to maintain a horse and two cows." Mr. Anderson, Captain Forbes, and Erriboll resolved to build the houses at Achowgharve side. The meeting resolved that the places of worship shall be at Camusan-dun, Keanloch and Melness. "That the missionary shall employ his time in the winter and spring seasons in the bounds of West Moine and Melness. During those seasons he was to preach only once a month at Melness and catechise the people of that district either in month of March or April as most convenient and that he preach in Keanloch 12 Sabbath days during the summer and autumn seasons."

[15th May, 1794.—When the above houses were finished a quorum of the Presbytery met with Mr. Anderson and Erriboll to prepare a report of the same which was ordered to be transmitted to the Society so that Mr. Robertson, the missionary, may receive his comission and enter on his charge without delay.]

[30th November, 1796.—At Tongue Manse. Mr. George Gordon ordained for Achness.]

[2nd April, 1796.—At Tongue. Mr. George Gordon, missionary, present. Mr. Robertson had at this date been transferred to the mission in the heights of Halkirk.]

[3rd April, 1799.—At Tongue Manse. Mr. Thomson appointed clerk of Presbytery.]

[2nd April, 1800.—At Kirkiboll. Mr. Neil Macbride, a licentiate from the Presbytery of Edinburgh, having come to the bounds in order to be missionary at Eriboll, attended this meeting with a view to be received as missionary in said bounds.

Mr. Roderick MacKenzie, on presenting a letter from his minister, Mr. Falconer, was examined by the Presbytery and appointed catechist.

Mr. Neil MacBride ordained.]

36 *Notes from the Tongue Presbytery Records.*

[21st April, 1801.—At Tongue. Mr. Duncan MacGillivray attended and presented an extract of his license by the Presbytery of Tain dated at Kilmuir, 7th May, 1800.]

[2nd April, 1801.—Mr. MacGillivray ordained.]

[3rd November, 1802.—At Heilam. The clerk produced His Majesty's presentation to Mr. John MacKenzie, missionary minister in Creich (Rosehall) to be minister of Eddrachillis.

Mr. John Kennedy¹ attended this meeting. The S.P.C.K. had appointed him to be missionary at Eriboll where he had officiated since last May.]

[2nd December, 1802.—At Tongue. Mr. John MacKenzie's certificate of ordination from Presbytery of Tain, dated 4th May, 1797, presented to the Presbytery.]

[6th April, 1803.—At Tongue. Mr. John MacKenzie inducted.]

[22nd November, 1803.—At Tongue. Hugh MacKenzie, schoolmaster of Tongue, compeared and signed the formula required by the General Assembly (this was afterwards Dr. MacKenzie).]

[3rd April, 1806.—At Tongue. Robert Clark examined as candidate for parochial school of Eddrachillis and found qualified.]

[23rd September, 1806.—An agreement between Lord Reay and Rev. Mr. MacKenzie in reference to the glebe is inserted in the minutes.

Mr. Hugh MacKenzie assistant at Dyke is admitted assistant and colleague to his father on 26th November, 1806.]

[6th April, 1808.—At Heilem. Mr. William Findlater, a licentiate from the Dingwall Presbytery, and who has been appointed missionary at Erriboll by the S.P.C.K., attended this meeting.]

¹ Afterwards the well known minister of Kilearnan, Ross-shire, and father of Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall.

[7th April, 1808.—At Heilem. Mr. Findlater ordained. At Mr. Thomson's request George MacKay, Hope; George MacKay, Heilem; John MacKay, Achloch; Alex. Calder, Strathmore; and John MacKay, there, in order to be ordained members of the Kirk-session of Durness.]

[28th November, 1810.—At Tongue. John Munro, student in philosophy, from the parish of Halkirk found qualified for Farr school.]

[27th November, 1811.—At Tongue. It is noted that Mr. Thomson died 12th June, 1811.]

[30th April, 1812.—At Durness. Mr. Findlater inducted.]

Mr. Roderick Reid, student in divinity and tutor to Mr. Clark, Glendu, is recommended to the Synod for license. He was licensed 3rd March, 1813.]

[13th September, 1813.—At Tongue. Mr. David MacKenzie, licentiate from the Presbytery of Forres, who had been appointed missionary in Achness, attended the meeting. He was to receive a salary of £50 from the S.P.C.K. exclusive of what the people might give.]

[25th November, 1813.—At Tongue. Mr. David MacKenzie ordained.]

[10th October, 1814.—At Eddrachillis. Mr. Dingwall died 16th September at Farr.]

[4th April, 1815.—At Durness. Mr. Donald Sage¹ recommended for Achness.]

[3rd May, 1815.—At Bettyhill. Rev. David MacKenzie admitted.]

[25th July, 1815.—Mr. Hugh MacKenzie² licensed.]

[29th November, 1815.—At Tongue. The Presbytery considering the long vacancy in the Erriboll Mission, resolved to petition the S.P.C.K.]

¹ Author of *Memorabilia Domestica*, in which he gives such a graphic account of the evictions in Strathnaver, where the Mission Church of Achness was situated.

² Afterwards minister of Assynt, Clyne and Killin.

[28th November, 1816.—At Tongue. Mr. MacKenzie reported that he had a letter from the S.P.C.K. in answer to their petition. The Society intimated their intention of re-establishing the Mission, and appointed Mr. Hugh MacKenzie as missionary.

At this meeting Mr. MacKenzie is ordained.]

[1st April, 1818.—At Tongue. Mr. Robert Clerk, schoolmaster of Farr, and Mr. Hugh MacLeod, tutor in the family of Skerra, were recommended to the Synod for license.]

HOW THE HALCROS ACQUIRED CLETYAN IN STENNESS, ORKNEY.

BY J. T. SMITH LEASK.

ISE¹ wirran, i thee² time thu'll hae hard a few wheer³
yarns o da ongans o da Hacroos at bed i Irelan'
i da ald days. Bea waas da "headhoos" o a' dem
at bed hereaboot an' dey gaed bae da name o da Hacroos
o Bea. Dere waar Hacroos i Aevie⁴ an' Cava an' ither
pieces, bit A'm tinkan dey waar a' sib.⁵ Dey aad⁶ hapes
o lan', bit Guid kens foo dey cam by id, bit gin id waas
a gotten is⁷ dey deud Cletyan, at's a pairt o Biggins noo,
dey wad haen a po'er tae accoont for whin dey gaed
abeun, gin ony o dem wan dat lent ava. Sal! A'm
dootan a hantle o them's sweean⁸ noo, gin a' A'm hard
i me day's treu.

Dere waas ane at bed i yur 'oose at dey caa'd the
'Leddy o Coldama.' Sheu hed tree daiters at A'm hard
thee gutcher⁹ ald Willie Smith spakan o. He minded dem
on, is dey a' bed aboot ae hoose, bit A'm tinkan dey a'

¹ I, ON. *ek*, A.S. *ic*, Germ. *ich*, Eng. and Scot. dial. *Ise*, *Iss*, etc.

² thy. ³ queer. ⁴ Evie parish. ⁵ related. ⁶ owned. ⁷ as.

⁸ ON. *sviða*, Dan. *svie*, to burn. ⁹ grandfather.

NOTE.—*at*, that; *o*, of; *i*, in; *dey*, they; *A'm*, I am; *is*, as; *foo*, how.
Derivations are by the Editor.

dee'd whin 'e waas bit a cutty rinnan chield. He aye telt o foo dey waar a' gaen wi' crewals.¹ Na, I cinna tell dee whit da Leddy's first name waas, bit ma'be id waas her at du says deed i the hoose in 1766. Whit says du caa'd dey 'er? Cecila? Oh, boy, wad dat a² been da sam' is Cessie noo-a-days? Foo ald waas sheu whin sheu deed, kens du? Hid deusna say? Min! dat's a peety, whit a peety noo, for dan we wad a kent about whin her brither wad a been i 'is state royalty. Ma'be Cessie, at du tells me o, waas anither daiter o da Leddy's. Ah, boy, A'm dootan sheu buist³ a been a daiter, an Ise tell dee why. Da Leddy waas said till a been a sister o William Hacroo o Bea. Noo du kens at he merried a Cava lass, Hacroo bae name teu. Sheu aad Cava an' selt id in seeventeen hunder an' seeven. Noo, I kenno whin sheu waas born nor whin sheu merried, bit mak 'er terty⁴ whin sheu selt Cava, dat wad mak' 'er be born about 1677, an' gin sheu an' 'er man waar onyting like yamals,⁵ da brither A'm gan tae tell dee o, buist a been born efter, an' A'm dootan couldna hae deun a' A'm hard o 'im, dan. A'm dootan dere buist a been twa Williams o Bea about dat time, to⁶ I niver hard o'd.

Beesweel,⁷ da Leddy haed a brither at bed wi' 'er, bit whit 'e waas or whit 'e deud I ken no, a' I ken, he waas no great rug.⁸ Dey haed a grand hoose, wi' apstairs intil id, boy! an' limed waas, seustu!⁹ noo, an' chimlas,¹⁰ no wi' backs an' lums¹¹ sam is ither hooes i the toon. I mind da hoose fine, bit da sea's taen id a' awa noo, an' gin A'm no mistaen da Smiths bed i a peerie¹² hoose aye narer the sea.

¹ Fr. *écrouelles*, scrofula. ² have.

³ must. ⁴ thirty. ⁵ persons of equal age. ⁶ though, ON. *pó*.

⁷ be (it) as it will, however. ⁸ did not bear a good character; cf. Eng, *ruck*, *reak*, family, lineage, ON. *rekja*, to trace (a pedigree); also ON. *rekkr-r*, a straight, upright man, a freeholder.

⁹ seest thou? cf. ON. *sussu*, interj. of wonder or amazement.

¹⁰ chimneys. ¹¹ opening in roof for smoke and light, ON. *ljóri*. ¹² little.

Noo, da Leddy's brither at bed wi' 'er wanted grund, an' set 'is mind api Cletyan, like Naabith's bit o yard at du reads o i "The Beuk," bit haith¹ 'e waas a lock² waar nor Ahab 'cis 'e offered naething for 'id, nor is muckle is spiered da ald man at aicht³ 'id, gin⁴ 'e wad sell id. He jeust pat ower wurd till ald Cletyan tae ca' api 'im, an' no lippenan⁵ onyting wrang, da puir crater deud id. Whin Cletyan gaed i the hoose, seustu! da door was boolted ahint 'im an' dan Hacroo klikkit ap⁶ 'is swird an' pistil, an clappid doon a paper api da table, an' telt da ald man, gin he deudna pit 'is name till id, 'e wadna geong oot wi' da life. Da paper waas da tettle⁷ o Cletyan. Da ald man sheurly saa nathing ither for id, or he waas ma'be no jeust "prepared," wha kens, he ma'be gowled,⁸ bit 'e pat 'is hand till id an' dat's da wey da Hacroos cam bi Cletyan, an' A'm telt a hantle⁹ mair was gocked¹⁰ ower. A'm seur I kinna whit dey deud for witnesses till da tettle, hid's afen palled me teu; bit, boy! boy! hid waas a creual piece o wark, hid waas dat, Guid preserve is a'.

Efter dis a soomans cam' till Hacroo. A'm no seur whit id waas aboot, bit I aye tou't id waas ower Cletyan. Onywey twa offisher bodies caa'd api' 'im wi' 'id. Bae 'is ain tale he waas ceevelity idsel, an' wad hae dem in by, whither or no, till sit a peerie meenit an' rest dersels after dere lang traivel, an' tak a air¹¹ o mate. Makan a whassaco¹² at 'e waas blide tae see dem; ever hard du da like? Dey gaed in by like a pair o stoopid amitters,¹³ an' he teuk doon a footh¹⁴ o' binnicks tae them, wi' 'is ain hand. Dere wasna ony loaf dan,

¹ faith. ² lot. ³ owned. ⁴ if. ⁵ expecting.

⁶ snatched up; Eng. Scot. *click*. ⁷ title deed.

⁸ Eng. Scot. to howl, ON. *gaula*. ⁹ number.

¹⁰ Scot. *gouk*, to deceive—obtained by fraud. Dr. Jón Stefánsson says that Icel. *gauh*, cuckoo, is applied to a defrauder.

¹¹ taste, or quantity. ¹² pretence. ¹³ foolish persons.

¹⁴ Eng. *fouth*, *fulth*, abundance.

na deed,¹ an' 'e clined² butter api' twa o dem wi' 'is ain toomb, an' A'm telt, 'e hedna ony hawance³ on da butter. Seurlly he hedna a bit o knife whin 'e eused 'is toomb, bit dat waas naethin, toomb pieces waar a' da go even whin I waar a bairn; a hantle⁴ speultered⁵ the butter, bit I niver saa onyane deuan id mesel. Dan, boy, whit tinks du, he oot wi' 'is pistils, boolted da door, teur da soomans i twa, plestered ae half api' ae clinoo² an da' ither half api' da tither, an' wi' da pistils emmed at dem, made da offishers gleap⁶ da clinoos, soomans an' a'. Ise-wirran dere waas no ony chimpan⁷ or tarooan⁸ i dere minds dan, bit A'm seur dey hed a sair wark humlin⁹ id ower, an' wadna a' been da waar o a air o pheesic efter pittan doon sae muckle paper, bit ma'be dere gluff¹⁰ deud a' the sam'.

Na, buddy, I niver hard o 'im bean peunished for 'is atgans¹¹ or deean onywey bit a fair strae daithe¹² i is ain bed, an' dat maks me tink at 'e buist a been a offisher o ae kind or anither, an' a big ane teu, bit whan "The Best" himsel only kens noo. Hid leuks like da wark

¹ indeed. ² *clined*, buttered; *clinoo*, buttered bread; ON. *klína*, to smear; *klínigr*, buttered bread.

³ *sparing*—havings? cf. Eng. Sco. *havance*, manners, cf. ON. *haveska*, good manners, esp. at table. ⁴ a number (of persons).

⁵ butter softened in the mouth and then spread on the bread. Eng. Sco. *spalter*, *spalder*, *spelter*, etc. to spread. ⁶ ON. *gleyþa*, to gulp down.

⁷ feigning a small appetite; cf. Eng. Scot. *jamph*, to shuffle, idle; *gamp*, to mimic, ON. *gymbing*, mocking; also Eng. Scot. *cham*, *champ*, to chew, ON. *kampa*, to devour, used of a whiskered wild beast!

⁸ pettish refusal of food; ON. *tyrrinn*, peevish, fretful.

⁹ Swallowing the food insufficiently masticated; Galloway, *hummeled*, chewed in a careless way. E.D.D. This word is only found in Galloway; and if, in Orkney, it is only found in Stennes, it may point to a Galloway settlement in that parish. Curiously enough, there were two families of Boag and Trochan in Stennes in the 16th and 17th centuries, whose names are represented by similar place- and person-names in Galloway, and this may also account for the *Clouchston* form of the place-name *Clouston*, where these families lived, thereby assimilating it with the place- and person-name *Cloughston* in Galloway. ¹⁰ fright.

¹¹ ON. *atgangr*, aggression.

¹² ON. *strá-dauða*, dead in bed, opp. to *vápn-dauðr*.

dey deud i the time o dat breut Patrick Stew-ard wha got 'is hade dung aff i 1615, bit ma'be id waas aboot "The Fifteen" an' dat wad jeust seut for a brither o William o Bea, to¹ I cinna tink id waas sae nar wir ain day. A' da sam, bae da wey William o Bea waas dewn awa wi', id wad leuk is to dis scoondrel hed a han' i id teu. Du'll ken 'e waas drooneded ae day whin 'e waas sheutan selkies at da White Breest ower by i Hoy. I kinno wha id waas, bit some ane wanted 'im oot o da wey, whit for I deunna ken; for, fae a' A'm hard o 'im, to he cerried 'is hade heisk,² he waasna a ill body ava an' hed a fine lass at merried Jamie Smith at bed i Blackbraes. He hed naething bit daiters an' I niver hard ony ill till ony o them. Weel, someane gaed dere waas³ tae a ald witch an' spiered 'er tae help tae mak awa wi' 'im. Och! co⁴ da trucker,⁵ sheu wad be blide tae deu dat. Weel, min!⁶ sheu begood an' tried first ae airt an' dan anither, bit, illhelt api' 'im, he wadna dee. Ae day he gaed oot i a boat, an' boy! sheu made ap 'er mind at sheu wad hae 'im i 'er cleuks⁷ dan. Sheu set tae wark bae whit dey caa'd da airt o the kirn cap. I kinno foo sheu begood, bit I tink sheu steered amang da amers,⁹ an' every noo an' dan sent a peerie lass sheu hed ben tae tak a keek¹⁰ intae da ald plowt kirn. Dere waasna ony o yur wap kirns dan.¹¹ Whit tinks du, boy! id waasna canny Ise asseur dee for, Guid preserve is a', da milk begood tae swilter an' swilter¹² waar an' waar. Dan da ald witch keepid mumlin till hersel—prayan tae the ald chield,¹³ wha kens—an' sent da lass tae tak anither keek. I da end sheu cam rinnan but, a' piveran¹⁴ wi' gluff, for da cap waas tirrlan¹⁵ roond an'

¹ though. ² haughtily. ³ went their ways. ⁴ quoth.

⁵ worthless hussy, cf. ON. *trúðr*, a juggler. ⁶ man.

⁷ clutches. ⁸ how. ⁹ embers. ¹⁰ peep.

¹¹ upright churn as opposed to the barrel churn.

¹² to become agitated, of liquid. ¹³ the devil. ¹⁴ trembling.

¹⁵ twirling.

roond like a tirloo.¹ “Eh, noo, co sheu, gin id wad bit whimmel² I wad hae ’im,” an’ gaed on wi’ ’er mumlin’. I kenno gin id whimmled or no bit id waas said at dat waas da day ’e waas droon’ded. Du sees, buddy, sheu tou’t, gin da cap wad geong ower, da boat wad geong ower teu. Min, A’m af’en windered gin sheu waas da last witch at waas burned i Orkna. Du kens whaar sheu bed, doon dere api’ da shore at da Bey o Nazegoe. Bidean sae nar, sheu wad a’ been handy for dis illcontrivin (wicked) brither tae geong till, an’ wha kens ma’be ’er bit o lass waas a peerie Hacroo. “Best” tak a care o’s a’, boy, for muckle’s wir need tae tank wir Maker at illdeuars cinna get ap wi’ atfares³ like dat noo.

A’m hard anither yarn jeust sonting da sam, bit some folk hed oot it waas aboot Foolmirs, at’s a piece o Biggins noo teu, to some t’out id waas da treu yarn aboot Cletyan. I kenno bit Ise gae dee id is I hae id. Hid waas said at da man at bed i da Ha’ Clestrain wanted da bit o lan’, an’ kennan at da ane at aicht⁴ it waas no jeust ower weel aff, sent awa ower for da puir crater, whassaco he waas gan tae deu sonting for ’im. Whin he cam till da Ha’, da vegabin gaed da puir man a strood⁵ o ’is ain ald claes, an’ telt ’im tae pit dem on an’ see foo dey seuted ’im, an’ gaed ’is waas but, fill da man wad hae time tae change ’imself. Dan, whit tinks du, boy, whin da vegabin gaed ben again, he cried apin ’is servants tae come an’ see whit da ald man hed deun—stown⁶ some o ’is claes. Hid waasna ony eus⁷ for da ald man makan ony molligrant⁸ aboot id. Clestrain wadna leed⁹ till ony explanation, an’ naethin wad deu nor save da puir bothy fae bean hung bit tae gae ower da tettles¹⁰ o ’is hoose, whit ’e waas fen¹¹ tae deu tae save ’is wazzan.¹² Bit, min,

¹ a top made out of a reel. ² capsize, ON. *hvelfa*.

³ ON. *atferð*, behaviour.

⁴ owned, ON. *átt*.

⁵ a suit, ON. *skrúð*, *skrúð-klæði*, a suit of fine stuff.

⁶ stolen.

⁷ use.

⁸ Scot. = complaint.

⁹ listen, ON. *hlýða*.

¹⁰ title deeds.

¹¹ fain.

¹² throat.

dat waasna da warst o'd, wad du heist¹ id in, boy, Clestrain gaed hame wi' da man, gan² side be side wi' 'im tae Foolmirs or Cletyan for da tettles and teuk dem hame wi' 'im. Boy, boy, I cinna tink dat can be treu, an' min id soonds lee-like teu, for du sees I aye t'out at da Honeymans aad³ da Ha' Clestrain till da Balfours bou't id. Onywey id belanged tae da Honeymans twa hunder year sin, whin da Pirate Gow's men breuk intae da hoose ae night an' flegged da wives sairly. Noo, niver i me days deud I hear at da Honeymans ever aad Foolmirs or Cletyan, for da Hacroos aad baith, is lang back, is folk ken, sae wha kens bit ma'be dat's da wey at dey cam by Foolmirs is weel is Cletyan an' da wrang man's got da weight o id.

E' na, bit, boy, ever hard du o' da waal⁴ o Cletyan an' whit sheu deud aince apin a time whin sheu gaed i the poots?⁵ Du'll ken whaar sheu is, awa ap api' da breck abeun Biggins, on da iver⁶ side o da Burn o Villis. Weel, min, dat's no whaar sheu aye waas, sheu waas doon i da yard o Cletyan, atween Biggins an' da Ha', an' flitted hersel a' dat lent wi' fair scunner.⁷ Ise assure dee dat's ower a wharter o a mile, an' trou da brae an' ower da burn teu. I kinno whin sheu gaed, bit hid waas lang aneuch afore ald Tammy Chalmers gaed dere tae bide. Min's du 'im? Min, he waas a fine ald body. Aye, aye, he's awa an' a' 'is bairns awa an' we man a' geong teu if we're spared. Weel, onywey, da folk at waas i Cletyan dan, killed a golt, an' whin he waas apened dey gaed da fa⁸ tae a boosam⁹ bit o lass, at waas rinnan aboot hands, tae clean, an' whit tinks du deud sheu deu? Sheu gaed an' coopid

¹ hoist. ² going. ³ owned.

⁴ well. ⁵ poots. ⁶ upper; ON. *yfir*, over, above.

⁷ Eng. Scot. Irel. = disgust. ⁸ entrails.

⁹ active; in Iceland, *bú-samr*, is applied to one busy about household or farmhouse affairs—Dr. Jón Stefánsson.

da puddens i da waal an' gaed dem a blot.¹ Hid waasna right o da bit o lass aither, bit, puir ting, sheu ma'be deudna ken ony better, to sheu might a' (have) tou't it wad fyle² da watter. Weel, min, da waal dried ap dat sam' night an' nae air o watter ever cam oot o 'er again, an' a' cis da grice's puddens waar cleaned i 'er. Dan du sees sheu hed tae brak oot some piece, is sheu hed niver been dry afore, sae sheu breuk oot api' da breck o Biggins whaar sheu's run sin syne, an' a fine waal sheu's teu.

EDITOR'S NOTE.

The eight settings mailing of udal land of the room of Cleckin in the town of Ireland in Stennes was sold June 9, 1708, for £90 Scots to William Halcro of Coubister, and his wife Margaret Black, by William Spence of Cleckine, son and heir of the deceased Thomas Spence of Cleckine, and grandson of the deceased Malcolm Spence. The disposition was written by George Traill, writer, Kirkwall, and the N.P. was Donald Grott. It was witnessed by Hugh Cloustone, merchant burgess of Kirkwall, his son Hendrie Cloustone, and William Groat, brother of Donald Groat. The instrument of sasine on the above was written by Robert Donaldson, N.P., and witnessed by Patrick Stove, merchant burgess of Kirkwall, James Halcro of Newbiggings, Wm. Inksetter, servitor to Mr. Robert Honyman of Gramsey, and James Grahame, servitor to the notary, and registered Nov. 11, 1709, at Kirkwall, by Ja. McKenzie.

The ancestors of the families of Halcro, of Bea and of Biggings, owned Cava, which was sold in 1707 to their distant relative, William Halcro of Coubister, who was descended from the elder branch of the Halcros of

¹gave them the first wash; ON. *bleyta*, to soak, moisten; *bleyti*, soaking; *blautr*, soaked; *blotna*, to become moist; *bloti*, a thaw.

²defile.

Cava and Houton. Cava had been left to a younger branch of the family. The family of Halcro of Aikers and Cava is now solely represented, in the male line, by John Halcro, of Hogarth in Rendal, who is the direct descendant of the eldest son of William Halcro of Aikers and Cava, who died 1595. Bea formed part of the Cava estate, and was retained by that branch of the family; and they only *sold* land in 1707 and after. Biggings is still in the possession of the descendants of this family, which also acquired Cleckine, in the nineteenth century, from the laird of Coubister.

The incident about the summons may refer to an action of multiplepounding between the Halcros of Bea and Biggings in the 18th century; while the story of the drowning of young Halcro may refer to William Halcro, heir of Coubister, who (with a party of young men from Stromness) was drowned on a voyage to Sule-skerry, the Súlna-sker of the Saga. His fiancée and first cousin, Elizabeth Johnston, was so affected by his loss that she remained a spinster all her life.

Mr. Leask's valuable and characteristic stories in the dialect (see also *Miscellany*, I., 63) are particularly instructive as to the erratic genesis and evolution of traditions regarding even recent bygone families, persons and events, as compared with the remarkable persistence and accuracy of folklore of everyday occurrences, and calendar customs—place-names, annual feasts and fasts and customs associated with them, charms and such like. Of historic events, in Saga and more recent times, not a genuine vestige of tradition remains,—excepting tales re-introduced from literary sources, and even fiction, *e.g.*, regarding the battle of Summerdale, in 1529.

—A. W. J.

ÓÐAL LAW IN ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

BY A. W. JOHNSTON.

Abbreviations:—Hkr., *Heimskringla*, "Saga Library"; Orkn., *Orkneyinga Saga*, Rolls text; P.R., Peterkin's *Rentals*.

GREEN'S *Encyclopædia of the Law of Scotland*, second edition, 1914, contains a revision of the valuable article on "Udal Law in the Orkneys and Zetland," which appeared in the first edition, by Mr. W. P. Drever, solicitor, Kirkwall, in which he gives an exhaustive digest and review of decisions by the Scottish law-courts in óðal law cases, together with a historical sketch of the subject.

The following criticisms and remarks are made in regard to the historical statements alone.

King Haraldr hárfagri (fairhair) completed the consolidation of Norway into one kingdom by his victory at the battle of Hafrsfjörðr, in 872. After this many "fled as outlaws before king Haraldr and fell to war-ringing in the West: in the winter they abode in the South-isles (Suðreyjar, now Hebrides) or the Orkneys (Orkneyjar), but a-summer harried in Norway . . . so he had his host out every summer. . . . But when the king grew weary of this work . . . he sailed with his host" and conquered Shetland and Orkney, etc. Ívarr, son of earl Rögnvaldr of Mæri, was killed in this expedition, in compensation for which the king gave Rögnvaldr the Orkneys and Shetland, which Rögnvaldr straightway gave to his brother Sigurðr, and the king at once gave the earldom to Sigurðr (Hkr., I., 111 *et seq.*). Sigurðr hinn ríki (the great) was the first earl of Orkney (Hkr., II., 168). After Sigurð's death his son, Guðormr, ruled one year and died childless, and was succeeded by his cousin, Hallaðr Rögnvaldsson, who ruled a short time, probably a year, and gave up

the earldom on account of the vikings who infested the islands and Caithness. Earl Hallaðr was succeeded by his brother Torf-Einarr, and the king gave him jarls-nafn (title of earl). Hálfðán, son of king Haraldr hárfagri, burnt earl Rögnvaldr in his house and fled to Orkney, where he was slain by the Orkneyingar and earl Torf-Einarr. King Haraldr now made his second expedition to Orkney, when "he let the Orkneyings swear him all their odal lands . . . the earl became the king's man and took all the lands in fief of the king, but was to pay no scat, whereas they lay so open to war. The earl paid the king sixty marks of gold" (Hkr. II., 168) for the slaughter of the king's son (*Flateyjarbók*, see *Orkn.* 311).

King Harald's first expedition to Orkney and the foundation of the earldom, as related above, took place several years after the battle of Hafrsfjörðr, and when Ívarr Rögnvaldsson was of a fighting age, so that it will be safe in accepting Vigfusson's conclusion (*Safn til Sögu Isl.* I., ii.) that this took place in 880, at the earliest, when (the writer has calculated) Ívarr would have been not more than sixteen years old. In those days the Norsemen became warriors at an early age, *e.g.*, king Eiríkr blóðöx (blood-axe) Haraldsson was the commander of a viking fleet when twelve years of age.

During the rule of the first three earls and the early part of the rule of the fourth earl (Torf-Einarr), the óðalsmenn thus appear to have continued in the possession of their primitive óðul (odal estates, which were not confiscated to the crown, as was the case in Norway) for payment of skatt and the rendering of military service when required by the earl. During the same period, 880-900, the earls of Orkney would have had (like those in Norway) to pay two-thirds of the skatt and land-skyld (rent of earldom estate) to the king and retain one-third for their board and costs. The earldom landed

estate at this time (the tenants of which paid landskyld), would have consisted of the confiscated estates of those víkingar in Orkney and Shetland whom king Haraldr slew, drove out and outlawed—the main part of the old earldom lands of the present day, which, being situated on the seaboard near good harbours, would have formed ideal viking stations.

In 900, king Haraldr confiscated all the óðul (odal estates) in Orkney and Shetland, in the same way as he had done in Norway, and granted them in fief (lén) to the earl, to whom the bœndr (freemen) had thereafter to pay landskyld (land-rent), and thus the bœndr or óðalsmenn became tenants *in capite*.

In 1137, earl St. Rögnvaldr, in order to raise money for the completion of St. Magnus' Cathedral, was advised by his architect (his father, Kollr) *færa lög á*, to bring up, or bring under notice, an existing law, which law was felt to be a hardship, viz., that law by which the earls had hitherto inherited all óðul after all bœndr, generation after generation, so that the heirs of those bœndr had either to redeem these óðul, generation after generation, for their own life-time, in order to regain possession of their ancestral óðul, [or otherwise they had to continue in occupation of these óðul in the capacity of hereditary tenants for payment of landskyld].

From this it is evident that the bœndr, after 900, were permitted to redeem their óðul for one lifetime and for a sum which has not been indicated, but presumably not of the full value, at twenty-four years purchase. Earl Rögnvaldr, after calling attention to this hard law, made an offer to the bœndr, which they accepted, viz., that they should buy their óðul outright, once for all, for one mark for each *plógsland* (ploughland), so that they would never require to redeem them again. As *plógsland* is an unknown term in Orkney, there can be little doubt that an original contraction, *þǫgsland* =

peningsland or *plógsland* has been wrongly extended as *plógsland*, a term known in Norway and Iceland (in literature) where *peningsland* is unknown. (*Orkn.* 132). In Dasent's and Goudie's translations, *færa lög á*, has been rendered "bring in a law" and "to pass a law," whereas it means to "bring up an existing law." (See Fritzner's *Ordbog*, s.v.. *færa med præp. á*).

It follows that the restoration of the óðul to the bœndr by earl Sigurðr hinn digri (the stout) c. 980, could only have been for the lifetime of the individual bœndr to whom he restored the lands.

Mr. Drever concludes s.v., (a) *conquest and settlement*, and (d) *udallers*, that the odal in Orkney differed from that in Norway in that it was virgin, and derived from primitive occupation, and had not been confiscated or feudalised by king Haraldr hárfagri. It has now been clearly shown that, in accordance with *Heimskringla*, not only were the Orkney and Shetland óðul confiscated and feudalised, but that, in accordance with *Orkneyinga Saga*, they remained crown and earldom property from 900 to 1137, when the bœndr were allowed to buy their lands outright. After that they held their lands for payment of skatt and were obliged to render military service, when called on, to the earl and his gœðingar or sub-feoffees.

The *Orkneyinga Saga* version of this transaction differs from that in *Heimskringla*, in that it states that the king fined the bœndr 60 gold marks, and that the earl paid the fine for the bœndr, in return for which the bœndr gave up all their óðul to the earl. So that it would thus be a bargain between the bœndr and the earl, by which all óðul became the private property of the earls. This version appears to be supported by the lack of any indication that earl Rögnvaldr, in 1137, obtained the consent of the king of Norway to the sale of the óðul to the bœndr, a consent which he would have had to have obtained if the óðul had been crown

property like the earldom lands. It is also further supported by the dispute between earl Þorfinnr hinn ríki, on the one hand, and his half-brothers and the king of Norway on the other, as to the earldom of Orkney and Shetland (including the óðul?) being the óðal inheritance of the earls. Whichever version is correct, the fact nevertheless remains that the whole lands in Orkney and Shetland were in the possession of the earls, from 900 until 1137, when they were sold outright to the bœndr; so that private property in land in Orkney and Shetland only dates from 1137 and after, and was subject to the payment of skatt and the rendering of military service when required by the earls. As any lands which were redeemed between 900 and 1137, were only held for a lifetime, after which they reverted to the earls, they cannot be looked upon as the private property of the bœndr who redeemed them, but only as the temporarily alienated private property of the earls or the crown, as the case may be.

In other words, during the period *circa* 900-1137, óðalsréttir (odal law), so far as the bœndr were concerned was in a latent state of suspended animation, and the only remaining link with the past was the existence of a peculiar custom by which the legal representatives of the original óðalsmenn were allowed the option to purchase the life-tenancy of their ancestral óðul.

The earl, as the owner of a private, family óðal (apart from the earldom or crown estate), was the sole óðalsmaðr in the islands. That the earls had private estates is proved by the *Saga*, in which we find it stated, *e.g.*, that one of the sisters of earl St. Magnus had some *eignir* (estates) and a bú as her *heimanfylgja* (dowry); while earl William Sinclair, the last earl, had extensive private estates in Orkney and Shetland, which were inherited by his children, and did not pass with the earldom to the crown of Scotland (*O. and S. Records*,

I., 97). Notwithstanding the statement in *Orkneyinga-saga*, that the earl acquired the óðul from the böendr, and not from the king, these óðul were treated as crown property by the kings of Norway, and granted in fief (lén) to the king's nominees, regardless of óðals-réttr; an explicit example is that of 1098-1103, when the native earls were dispossessed and the earldom conferred on Sigurðr, the king's son, afterwards king of Norway.

The erection of the bishopric in the Norse period took place between 995, when the islands were Christianised and planted with priests, and *circa* 1050, when earl Þorfinnr hinn ríki (the mighty) built the first cathedral or bishop's seat at Birsa in Orkney. In 1152, Nidaros was erected into the metropolitan see of Norway, including Orkney, and the bishops, who had hitherto been missionary bishops, were given constitutional chapters; hence the bishop of Orkney, who was in office at the time of the erection of the metropolitan see, was called in the saga, "the first bishop of Orkney." Mr. Drever places the erection of the bishopric as *circa* 1202. Possibly 1202 is in error for 1102, when William "the first bishop of Orkney" is said to have been consecrated.

The origin of tithes in Orkney must be the same as that in the rest of the kingdom of Norway, viz., imposed by law in 1112-1130 by king Sigurðr jórsalafari (Hkr.). The same Sigurðr who had been earl of Orkney from 1098 to 1103 when he became king. The Norse line of earls in the male line came to an end at the death of earl Erlendr in 1154, and the Norse line on the female side terminated with the assassination of earl St. Rögnvaldr in 1158. The Celtic lines of earls on the distaff side are as follows: Atholl, 1139-1231; Sutherland (earl Haraldr úngi) 1196; the Atholl line was succeeded by the Angus line in 1231, but their Norse descent is unknown (probably through a sister of earl Haraldr úngi), to which succeeded their descendants the Strathearne

earls; and they by their descendants the Lowland-Norman family of St. Clair, which gave up the earldom to the Scottish crown.

Founding on unauthenticated literary sources,¹ Mr. Drever states that the *youngest son* inherited the head house of an óðal, and he entirely ignores the testimony of numerous records (which agree with New Gulathing Law) that the *eldest son* alone enjoyed this privilege. (See *Saga-Book* VI., 305). The following references will suffice: Orkney, 1514, "he sall bruk . . . the principale chemeis place . . . as eldest bruthir," *O. and S. Records*, I., 255; Shetland, 1516-1545, "chose for himself as a head buil . . . and the said . . . was the oldest brother and had therefore the first choice," Goudie's *Shetland*, pp. 81, 82, 84, 95; 1610, "the eldest brother had na farder prerogative abone the rest of his brether except the first choice of the pairtis and parcillis of the landis divydit," Peterkin's *Notes*, app. p. 96.

There appears to be absolutely no doubt that the Orkney Lawbook was New Gulathing Law, with this variation, that the Orkney and Shetland *things* remained primary assemblies and were not attended by delegates as in Norway. Each legislative district in Norway had a separate section of the law dealing with the constitution of its legislature. The writer has gone fully into this subject in the *Introduction* to *O. and S. Records*, I., and need not repeat the evidence here beyond restating that the feoffees of the earldom in 1420, and after, undertook to rule the islands according to the Norwegian law-book (New Gulathing Law), and that in 1538 a Shetland court gave its decision in

¹ Gifford's *Description*, which gives a traditional or unauthenticated account of a custom which had ceased, he says, 70 years before he wrote:—the same author who, in the same passage, states that daughters and sons inherited equal shares of landed property! Traditions regarding extinct laws and customs are usually incorrect and often the opposite of fact.

accordance with Gulathing Law. It is certified, in 1422, that James of Cragy, in Orkney, had been a trusty observer of the laws of the king of Norway (*O. and S. Records*, I., 41, 43). In every recorded instance Orkney and Shetland law corresponds with New Gulathing Law, so far as the writer has examined the evidence. Norwegian records, while lacking the slightest indication that Orkney and Shetland (like Iceland) had a local code of laws, bear evidence to the fact that these islands were subject to the same law as the rest of the kingdom of Norway. Unless conclusive evidence to the contrary is produced, it must, therefore, be taken for granted, and there is no excuse to suppose otherwise than, that the islands were subject to the ordinary law of Norway.

The Shetland term *scattald* was applied, in 1576, to an inhabited township, including its *hagi* or enclosed pasture: "nichtbouris that dwellis within ane scathald" (Balfour's *Oppressions*, pp. 46, 47, 49, 88, and *Glossary*, s.v.). The *hagi* was part and parcel and the exclusive property of the township, it was undivided, and was shared in common by the township, *pro indiviso*. The *hagi* was quite separate from the commons proper (the hills and moors), and was the private landed property of the township. In the 18th century the term *scattald* got restricted to the *hagi*, but the genuine term *hagi* was preserved in the legal term *hogleave*, leave or permission given, for a consideration, to outsiders to make use of a *scattald* other than their own.

The statement that, in Shetland, skatt was paid for the use of the *scattald* (or *hagi*) is entirely founded on unauthenticated literary sources¹ and is without foundation in fact. The mere fact that the owner of arable land which became ley, or uncultivated, paid no skatt

¹ Hibbert's *Shetland* (quoting traditions or unauthenticated statements from Gifford's *Description*).

and still retained his right to the scattald, should be sufficient to disprove this. It is a fable similar to the youngest son's alleged right to the head house (see *Saga-Book*, IV., 248, *et. seq.*). Skatt was only paid for cultivated land so long as it remained under cultivation, and was assessed on the pennyland valuation.

Both Orkney and Shetland were divided into pennylands, eighteen of which made an eyrisland or ounce-land; the penny and the eyrir represent the amount of the rent paid in silver at the time the valuation was made, probably in 880. The division of the ounce, or $\frac{1}{8}$ mark, into 18 pennies is not of Scottish origin, as $\frac{1}{8}$ Scots mark = 20 pennies. However, the Shetland currency mark was reckoned as 12s., $\frac{1}{8}$ of which = 18 pennies, and this probably explains the origin of the above enumeration (*O. and S. Records*, I., 71, 74).

The eyrislands were, at a later date, revalued at their purchase price in marks of gold. Rent valuation is usually in silver, and purchase valuation in gold; but as the lands in Orkney and Shetland were in such small lots, the latter is, with one exception, always given in silver marks of 13s. 4d. each. The later mark valuation was used as the basis for dividing óðul, and for charging rent, while the earlier eyrisland valuation continues to this day as that on which skatt is rated.

In Shetland there is only one record of the pennyland valuation, viz., in 1299, when the purchase price of a pennyland in Papey was valued at 1 gold mark = 8 silver marks, and the rent was rated on the silver marks (*O and S. Records*, I., 38, 39).

In Orkney the pennyland varied at from 1 to 20 marks in value, while in Shetland there is only the one instance mentioned above. In Orkney, rent was rated on the mark valuation down till the 17th century, while in Shetland it only occurs in the above record. In the 16th century and after, in Shetland, rent

was charged, at greatly varying rates, on the basis of the mark valuation, and was expressed in pennies—the penny representing the “Shetland payment” or currency value of the actual produce paid as rent—the writer made this discovery. The rent was paid in cloth (vaðmál) and butter, while the skatt was paid in butter and oil, and leiðangr (war tax), the true skatt, was paid in calf-skins or cloth. Orkney and Shetland payment or currency was (like the Icelandic currency) a fixed conventional price of produce, evidently of sterling value, and consequently fixed before Scots money began to be greatly depreciated. The last relic of this currency in Orkney occurs in 1500 (P.R., I.) where 1 spann = 21 “pennies” of butter, valued at 1s. 4d. Scots, while 1 lispund was valued at 4d., and 1 barrel at 6s. 8d. Scots; so that 5 spans = 20 lispund = 1 barrel butter in current market value. In Shetland the currency value or “Shetland payment” of produce was as follows:—

CLOTH (vaðmál).

ells.	Shetland Payment.	Scots 1628.	Stg. 1628.
1	2d. vaðmál.	4s.	4d.
6	1s. „	24s.	2s.
60 (a pak)	10s. „	240s.	20s.

BUTTER.

lispunds.	Shetland Payment.	Scots 1628.	Stg. 1628.
$\frac{1}{2}$ (4 marks)	1d. butter.	8s.	8d.
1	6d. „	48s.	4s.
12 (1 barrel)	6s. „	576s.	48s.

These figures are taken from a MS. rental with the Viking Society, and will also be found in Goudie's *Shetland*, 178.

A clever instance of Scottish grabbing, in 1576, will be found in Balfour's *Oppressions*, 27. When the taxpayers brought too much cloth to the collector the surplus was taken and paid for at the currency rate, viz., 2d. per ell, *but in Scots money*; while, when too little

was tendered, the deficiency was charged for at the then market price of 2s. Scots per ell!

In Shetland the cloth and butter paid in rent was in the proportion of two-thirds in cloth currency and one-third in butter currency, called "Shetland payment." Each "penny" in the mark of land (4d. to 12d. per mark), paid exactly one penny currency value of cloth and butter in rent, hence the term "penny in the mark of land."

The following table shows the uniform rent paid in 1628, 1716 and later. This has been compiled from the MS. rentals of these dates, and corresponds with the rents mentioned in various documents in *O. and S. Records*, I.

RENT OF "ONE PENNY IN THE MARK OF LAND," 1628.

	Shetland.	Scots.	stg.
Cloth $\frac{1}{3}$ ell (at 2d. currency per ell)	$\frac{2}{3}$ d. vaðmál	= 1s. 4d.	= 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ d.
Butter 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ mark (at 1d. currency per 4 mk.)	$\frac{1}{3}$ d. butter	= 2s. 8d.	= 2 $\frac{2}{3}$ d.
	<hr/> 1d.	<hr/> 4s.	<hr/> 4d.

From the fact that skatt, in Shetland, varies in amount on the marks of land, it is evident that it is still rated on the lost pennyland valuation. The writer hopes to recover instances other than that of the Papey pennyland, from which he will be able to restore the pennyland valuation of Shetland.

With regard to weights and measures, it has already been shown that the spann was (as in Norway) a measure of capacity. It has never been equated with the lispund, nor has it ever been divided into 24 marks.¹ The lispund must also have been originally the Norwegian lispund (*linspund*), 20 of which = 1 skippund = 24 vættir (each of which is 28 $\frac{5}{6}$ marks), so that 1 lispund = 34 $\frac{2}{3}$ marks, and not 24 as reckoned in Orkney and Shetland in 1500 and after. The Norwegian bismar-

¹ i. e. in contemporary records.

pund = 24 marks, and as the Orkney lispunds were weighed on the bismar, possibly the division of 24 marks got shifted on to the lispund, or otherwise the term *lispund* may have been applied to the bismarpund.

In Shetland (and Orkney), in 1299, the setting (*séttungr*), meil (*mællir*) and sáld were corn measures of capacity, as in Norway, whereas in Orkney and Shetland, in 1500 and after, a setting was a weight = 1 lispund.

The lighter bere-pundar weight made its appearance in the 16th century, and may preserve the original weight before it was increased by the Stewart earls; the difference between bere- and malt-pundar weight corresponds nearly with the alleged increase of the weights made by the Stewarts.

All students of this subject should be deeply indebted to Mr. Drever for his excellent work, and it is to be hoped that his two articles in the *Encyclopædia* will be printed and published by themselves, so that they may be obtained by the many people who are interested in the question from a literary or legal point of view.

NOTE.—*Orkneyinga* (pp. 10, 15) and *Heimskringla*, are explicit in stating that the óðul had remained in the earls' possession circa 900-980; so that, up till 980, advantage had not been taken by the option to purchase life-tenancies. In 1137, it is merely related that the "heirs" had hitherto had the option of purchasing life-tenancies without any indication being given as to whether such an option had been taken advantage of. But it is explicitly stated that the option to purchase the óðul outright (thereby obviating the necessity of redeeming them again in the future), was agreed to by the earl and the bóendr, at a þing specially called for that purpose (*Orkn.*, p. 132). One thing appears to be clear, that during 900-1137 (237 years), the descendants of the original óðalsmenn had remained in the occupation of their ancestral lands.

It is not stated whether the whole óðul were bought, so that some may have remained, and may still remain, as part of the earldom estate.

The position, in 1137 and after, would be, that such lands as were bought back, were, thereafter, held by purchase, of the earl, as coming in the place of the crown, and subject to the burden of skatt and military service, etc.

Odal Inheritance.—The writer has now definitely traced the source of Wallace's and Gifford's statements regarding this subject, to Wallace's correspondent, sir Robert Sibbald. In Sibbald's *Description of Shetland*, 1711 (reprint, 1845, p. 31), he prints a list of words derived "from an old manuscript written a hundred years ago, and sent to sir James Balfour, Lord Lyon, amongst whose collections I [Sibbald] found it." Wallace's "Norish words" is a copy of this list, including the article on *Gavelkind*, which is slightly varied in the wording, while Gifford gives an amplified version of *Gavelkind* (reprint, p. 47). All these accounts state that sons and daughters inherited lands and movables equally, and the youngest son got the dwelling-house, in addition to his share. The MS. from which this absurdity was derived, is alleged to have been sent to Balfour *circa* 1611 (*i.e.*, 1711—100) [when he was 11 years old!], and at a time when it was attested by the sheriff-depute of Orkney and Shetland, in a legal document of 1610, that, in Shetland, landed property and heritage was divided among brothers and sisters in the proportion of "two sisters' parts for one brother's part," and that the eldest brother had the first choice of the parts—which is otherwise expressed, in legal documents, as "the first choice of the dwelling-house." (Peterkin's *Notes*, app., p. 96.)

The fact that the earliest MSS. of this "List of Words" and of Jo. Ben.'s *Descriptio* have been traced to sir James Balfour, through Sibbald, suggests the probability of Balfour having been either the author of these forgeries, or hoaxed by having them sent to him by the forgers or misinformed authors.

The end of the 16th and the first half of the 17th century, when these "MSS." were written, was the period of topographers in Scotland—Scott, Pont, Gordon, and Balfour. The only clergyman in Orkney at that time, whose name bears any resemblance to "Jo. Ben.," was John Bonar, incumbent of North Ronaldsey, in 1593 (*Fasti*). Curiously enough that island is the first one mentioned in the *Descriptio*, and it receives the fullest account, while the two adjoining islands of Sandey and Stronsey, which come next in order, likewise receive fuller accounts than the other islands, as though the author were better acquainted with them—he, personally, gave spiritual advice to a sea-monster-ridden woman in Stronsey.

Weights.—Evidence of the increase of the weights is apparent in the table, p. 57, *ante*, in which the relative value of $\frac{1}{2}$ ell of cloth and $1\frac{1}{2}$ mark of butter is 2 : 1, in "Shetland payment," and 1 : 2, in 1628; *i.e.*, $1\frac{1}{2}$ mark of butter had increased in value from $\frac{1}{2}$ to twice the value of $\frac{1}{2}$ ell of cloth, or four times more than before.

HOOLABY YORL AND DA GÖIDFIKS.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF FAIR ISLE,
IN THE DIALECT.

BY GEO. W. STOUT.

Pronunciation:—*á*, as in father.

ā, *ae*, *māte*.

ē, *ee*, *meet*.

ī, *fiend*.

ī, *find*.

ó, *mote*.

ú, *oo*, *flute*.

ö, *ü*, French, *few*.

I DAT days, *fí*ás, gret an' triflin', göid *fār* *ī* da mak up o' a Fríley, if no ony Shetlander; an' for da sak o' daim it (*that*) kensna, we sall tak, for example, da story o' a mild *fī*ēg, ane o' Yorl's last trials apo da face a' dis erth. Dis wiz whin da parrafian lamps first cam ta Ile, an' thó Yorl himsel didna lik ta dö awa wi' da auld creeshy puller, even thó hit dreepit saithe öly apo his báld skult, when he wiz sittan shewan a joop anunder hit, he himsel tocht it (*that*) da lów o' da new lamp wiz *fār* brichter!

Bit to'r tēl. Hit wiz *ē* blashy nicht, late a hairst-time, it (*that*) wir bold fölla wiz nearly driven út o' 'is wits—a' trow da cause o' a rinklin lamp. Hit wiz blawin a pure stinker wasterly, an' Yorl an' his bridder wiz iz ticht anunder der auld Fríle claith-webs, iz dey cöid smuggle, an' da doors o' da auld box-bed wiz drawin dat ticht it (*that*) a blue lów cöidna escapit.

So, iz Aw's sayin', *ī* da very middle o' da nicht, Yorl waukened up wi' a gluff, fae da laand a' Nod, (lakely tinkin on his aet skrús, some o' hit, be dis time, micht be nearer Norwa, wi' da gale), an' sat up a bed. Suddenly, *ī* da very hicht o' da stórm, a peerie rinklin soond, lik a bell, wiz borne on his lugs, an' a cauld shiver begöid ta crál up his rig. In a' his döins wi' da bokies, niver afore had he heard da lik, an', in his

romised state, hit soounded a' da waer—lik very ongaens o' da bokies dimsells—an' iz he efterlans sed: "Hit yüst began wi' a öink, in' keepit on da sam wye!" Unable ta stánd it ony langer he rakid his bridder, Sjhorm, wi' a nudge a side, leetan till 'im: "Boy! wauken, d'er bokies a but-end!" Bit he micht as weel tried ta wauken da Sheep Craig wi' a nudge, thó, in da end, after mony a shikle, Sjhorm got up, wi' a faerless: "Be dú blyde my sjhewel," deep doon in his creg, shöived da bed doors apart, an' hánd in hánd awa dey went. Winnan ta but-end at lent, bit no 'ithút makin' iz muckle din iz dey cöid, ta fly da bokies, knockin ower stöills, daffiks, creepies an' sík-lik, an' wi' da cauld draps brakin út ower dim, wi' faer, dey at lent fan da seat a' da evil speerit—nothin' more or less or da auld tin lamp, hingin rinklin a reip, its möivment caused be da shiklan i da auld feely röif wi' da gale. Dis, indeed, micht A be aloood ta sää, it (*that*) for da time it (*that*) dis happened, hid widna 'a withstöid löikin intil at da hánds o' a less frichted man or Yorl an' his bridder; for Yorl, himsel, wiz a göid auld brug o'm, an' it wiz sed it (*that*) nader wind or water cöid turn 'im.

Da gretest trial o' his daa happened ēnz, thó lang years gon, in' whin Yorl wiz in his prime, in whin dat time o' da Frile history wiz, or rader söid 'a been, taen doon, it (*that*) bokies war seen in very deed.

Aboot da time it da lamp thing töik place, da "Bokie Age," so ta spek, wiz still in its glory, thó, believe dú me, hit had rakid da time whin *no one sowl sá dim*, a fac it (*that*) tokened da licht it (*that*) wiz beginnan ta creep in.

Bit whin Yorl wiz a yung sheelder, an' fairt for nothin, an' haed, in very reality, come in contact wi' dim, a' body (*everyone*) (da mair or less faerless craturs onywey) had haed some kind o' passin wi' da peerie úmags a' deel-föik (*i.e.*, of dale-folk—the fairies).

Weel, hit happened dis wye. Yorl wiz coomin hem fa his coortin e nicht (bokies wirr maistly seen be yung anes gaen hem fa lasses a mornin!), an' ha'in ta pass da Sköil burn, it (*that*) rins by Burkle on its wye ta Hestigia, he first tocht he saw da göidfiks sittan a watter, suppin horse dirt ato' (*out of*) silver ladles. Kens da, A canna tell yah richtly, for da details o' da calámetry wiz niver hánded doon ta prospērity, an' it's no on record if Yorl partöik o' da ' göid ' stuff doy'r aetin, bit dis fac remains, an' it söid dö da möst critical, it (*that*) Yorl, poor sowl, wiz carried snap aff, lock, stock an' barrel, for a while.

Iz (*as*) till his trials, trow da nicht, wi' da göid-fiks, he wiz ever silent on; but whin da grey, cauld voar mornin' begöid ta lichten, a search perty fan Yorl, stiff an' cauld, thó no deed, on da rig o' his back, in' 'athoot his bonnet, on da tap o' Meoness, faer, faer fa da Sköil burn. "Da bokies göid aff wi' me," wiz da öonly thing he wad sã, efter dey got him back ta life again.

GLOSSARY.

WITH DERIVATIONS BY THE EDITOR.

A, I; Aw's, I was.	creepie, a small stool.
a, on, in, during, ON. á.	creeshy (applied to wool treated in fish or seal oil) greasy, Sco.
'a, have.	creish, creishy.
a', af, of.	creg, throat.
a', all.	da, the.
anunder, under, beneath, ON. inn undir.	daffik, a wooden water pail, Gaelic, dabhach.
at, out, in 'ato' ladles', out of l.	daim, them.
'athoot, without.	dat, that.
begöid, began.	dem, them.
bokie, bogie, ON. bokki, a man.	d'er, there are.
bridder, brother.	dey, they.
brug, a strong healthy person, cf. ON.	dim, them.
bragr manna, best of men,	dimsells, themselves.
brokkr, a trotter, of a horse;	dis, this.
but more probably Gaelic brogach, a sturdy fellow.	esterlans, afterwards.
claith-webs, clothwebs, old term for Fair Isle homespun.	fac, fact.
cöid, could.	fae, from.
	fairt, feared.

fan, *found*.
 fār, *far*.
 feely, *made of sods*.
 flæg, *fright*, Eng. Sco. fleg, *to frighten*.
 flías, *frights*, Eng. Sco. flay, *a fright*.
 fly, *to frighten away*.
 föllo, *fellow*.
 Frile, *Fair Isle*, Saga name, *Friðarey*.
 Friley, *Fair Islander*.
 fú, *how*.
 gluff, *to frighten*, ON. glúpna.
 göid, *went*.
 göidfiks, *good-folks, fairies*.
 hairst, *harvest*.
 hem, *home*.
 hit, *hid, it*.
 i, *in*, ON. í.
 in', *and, in' whin, and when; can this be ON. en, but*.
 ir, *our*.
 it, *that*, ON. at.
 'ithút, *without*.
 iz, *as*.
 joop, *shirt, jump, jumper*.
 leetin, *speaking*, ON. láta, *to let, in the sense to say* (Ox. Dict. s.v., 5).
 lent, *length*, ON. lengd.
 lów, *flame*, ON. log.
 nader, *neither*.
 öink, ON. ynkr, *a din; the meaning is now lost in Fair Isle, and the word is alone used in this story*.
 öly, *oil*, ON. olea.
 or, *than*.
 parrafian, *paraffin*.
 prosperity, *posterity*.
 puller, *cruisie* (lamp) ON. ampli, ampúll, ampullr, ampulla, ampulli, *a small jar (of oil, etc.)*. Latin, ampulla, French, ampoule.

rader, *rather*.
 rakid, *reached*, ON. rétta, *to stretch out, t > k in some cases*.
 reip, *rope*, ON. reip.
 rig, *backbone*, ON. hryggr.
 rinklin, *a tinkling sound*, ON. hringla, *to clatter, rattle*.
 romised (Shetland, ramist, Sco. ramisht, Norse, romsen), *not had enough sleep*.
 sá, *saw*.
 saithe, *the coal fish*, ON. seiðr.
 sheelder, Sco. chield, *a fellow*.
 shewan, *sewing*.
 shikle, *to shake*.
 sík, *such*, Sco. sic., ON. slíkr.
 sill, *shall*.
 sjhewel, *jewel*.
 sköil, *school*, ON. skóli.
 skrús, (*corn*) *stacks*, ON. skrúf.
 söid, *should*.
 stöills, *stools*, ON. stóll.
 tæl, *tale*, ON. tal.
 thó, *though*, ON. pó.
 tocht, *thought*.
 trow, *through*.
 úmags, ON. úmagi, *helpless person, one who cannot maintain himself; a law term relating to the duty of maintenance as regards children, aged people, paupers and persons disabled by sickness*.
 út, *out*, ON. út.
 waer, *worse*, ON. verr, verri.
 whin, *when*.
 winnan, *winning, gaining*, ON. vinna.
 wir, *our*, ON. várr, Icel. vor.
 wiz, *was*.
 yah, *you*.
 yust, *just*.

Person-names.—In ordinary conversation, in Fair Isle, a person was called by his Christian name, preceded by that of his house, e.g., Hoolaby Yorl, i.e., Yorl (*surname*) of Hoolaby, Pund Roby—Roby . . .

of Pund, Shirva Willie, Shedlar Tammy, etc., in the same way as in Iceland at the present day.

"Fair Isle" may have been a folk translation of the original Saga name, *Fríðar-ey* (i.e. *Fríð*'s-isle; *Fríðr*, gen. *Fríðar*, a woman's name—from *fríðr*, adj., fair, beautiful—and *ey*, fem., an island), which may have become shortened to **Fríð-ey* or **Frey* (cf. *Sand-fríðar-ey* > *Sam-frey*), and so taken to represent *Fríðey*, Fair-isle. If so, this would have taken place before 1572, when the form "insula de Fairyle" occurs (O. and S. Records, I., 179). As an example of a translated name, in Shetland, may be mentioned Brother Isle, from a probable original **Bróður-ey* (Jakobsen).

"Fríle," the modern local name, appears to be a contracted form, *Frí-isle*, of Fair-isle; and *Fríley*, a Fair-islander (ON. *Fríðarey-ingr*, sing., -ingar, pl.) appears to be *Fríle+y*, dim. suff.

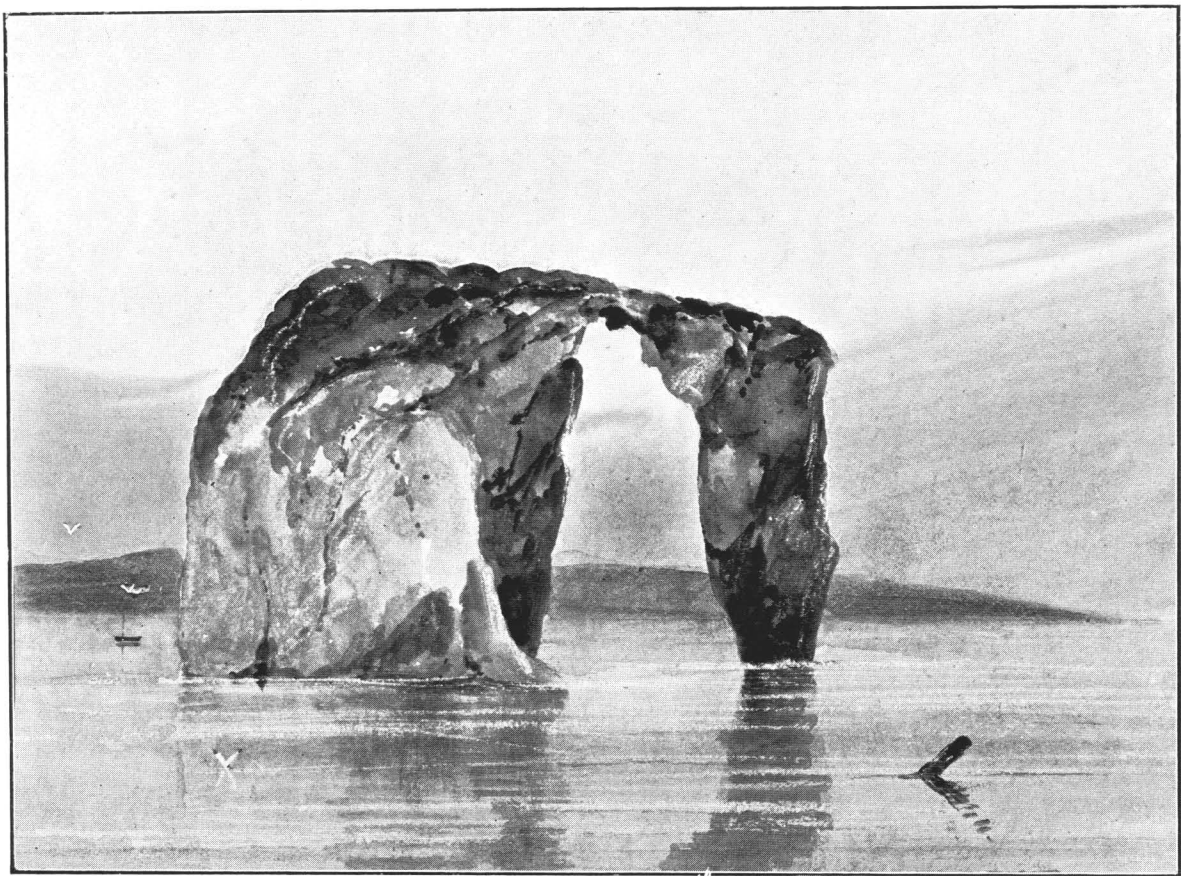
The tautology, **Frey-isle* (= *Fríle*), is possible, but improbable, as none of the many similar tautological examples occur in Shetland.

NEWS NOTES.

John O' Groat Journal. An interesting account is given of No. 1 of the transactions of the Scottish Dialects Committee, which was appointed seven years ago by the Council of the Scottish branch of the English Association to arrange for the collection of materials in the Scottish Dialects (August 28). Former Caithnessian soldiers, with incidents in their lives, by H. (October 23, 30). Pulteney Notes by "Cairnduna," with a note on a Waterloo veteran, Major Geddes of Canisby, whose nephew, William Geddes, had published a book in 1855 "On emigration to New South Wales" (October 30). The Gunns of Houstry, Dunbeath, by Rev. George Sutherland, Bruan (August 28). Notes on Janetstown and Milton, Wick, and the late Mr. John Barnettson, tenant of Lower Milton farm, with reminiscences of fifty years ago (August 28). Hallowe'en, some old observations described by "Observer"—castin' glesses—salt cutties (oatcakes)—wechts and winnowing—simmons, screws and sweethearts—apples—kail stocks—divots—burning peas (October 23).

Northern Chronicle. Frasers of Belladrum, by A. M. D., with a list of the men enlisted for the Honble. Colonel Fraser's regiment by James Fraser, in 1757 (October 14, November 25).

Shetland News. Mansie's Röd (continued weekly). A translation of the charter of Lerwick which was erected into a burgh of barony in 1818 (April 11).



DOREHOLM, SHETLAND.

From the original water-colour drawing by G. Richardson, in Dr. Edward Charlton's "Visit to Shetland in 1832."

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND.

VOL. VIII.

PART II.

APRIL, 1915.

NOTES.

ORKNEY FISHERMEN IN IRELAND.—Dean Swift wrote from Ireland to Francis Grant, in a letter dated “Dublin, March 23, 1733-4”:—“A gentleman of this kingdom, about three years ago, joined with some others in a fishery here, in the northern parts; they advanced two hundred pounds by way of trial: they got men from Orkney to cure their fish, who understood it well. But the vulgar folks of Ireland are so lazy and so knavish, that it turned to no account, nor would anybody join with them; and so the matter fell, and they lost two-thirds of their money.” [Correspondence of Jonathan Swift, D.D., edited by F. Elkington Ball, Vol. V., p. 65].—A. FRANCIS STEUART.

THE FALL OF HALMADARY (*Gaelic: Tuiteam Halma-dairigh*), (See *Miscellany*, Vol. VII., p. 167).—In connection with the Tongue Presbytery minute reference to the above extraordinary affair the following extract may be quoted from a paper on “The Influence of the Norse Invasion,” read to the Gaelic Society of Inverness by the Rev. Neil MacKay, Croick, now U.F. minister, Strathly:—“Here is a story in connection with the little village of Halmadary, on the top of Strathnaver, which, in my opinion, illustrates nothing more than the terrible power and tenacity of Norse heathen ideas. The *Fear* of Halmadary had begun to hold prayer meetings at his house, and the inhabitants of the surrounding district attended them. One day, after the people had assembled, and the services were proceeded with, a large raven was seen, in the dim light, sitting on the *coilbh*. The worshippers all instinctively felt that it

was an evil spirit, and they became conscious of a dark and powerful fascination. Meanwhile the curiosity of the neighbours around was aroused by seeing that, though it was getting late, the meeting was not being dismissed. One after another went in to see what might be the reason, but, once in, they were seized with the spirit that possessed the worshippers, and they did not return to tell the tale. The night passed, and so did the following day and night, and the meeting was not dismissed. At the end of that time the people who had assembled from the country around decided to take the roof off the house, and when this was done the spell that bound the worshippers was broken. It is said, however, that some of them never shook off the effects of the influence under which they were brought, and that they showed great reluctance in telling how they had been engaged during that time. It, however, transpired that they had decided to offer a human sacrifice to the spirit, and that the victim fixed upon was the *Fear's* son. A servant in the house had enough of reason left to protect the child, and thus a terrible crime was prevented. The good people of Sutherlandshire called this event Tuiteam Halmadary, and not wishing that so much dark superstition should ever be seen associated with Christian worship, they discourage enquiry into it. The general idea is that the event took place about the end of the seventeenth century. [The Presbytery minute, dated 2nd March, 1749, refers to it as 'a melancholy scene that happened several years ago in one of these unauthorised meetings at Halmadary.'] My own opinion is that the story takes us back to the time when the Norse settlers were renouncing Paganism, or at least to a period when Thor was yet an object of popular dread. Thor is always represented as the determined foe of all who forsook the old faith, and he had two ravens, Mind and Memory, which acted for him in the world. Some such

beliefs as these would seem to have been held by the people of this retired Norse hamlet, and to have led to their putting into practice some of the worst features of the religion of their ancestors.”—(*Trans. Gael. Soc., Inverness*, xx., 99, 100).

OGANG.—In *O. and S. Records*, I., 338, this is explained as “applied to district courts in O. dealing with boundaries.” The correct derivation has now been found. In the first place here are a few references to these courts: 1502, in Eistarbustare in Holme $1\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland had gone astray, “and can nocht be gottin quhill (*until*) owgang and landemaris be thereon.” It had evidently been recovered by 1595, when we find the full number of pennylands stated (P.R. Nos. I. and II.). “An ogang and a doom dempt” in 1509 and 1519 regarding boundaries (*O. and S. Records*, I., 251, 61). 1587, lord Robert Stewart held “courts of perambulation and overgangs” on lands from which the owners were evicted. These lands were re-conveyed to the former owners: “all and haill his udall lands, quoylands and other heritages whatsoever, evicted and become in his lordship’s hands be way and manner of perambulation and overgangs, holden thereupon” (P. Notes, 126-7). In this instance “overgangs” is explained in E.D.D. as “a right of way”! In the Aberd. Reg., “the ourgang and boundis of the town” is explained in Jamieson as *extent*. *Overgang* in Scotland means *superintendence*, *oversight*, but in the above instances the writer would suggest that it means *judicial inspection*, being a translation of O.N. *yfir-ferð*, inspection (*ganga yfir*, to inspect or visit); in the same way as *jafnaðar-maðr* is translated *equal-man*, umpire, arbitrator, as opposed to a *meistara-maðr*, a learned man (a lawyer). *Landimere*, *landemeer*, *landsmark*, *lange-mark*, are Scottish terms for boundaries or marches, “to ride the landimeres,” to examine the boundaries,

landsmark, langemark, or landimeres-day, which in Lanark, was held upon the day after Whitsun-day fair (E.D.D.). Landimere is from O.N. *landa-mæri*, a landmark, boundary (also in the forms: *landa-mark, landa-merki, rá, rá-merki, merki*, etc.). The phrase “overgang and landimeres” therefore means: an inspection of the boundaries.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

“RECORDS OF THE EARLDOM OF ORKNEY.” Edited for the Scottish History Society by J. Storer Clouston.—Although a review of this book will be given in the *Year-Book*, it will be as well to call attention here to some inaccuracies and misrepresentations which it contains, reflecting on *Orkney and Shetland Records*, Vol. I., of the Viking Society, especially on the Introduction.

Mr. Clouston’s quotations
and deductions:

Mr. Johnston says that the odallers “were indiscriminately, rich and poor, described as *góðir-menn*: good men, *i.e.*, good, honest and respectable men.” No evidence is quoted to support this view. . . . But the question is really one for a Scandinavian scholar to answer, and Dr. Edvard Bull has done so, etc. (p. xciii.).

Actual passages from
O. and S. Records:

The óðals-bœndr were all, rich and poor . . . eligible for nomination as members of the lögrétta . . . and, as such, they were indiscriminately, rich and poor, described as *góðir-menn*: good men, *i.e.*, good, honest and respectable men; whereas the rich, the well-born and leading men, or rulers, who were members of the hirðmannastefna, were, as such, appropriately described as the “gentles” of the country (p. li.).

Note.—Mr. Clouston's quotation makes Mr. Johnston say that *all* the óðalsmenn were *góðir-menn*, whereas Mr. Johnston only described those óðalsmenn who were *members of the lögrétta* as *góðir-menn*. Mr. Johnston's definition of *góðir-menn* as a forensic term, is quoted from the glossarium of the "Old Norse Laws," which is cited in his *authorities*. Mr. Clouston quotes Dr. Bull's definition of *góðir-menn*, in its social application, as *gentlemen*, and applies that meaning to its political application to members of the assize, who, he thereby attempts to prove, were well-born and leading gentlemen, as compared with the other óðalsmenn. That the assize included very poor, as well as rich landed men, is capable of ample proof.

Mr. Johnston [is of] the opinion that the Lawthing of Orkney was a primary assembly which proceeded to elect its own lögrétta on the spot (lxxxiii., note 2).

The lawthing [was] a primary legislature, by whose consent acts were adopted, while legal decisions were given by an assize (lögrétta) chosen from the assembly (xxxvii.).

Note.—Mr. Clouston misrepresents Mr. Johnston as saying that the assize was *elected by*, instead of *chosen from* the assembly. The Scottish forensic term *chosen*, nominated, is used in documents recording the decisions of the Orkney courts, and corresponds to the original Old Norse terms: *nefna* and *nemna*, to nominate, *nefnd*, nomination, *nefndar-maðr*, a nominated member of a court—the nomination or choice being made exclusively by the government officials, without any vestige of popular election; it being, however, provided that the nominees had to be representative of districts.

Several passages purporting to illustrate the Lawthing from this source [*Orkneyinga Saga*] are quoted [by Mr. Johnston] (lxxxiv.).

Thing (afterwards Löging). The references in the Saga to the *thing* and laws are as follows (xxvii.-xxix.).

Note.—Mr. Johnston gave all the references in the Saga to the *things*, without discrimination. The *Law-thing* does not make its appearance until after the adoption of the "New Norse Laws," in 1276, and corresponds with the Norwegian name for the legislature, in that Code.

In refutation of Mr. Johnston's opinion (p. xxxv.),

that there were precisely similar officials in Orkney and Shetland (in the Norse Law Period—down to *circa* 1611), Mr. Clouston cites (pp. lxix.-lxxiii.) alleged evidence of 1696 and 1733 (the Scottish Law Period), to show that whereas there was only one *lawrightman* in each parish in Shetland, there were, he alleges, no less than 38 in South Ronaldsey (two parishes), in Orkney; notwithstanding the fact that the term *lawrightmen* in Orkney was an alternative one for *rancellors*, and that these officers are only to be compared with the similar *rancelmen* in Shetland, of whom there were also an unlimited number in each parish, precisely as in Orkney, and with identical inquisitorial or “searching” duties. Both terms are used, indiscriminately, in the “Country Acts” of Orkney in 1644 (Barry’s *History*, 1808 ed., pp. 482, 483; see also Low’s *Tour*, 204, Wallace’s *Description*, reprint, 105). The single parochial *lawrightman* in Orkney had vanished altogether.

Mr. Clouston (pp. xci., 292, 335, twice) calls special attention to alleged errors in *O. and S. Records*, whereas these are all corrected in the *errata* which was before him.

The damaging effect of these misrepresentations is now being felt, as Mr. Johnston has already been misquoted from Mr. Clouston’s book, on the innocent assumption of the accuracy of a publication of the Scottish History Society.

The book contains 241 documents, the majority of which have now been printed for the first time, some are summarised, and translations are given of Latin and Norse deeds. Mr. Clouston has appended twenty-five genealogical tables of Orkney families. Facsimiles are given of two documents of 1440 and 1489-90, and of the seals of a jury in 1584.

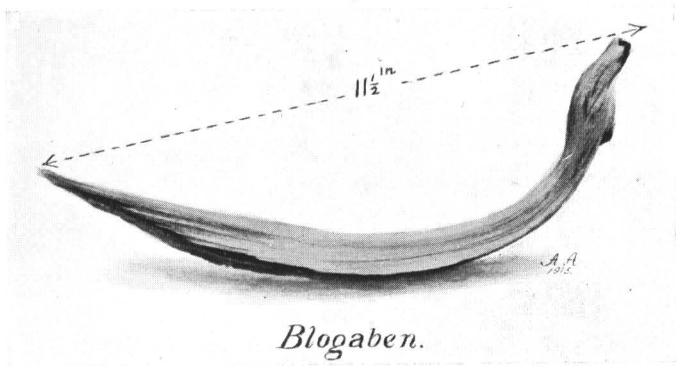
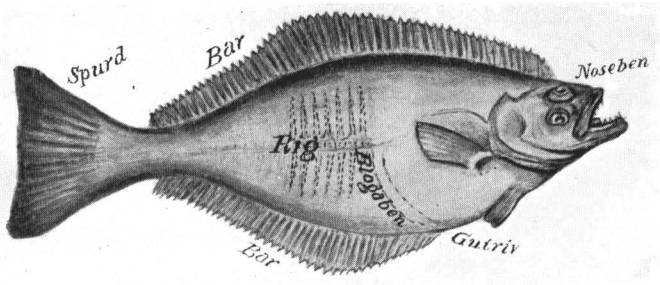
“AN OLD HIGHLAND FENCIBLE CORPS.”—This is decidedly one of the most interesting military histories

that has appeared for some time. While in the first place it makes its appeal to the people of Sutherland and Caithness, it is by no means limited to them. Captain Scobie has brought together a mass of information in connection with the Reay Fencible Highland Regiment of Foot, or MacKay's Highlanders (1794-1802). The brave deeds of this well-known regiment are recounted with a fulness of detail that leaves nothing to be desired. To readers whose tastes lie in other directions than the triumphs of the sword and the stirring heroism of the battlefield (though their numbers must be much diminished these days), it may be said that the author has gathered together quite an array of interesting facts, throwing light on the life and customs of the people in the Reay country. The volume is handsomely got up, fully illustrated, and beautifully printed. Author and publishers are to be congratulated on the production of a volume that will be highly prized by many in the far north of Scotland.

A review of this book will be given in the *Year-Book*.

“A GLOSSARY OF THE SHETLAND DIALECT.”—This valuable collection of Shetland dialect words by Mr. James Stout Angus, of Lerwick, has just been published by Mr. Alexander Gardner, of Paisley, at 4s. 6d. net, and will be reviewed in our next *Year-Book*. To those readers who have already got the book, the following *errata*, communicated by the author, will be of use. *S.v.*, Beltin, read, *May* 13, *N.S.*; bergulti, read, *ballan wrasse* instead of *black goby*; forsegan, read, *forlegen*; pretty dangers, read, *pretty dancers*; p. 167, read, “here ta say it an here ta lay it.” Mr. Angus has pointed out that certain words have different meanings in different localities in Shetland, and that his list of words is of those that were understood and used in Nesting, his birthplace.

“BLOGABEN.”—Mr. James Stout Angus has kindly sent an illustration of a “blogaben” and of a halibut showing from which part of the fish the bone is taken. Mr. Angus writes: “The halibut from which this bone was taken was 6ft. 4in. long. In old times the blogaben was counted sacred. It was carried in the boat to the sea, to insure good luck.” The “lugben” is also called the “blogaben.” The “lugben” is explained in Mr. Angus’ *A Glossary of the Shetland Dialect*, as: “the bone in a fish below the gill and at the top of the stomach—one on each side.” Mr. Angus has ascertained that the flounder has also got a similar bone, a specimen of which he has sent, so that it is apparently common to flat-fish. He sends the following quotation from Couch’s *British Fishes*, vol. iii., p. 147: “The border of the abdomen of this fish [flat-fish] from the first long spinous process of the vertebrae to the throat, is bounded by a curved bone, the concavity of which supports the entrails.” The tabu or sea-names of the halibut, in Shetland, are: “de glyed shield,” the squint-eyed fellow, and “de baldin,” which Jakobsen suggests may be O.N. *baldinn*, adj., mighty, obstinate, but which the facetious folk-etymologist may connect with the Shetland fishermen’s toast: “death to the head that wears no hair”—the bald one! *Bar* is O.N. *barð*, the side fin of some flat fish, e.g., *skötu-barð*, a skate’s flap, O.N. *skata*, skate. *Spurd*, is O.N. *sporðr*, a fish’s tail. *Gutriv.*, O.N., *got-rauf*, the spawn hole in female cod fish or salmon (Cleasby). In illustration of the fact that different objects are sometimes called by the same name, Mr. Angus points out that the sea-bream is called the *bergulti*, in Nesting, whereas the *bergulti* is really the ballan-wrasse. Mr. Angus does not know whether the turbot, which is called the *mill-fish*, has a *blogaben*; it is a very rare fish in Shetland, of which he has only seen two.



HALIBUT (FROM A DRAWING), AND BLOGABEN.
 From a photograph by Mr. Archibald Abernethy, Lerwick.

RENTAL OF BRABSTER, CAITHNESS, 1697 (continued from p. 12, *ante*).

Feildes.

GEORGE MCKBEATH, ther, laboures a pennyland and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow silver - - - - - (10 : 10 : 00¹

Wherof payed be a beast to the merchand

7lb. 13s. 4d. ; mair allowed to him for

ane ox bought to the plough, 13lb.

6 shilling 8d. Inde - - - - - 21 : 00 : 00

The ballance to be allowed out of his bond debt *which* is ten pound ten shillins.

[p. 6.] Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and

bannack - - - - - 1 : 1 : 3 : 2

Mair, he rests of bear seid - - - - - 2 : 0 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall - 1 : 2 : 0 : 2

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - - - 1 : 2 : 3 : 0

Inde is - 5 : 0 : 3 : 0

Summa - 6 : 2 : 3 : 0

Wherof allowed to him for his service at

the house, 1 boll, 2 firloths, 3 peckes, so

he rests yett - - - - - 5 : 0 : 0 : 0

*peyed - 1 : 1 : 3 : 2

*rests - 3 : 2 : 0 : 2

Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, 13.

Mair, he rests a wodder and a fleice att Beltaine nixt with a meat lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie, two ox steirkes, kellow, humbled, two yeir old come Beltaine; mair, he hes a reach gray, humbled ox, hyred to him for a firloth of victual.

¹ Deleted.

JOHN MILLER, elder, ther, Laboures ane half pennyland
and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (5 : 05 : 0¹

Receaved of mony 6lb., and a steir to the
merchand for 4lb. 6sh. 8d. Inde - (10 : 06 : 8¹

The ballance is 5lb. 1sh. 8d., to be allowed in his bond.

Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 2 : 3 : 3

Mair, he rests of bear - - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall - 0 : 3 : 2 : 1

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - - - 0 : 3 : 3 : 0

Inde is - 2 : 1 : 1 : 1

Summa is - 3 : 0 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests for ane ox hyre - - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Totall - 3 : 2 : 1 : 0

*peyed hierof - 1 : 0 : 3 : 3

*rests yet - 2 : 1 : 1 : 1

Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, io.

Mair, he rests a wodder and a fleice att Beltaine nixt
with a meat lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have it.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie a black horned
bull gelding 5 yeir old come Beltain, with a reach
horned ox 8 yeir old come Beltaine, hyred to him
for two firlots, mair he hes a broun, humbled,
starned ox steirk, 2 yeir old, come Beltaine.

[p. 7.] WILLIAM DAVIDSONE, ther, laboures ane half pennyland
and payes therfor, of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (05 : 05 : 0¹

¹ Deleted.

Wherof payed be a beast to the merchand 4lb. 13s. 4d.
the ballance resting yet ij shilling 8d. Item, I rest
him for ane half yeirs service 5lb. from which
reduce ij shilling 8d., ther remains four pound
eight shilling, 4d. to be allowed in his bond debt.

Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 2 : 3 : 3

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 0 : 0 : 0

Mair, of dry bear and bear meall - - 1 : 0 : 2 : 1

Mair, he rests of oat meall - - - 1 : 0 : 0 : 0

Mair, two firlots of oat seid is - - - 0 : 1 : 0 : 0

Inde is - 4 : 1 : 2 : 1

Summa is - 5 : 0 : 2 : 0

*payed hierof - 0 : 2 : 3 : 3

*rests yet - 4 : 1 : 2 : 1

*22th Agust, 1698, receaved till compt of his bond debt,
and this compt booke, 10lbs. as his staigs pryce.

Mair, he rests for this yeir's poultrie, 10.

Mair, he rests a wodder and his fleice at Beltaine, nixt,
with a meat lamb at Lambes, nixt, if he have it.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie, a black
humbled cowe steirk two yeir old come Beltaine.

JOHN MILLER, younger, ther, laboures the [half] of a
pennielland and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and
tallow silver - - - - - (3 : 10 : 0¹

Wherof payed be a beast to the merchand 4lb. the
ballance is 10 shilling to be allowed in his bond.

Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 1 : 2 : 2

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 0 : 1 : 2 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear and bear meall 0 : 1 : 2 : 0

¹ Deleted.

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 2 : 1 : 0

Inde is - 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

Summa is - 1 : 2 : 3 : 2

*peyed - 0 : 1 : 2 : 2

*rests yet - 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, 9

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie, a dinn
humbled ox 4 yeir old come Beltaine.

[p. 8.] DONALD MILLER, younger, ther, laboures the two pairt
of a pennyland, and payes therfor of Mertimes debt
and tallow silver - - - - (7 : 00 : 0¹

Wherof receaved a blew horned steir att 6lb., yet with
him, and rests ane pound. *This pound peyed
in money 14th Der., 1697.

Mair, he rests of fearme mill multer and

bannack - - - - 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, to him of dry bear and bear meall - 0 : 1 : 1 : 2

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 3 : 0 : 0

Inde is - 3 : 0 : 3 : 2

Summa - 4 : 2 : 0 : 2

Rests yett - 3 : 0 : 0 : 0

*peyed - 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

*or rests yet - 1 : 2 : 3 : 0

Heirot allowed for his service sex firlots and 2 [li]pes.
Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie ij, wherof one
payed.

Mair, he rests a wodder and a fleice at Beltaine nixt,
with a meatt lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have it.

¹ Deleted.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie a dinn humbled cowe steirk, two yeir old come Beltaine, with a read humbled ox, seaven yeir old come Beltaine, togider with a blew horned steir bought from himself, 5 yeir old come Beltaine.

Resting be him, to me, for bygone cess, 7lb. 4s. 8d., wherof allowed 2s. 6d. for caskes. *Memo, receaved 3lbs. in money and 2s. charged on widow McKenyie, and 6s. 6d. given for oyle and he rests yet vnpeyed, 3lb. 13s. 8d. wherof againe receaved 2os., rests yet (2lb. 13s. 8d.¹ This 3d. of Januarie, 1698, receaved payt, of this rest.

JOHN ALLAN, ther, laboures a pennyland and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow silver 10 : 10 : 0
Wherof payed be beasts to the merchand, 10lb. 13s. 4d.
the balance being 3 shilling 4d., to be allowed in his bond.

Mair, he payes of fearme mill multer and

bannack	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 : 0 : 0 : 0
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*Mair, he rests of seed bear	-	-	-	-	-	0 : 1 : 0 : 0
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*Mair, of dry bear and bear meall	-	-	-	-	-	0 : 1 : 3 : 0
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*Mair, of oatt meall	-	-	-	-	-	0 : 3 : 0 : 0
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*Inde is	-	1 : 1 : 3 : 0
----------	---	---------------

*Summa is	-	2 : 1 : 3 : 0
-----------	---	---------------

*payed hierof	-	1 : 0 : 0 : 0
---------------	---	---------------

*rests yet	-	1 : 1 : 3 : 0
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[p 9.] Mair, he rests for the yeirs poultrie, 13.

Mair, he rests at Beltaine nixt a wodder and his fleice with a meat lamb at Lambes nixt, if he have it.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custodie, a fleck hornd quoacke 2 yeir old come Beltaine, with a read humbled quyoacke 2 yeir old come Beltaine.

(To be continued.)

¹ Deleted.

REPLIES.

THE WITCH'S WIND (*An Orkney Witch*, p. 2, *ante*).—These verses are from a poem, "The Witch's Wind," one of a series of "Yarns of the Pentland Firth," by David Grant, F.E.I.S., a teacher in Canisbay, 1855-62, and afterwards rector of a Sheffield Academy. The ballad, of 46 stanzas, was probably composed during his Canisbay days. It may have appeared anonymously in one of the local newspapers. Some of his other poems did appear in the *Northern Ensign*, Wick, then edited by Mr. John Mackie, a native of Fraserburgh. I am not quite sure as to its earlier circulation, but it was included in a volume, "Metrical Tales and other Poems," published by subscription at Sheffield, 1880. In connection with these "Yarns of the Pentland Firth," Mr. Grant acknowledges his indebtedness to his nautical "guide, philosopher and friend," Mr. John Gibson, fisherman, who was well versed in local folk-lore, and probably supplied the original tales. The name of John Gibson, Duncansbay Head, Caithness, appears in the list of subscribers, and I can still remember the interest created by the appearance of this first copy of the book in my native district. Mr. Grant, who was a native of Moray, published a second volume of poems, entitled "Lays and Legends of the North," Edinburgh, 1884. There are several local traditions which might yet be collected as to the Pilots of the Pentland Firth having traded with the witches for a fair wind.—J. MOWAT.

FAIR ISLE (p. 64, *ante*).—Dr. Jakobsen mentions one tautological example in Shetland of *-ey-Isle*, viz., Musa Isle; so that the suggested contracted form, Fríðar-ey > Frey, might have given Frey-isle = Fryle, the local form of the name.—A. W. J.

"NORISH WORDS" (p. 59, *ante*).—This list of words was probably sent to Balfour sometime after 1611, when

it was written, and when he was engaged in topographical researches. Sibbald's statement does not necessarily imply that it was sent to Balfour at the time it was written.—A. W. J.

EARL THORFINN (p. 20, *ante*).—Possibly the Orkney Saga and the Annals are both correct as to the date when Thorfinn was sent to his grandfather, A.D. 1004, and five years after Svöldr, *i.e.*, counting the year in which the battle took place (1000) as one of the five years.—A. W. J.

A VISIT TO SHETLAND IN 1832.

(*From the Journal of Edward Charlton, M.D.*).

XIII.

(Continued from Vol. VII., p. 154.)

UNST (*continued*).

Friday, August 24th. Left Hillside at an early hour and came to Belmont with eight dozen of minerals in a cassie on the pony's back. We afterwards went over to Uyea Sound, in order to reach Haaf Grunie, but the day was too stormy to attempt the passage.

Saturday, August 25th. We got as far as the island of Uyea, but still could not attempt Haaf Grunie. This latter island contains some beautiful serpentine, in colour almost resembling the verde-antique. We again, however, dined with Mr. Leask, who gave me his Russian terrier, Lumpy, as he said he was of no use for feeding sheep!

Sunday, August 26th. Remained at Belmont, and merely walked along the shore and procured some fine serpentine.

YELL.

Monday, August 27th. In a very heavy gale of wind I pulled across to Culia Voe, and walked from thence

across the moors to Gloup. The minerals were all packed and left at Culia Voe.

Tuesday, August 28th. H[enderson] went to Mid Yell to call on Mr. Robertson,¹ the minister, who had a fine collection of Shetland antiquities. Walked out with my gun and shot half a dozen of pigeons.

Wednesday, August 29th. Remained at home all day, packing up minerals, corals, shells and bird skins. This day I performed my first surgical operation, by letting blood of one of Mrs. Henderson's servants, for a pain of the side.

Thursday, August 30th. The day was far too windy for our meditated journey. I ventured out in the afternoon with my gun and shot a rabbit and also some starlings. I purchased two lambs of this year for 2s. 6d., and killed and skinned them myself, though not in a very workmanlike style.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday were days of storm. I hardly ventured out of the house, and did not, I own, find much employment within doors.

Monday, September 3rd. Set off at 9 a.m. for West Sandwick, distant about fifteen miles. The way thither lay over brown, heathy hills, with occasional glimpses of the ocean, or of the voes by which it is constantly intersected. Nothing could be more dreary than the prospect of the long, swelling, brownish-black hills stretching away on all sides, and only relieved by lakes or huge pools of dark porter-coloured water, surrounded by a band of black and yielding peat. As we passed one of the largest of these lakes, which may be about three miles in circumference, we came, suddenly, upon a red-breasted merganser and her tiny young ones, which all squattered away into the water with a fearful

¹ Rev. James Robertson, presented to living in 1828, translated to St. Fergus, 1844, died 1854, in his 59th year. He married Ursula Spence, daughter of William Spence of Gardie, who died at Aberdeen, on her way from Shetland, in 1844. He wrote the account of the parish in the New Stat. Acc. (*Fasti*, and Grant's *Zetland Families*).

plash, while the mother bird kept sailing round and round them till they got fairly out of distance. We had not, at the time, our guns with us, or they would assuredly not have escaped. At the south-eastern extremity of this lake I found some beautiful specimens of compact masses of garnet embedded in a very quartzose gneiss. We arrived at 2 p.m. at West Sandwick, where Mr. Ogilvy,¹ the proprietor, constantly resides, and has done much to improve the land in its vicinity.

NORTHMAVINE.

Tuesday, September 4th. A heavy storm from the north-east, and no possible hope of crossing Yell Sound while it lasted. At 6 p.m., however, the weather had so much moderated that we started in a good six-oared boat for North Roe,² where we landed at 9 p.m., to the great joy of H[enderson], to whom the heavy seas had been anything but agreeable during the transit. Had curded milk for supper, and slept in a garret.

Wednesday, September 5th. Went off at 9 a.m. along the coast to Feideland, and returning at 5 p.m. to North Roe, we found Mr. Henderson³ and his family, who had just come back from Bardister. He appeared much concerned that he had not been at home on the previous evening to welcome us, and of course ex-

¹ John Ogilvy, of Gossaburgh and Quarff, born 1800, died 1840, married 1829, Barbara Grace, only daughter and heiress of Basil Robertson, of Gossaburgh. His ancestor, John, of the family of Milton, surgeon-major in King James VII's army, came to Shetland in 1690, after the battle of the Boyne. A sister of John of Gossaburgh married Admiral W. Hamley and was the mother of General Sir Edward Bruce Hamley, K.C.B., etc. (*Grant's Zetland Families and New Stat. Acc.*)

² Burra Voe?

³ Gilbert Henderson, of Bardister, Northmavine, born 1757, died 1841, married 1796, Jane, daughter of James Cheyne, of Tangwick. Their daughter, Isabella, married Thomas Shaw, of Ditton, Lancashire, whose daughter, Anne Jane, married James Robert Mellor, King's Remembrancer, son of sir John Mellor, P.C., and father of Alfred Shaw Mellor, Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer of the Viking Society. (*Grant, etc.*)

pressed no surprise at our having so unceremoniously possessed ourselves of his house. After dinner we walked out to see a young skua gull, which he had brought, during the summer, from Roeness Hill. The bird was bold and fearless, and afforded much amusement from its peculiar habits.

Thursday, September 6th. The wind blew very heavily from the south, but we faced the gale in Mr. Henderson's boat as far as Colafield. We arrived there at 2 p.m., and geologised for some hours to our great satisfaction. In coming over the hills towards Ollaberry, and when near the chromate mines of Lugon, I entered a small cottage and enquired for the ancient Danish stone axes, which are here known by the name of thunderbolts. I was fortunate enough to procure two of them, but both were of small size, and one of them was made of a singularly banded quartz rock. We reached Ollaberry at 7 p.m., where we were most hospitably received by Mr. Cheyne.¹

Friday, September 7th. About mid-day we crossed the hills to Hillswick Ness, and arrived at the mansion of Hillswick at 3 p.m. It is the residence of Mr. Thomas Gifford,² a younger brother of Mr. Gifford of Busta, who had spent the greater part of his life in the East Indies. At 7 p.m. Mr. Gifford returned from Tangwick, accompanied by a young Scotch advocate of the name of Napier, who had come to Shetland in search of documents and witnesses in the cause of Mr. Gifford of Busta. On the road to Hillswick I procured another stone axe.

¹ Arthur Cheyne, of Ollaberry, died 1849, 2nd son of James Cheyne, of Tangwick, and his wife Ann, daughter of John Gifford. (Grant and *New Stat. Acc.*)

² Thomas Gifford, of Hillswick, born 1789, lieutenant 25th Native Infantry, East India Company's service, married 1821, Jessie, daughter of John Scott, younger, of Melby. He was a younger brother of Arthur Gifford, of Busta, and 3rd son of Gideon Gifford, of Busta. An account of the litigation regarding the parentage of Gideon, which is referred to above, will be found in Grant's *Zetland Family Histories*.

Saturday, September 8th. Was out the whole day upon the Ness of Hillswick, and returned thoroughly wet through, but with a heavy bag of minerals.

Sunday, September 9th. No preaching here, because there was no priest. The wind blew keenly through the somewhat crazy windows of Mr. Gifford's dining-room, and induced me to remain the greater part of the day in the house. In the evening I wrote to Mr. Yorston, the banker at Lerwick, for a supply of money, as my funds were nearly exhausted.

Monday, Sept. 10th. Was out the whole day upon Hillswick Ness. The immediate vicinity of Hillswick abounds in the most stupendous coast scenery. On the west of the ness the rocks rise to a great height, and are cut down into rugged peaks and precipices by the ceaseless combined action of the winds and sea. The very composition of the stone has contributed, not a little, to the fantastic forms which it assumes. Huge veins of felspar and hornstone porphyry traverse the mica and the chlorite slate, overthrowing and contorting these beds into an endless diversity of figures. The ness of Hillswick is a peninsular about two miles in length, and seldom more than a quarter of a mile in breadth, jutting out boldly into the Bay of St. Magnus. Its geological structure is as interesting as its coast scenery. The great tracts of syenitic greenstone on the east and of granite on the west of Northmavine, are here separated for a space of three or four miles in length, and between them we observe beds of mica and of chlorite slate, with horneblende, traversed by veins of porphyry, and abound in mineral products. These constitute the promontory of Hillswick Ness, and here the wonder-working ocean has gambolled in its wildest mood. The contorted strata of Horneblende have been upheaved and traversed, in a hundred different directions, by the veins of porphyry; and, upon the sea cliffs of the Ness, the latter have

resisted the action of the waves, while the softer stratified rock has disappeared, and in this way have been formed those stupendous pinnacles, or *stacks*, which form so conspicuous a feature on Hillswick Ness.

Almost all these mighty natural obelisks are composed of the finest close-grained felspar porphyry, the basis, containing the crystals, being either a reddish claystone or, more frequently, a blue siliceous rock, which well deserves the name hornstone, and which is found in peculiar beauty at the Taing¹ of Torness.² The minerals which are met with in this singular geological formation are numerous and beautiful. At the Queen Gio,³ on the eastern banks, are strata of a most brilliant mica slate, alternating with quartz, and studded with perfectly crystallised garnets of from half an inch to an inch in diameter.

(*To be continued.*)

GLIMPSES OF SHETLAND LIFE, 1718—1753.

BY R. STUART BRUCE.

V.

(Continued from Vol. VI., p. 135.)

On 29th May, 1730, Busta writes to his correspondents in Leith, Messrs. John Coutts & Coy.:

. . . Hoping that my last, p. Mason, cam safe to your hands. Shall resume nothing thereof but . . . being amused with a story our people, cam last from Edinburgh, brought over that ther's a party to be sent here to quarter for the cess; whither for that I advised you formerlie to pay to Mr. Whitfoord for the last year, or for former years, I know not, but shall hop its rather for the last, and most again entreat that you will at any rate procure a discharge of Zetland's $\frac{3}{4}$ of the cess 1729, with

¹ ON. *tangi*, tongue, point. ² ON. *torf-ness*, turf-ness.

³ ON. *kvern-giá*, hand-mill chasm? *kvern*, in place names becomes *kven* in Shetland.

that allso of 1728 of which you payd the half for me, and, I doubt not, Sumburgh [Laurence Bruce, of Sumburgh, died 1737] has paid the other half and sent it per first occasion, for preventing my being reflected on by this country for the want thereof. I most allso again entreat that you will, as far as possible, mind my credit formerlie advised with the E. M. and R. B. [the Earl of Morton and Robert Barclay] and make them as easy as possible, and if Alex. Mitchell, of Mitchell, shall demand of you 40 or 50 sh. sterling, give it him for my account. . .

Busta writes to Messrs. Coutts & Coy., from Lerwick, 16th June, 1730, and says :

. . . I was favoured with yours of the 26th past, per Mason, covering invoice of his cargo, amount £166 11s. 8d. ster., all very right, also Mr. Whitfoord's 2 receipts for £120 13s. 3d., which seems only to include only the half year's cess contained in your last curt. acct. to me, and only $\frac{1}{2}$ the £120 ods I last advised you to pay him for my account, so that I most yet be due to him the other $\frac{1}{2}$ thereof; if so, and that he has given order to quarter therefore, I shall be very much disapointed, to which I entreat you'll please advert, and send me, per first [occasion], a receipt for the other $\frac{1}{2}$ of £120 ods. . . Mr. Baird's refusing to buy my fish is another disapointment, however I most endeavour to make that up some other way, tho not so well now as I would a don had I knowen it a month sooner. I have advised Ja. Harrowar to have his vessell at Hildswick beginnning of August next, with whom I will want 3 or 400 bushells Spanish salt, if it can be got with you, upon which I shall depend with your advice where herrings, butter and oyll may doe best, and what returns from the E(ast) sea may stand the best price at Leith, desiring to doe the best I can for putting you in condition to answer my great demands upon you. . . Being much straitened with time by this vessell's sudent departor shall ad no more. . . .

Of the same date (16th June) Busta writes a business letter to James Harrower, which is rather quaint. It runs :

. . . I was favoured with yours . . . importing the mellancholly news of your consort's death, for which I am heartily sorry, but that's a debt we most all pay to nature and I pray the Lord may sanctifie the dispensation to you and all concerned. I received Mr. Hugh Ross his acctts. of your cargoe whereby finds as I've oftne formerlie don, that markets are uncertain things; however, being now brought under some necessity to trye them yet further, I most have your vesshell at Hildswick,

beginning of August, and shall even refer the difference betwixt my former proposells and yours anent the fraught to your self, wherein I hop wee shall not discord, but am sorry ye dont goe your self with the ship, for which cause you most leave the ordering of the voyage entirely to my direction, seeing I can just now be no way certain how to employ her; as for Bremen, its a place I've very indifferent accounts for markets and extravagant charges upon that river, and therfore cant be possitive in sending her there, and besids you most allow me a liberty of bringing her back here from Hamburg, if I see it needfull, and advise the lowest freight you will take in such case, if it should so hapen, I will want 8 or ten last [16 or 20 tons] Spanish salt from Leith . . . but I, haveing cask enough, may bring it in bulk. . . .

Busta writes a letter by the same "occasion" to Mr. John Neill, wigmaker (I suppose in Edinburgh), in which he says that he :

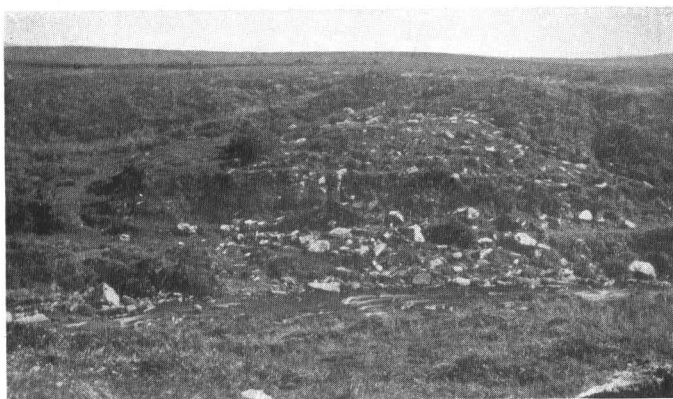
returns you hearty thanks for your rady compliance with my demand. The periweig I received, and I think will doe very well. You demand £3 for it; I know not how it may prove, but you best know its value, and therefore refers it to you(r) self and desires you may demand your money from Messrs. John Coutts and Company, who will pay it for my account as soon as they can, and I hop you will not be heasty in your demand upon them because my effects with them is oftne long in turning to cash. . . .

Another letter by the same vessel, and written to Mr. James Binning, says :

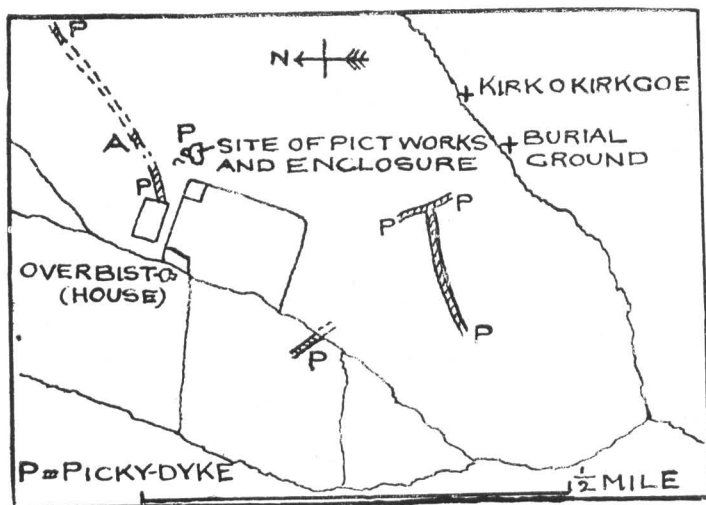
. . . I received some news papers by John Fraser from you but they are imperfect, which I suppose has been his fault, if you are pleased to continue to semd them, please acquaint wherein I can serve you in any thing of your countrie(s) product can serve your family, which [I] will take as a favour don. . . .

Busta was still in Lerwick in July; as on the 1st he writes to :

Madam the window [*sic*] of Hans Roosen & Comp. I was honoured with your favour of 1st of June past, covering Mr Chas. Roosen's to me, and did also receive, p. Capt. James Mercer, 30 matts tobacco shiped by you at Hamburg for my account, for the value whereof I have credited Mr Charles Roosen and returns you hearty thanks for your care and kindness in that affair, as also for the offer of your good offices to me for the futter, and shall be very proud of haveing the



THE KIRK O KIRKGOE, FROM THE NORTH.
From a photograph by Mr. James Linklater, Beaquoy-side, Birsa.



PLAN OF PICKY-DYKES AT OVERBIST, BIRSA.

honour of your correspondance; and, for beginning thereof, begs you'll be so good as advise me how a small ship's cargoe of butter, oyll, herrings and fish might sell with you in the last of August or beginning of September nixt, and if you can bring those goods to as much as others offers me, I will consign to you if you are pleased to accept of that trouble; and for that end you may see the fish and herring I send by this small vessell consign'd to my old correspondent Mr Bartlay [Barclay], and thereby you can make a compute how these goods may answer the time above proposed, and write me accordingly; but let him nor non of my country know I have write you upon that subject, farther than that you want to deal in these goods; and if you can bring them to bear any tollerable price, advise me pr the bearer hereof, William Masson, master of the small sloup from Zetland. . . . If you can bring them to any tollerable price I will consign to you in time comeing: it is but a small affair that I can annually affoord of 10 or 12,000m (marks).

(To be continued.)

THE KIRK O KIRKGOE AND THE PICKY DYKES OF BIRSA, ORKNEY.

BY JOHN SPENCE, OVERBIST, BIRSA.

ABOUT half a mile or so to the south of this house there is an ancient ruin called the "Kirk o Kirkgoe." It is now reduced to an almost shapeless mass of grey, lichen-covered stones. But the foundations may yet be traced, shewing an area of some twelve by fourteen feet or so. It lies on a high ledge on the south bank of a deep-cut goe or burn, which the winter torrents have hollowed out to a depth of fifteen or twenty feet, with a width of a hundred feet or thereby.

An old writer, speaking of such ruins, of which there are quite a number in Orkney, and for that matter, also in Shetland, says: "Remains of Popish chapels are

numerous, because every erysland of eighteen pennyland had one for matins and vespers, but now all in ruins." Of course, in Catholic times, no doubt many of these places would have been in repair and would have been used as stated, but the writer hopes to show that at least one, in this locality, dates very much farther back. Some reasons will now be given for doing so.

About eighty or a hundred yards further down the goe, or moorland burn, on which this ruined kirk is situated, there is another green mound. It is also, like the other, situated on a ledge alongside of the water, now, in the summer time, purling lightly and leisurely by, though oft in winter a torrent strong enough to have hollowed out, through the ages, this deep and wide mountain goe which dips down, like a crevasse, in the open roll of the moorland. This green mound is also on the same side of the water as the kirk. About half-way between, but on the north side of the water, there is a slight mound which tradition has assigned the title of "The Castle." An old man told the writer's father that generally there was such a "Castle," or watch-tower, near by those ancient kirks in which a sentinel was posted to give the alarm to the people in the kirk of the enemy, in persecuting times. But it is very doubtful if tradition could have carried down her records for 1500 years, or from the time when the earliest Christian converts in Orkney were said to have been persecuted by their brother Celtic sun-worshippers. Be that as it may, there is evidence enough to show that the second green, stone-dotted mound is the graveyard of the kirk, or rather, sanctuary or sacred place, of the original Celtic population of this part of Orkney, and this in pre-Christian or so-called heathen times. The similar and contiguous situation of the two—both being placed on green steps or ledges half-way down from the top surface of the moss to the water below—as also their being situated

far into the uninhabited moor, go to show pretty clearly that both are contemporaneous and connected.

But the style of burial of this ancient grave-mound shews that it dates back to the pre-Christian ages. The style of burial appearing in a great many of the Celtic or Pict grave-mounds throughout Orkney shows that the original inhabitants cremated or burned their dead, or rather partly burned their dead, the burned remains being covered with earth at the grave-mound where they were cremated.

In the writer's remembrance many of those Pictish grave-mounds have been carted on to the cultivated fields—a most reprehensible practice—but many of them still remain, enough to show that those aboriginal Pictish inhabitants of Orkney had been in these islands for a very long time. The writer has come across those grave-mounds of the ancient inhabitants of Orkney in most unexpected places. There is a place called “Kit-Huntlin's,” situated on the edge of a similar mountain goe or burn, some miles farther from this place, in the heart of the moorland. The writer examined the place lately, and found the burnt earth and minute fragments of bone characteristic of so many of those ancient Orcadian grave-mounds.

But to return to the grave-mound in Kirkgoe, hard by the ruined kirk. On examination this mound, in the exposed part, shows the rich black earth charged with minute bony fragments and mixed with ashes. Here and there among the earth we come upon lumps of what is locally called “smithoo-cramps,” from their resemblance to the slag that comes from a blacksmith's furnace.

The father of the present writer remembered as a boy how an old man, a relative of his own, was in the habit of going to the old ruins of the Kirk o' Kirkgoe to solitary worship on a Sunday. He would tell of how he saw this old man crossing the intervening moss from

it to his home for the last time, before he was carried to his last resting-place under the shadow of St. Magnus' shrine, with old Ocean hard by to sound his requiem. He was slowly tortured to death by the dreaded cancer, and he repaired to this most ancient sacred fane, if haply he might find strength for the burden of life through communion with the great Unseen.

The sacred places in Orcadia *were*, doubtless, held sacred and inviolate all down through the long ages—until about a century ago. Then came the time of agricultural improvements, when, in the more cultivated districts, many an old aboriginal burial-mound was dug up and carted on the fields for manure.

The people of that time, the profane “dyke-building generation,” as they have been called, were also responsible for the mutilation of the wondrous Stones of Stennes, and last, but not least, for the destruction of that most unique relic of ancient days, the Stone of Odin.

This time of desecration of the sacred relics of the past was happily short in duration, and in our day all that remains of the far-distant past beyond the dawn of history is again carefully preserved and had in reverence as of old.

It was, however, in the more remote and less inhabited, and therefore less cultivated, parts of Orkney that it would be most likely we should find at least the surface works of ancient man most in evidence. Thus we see, in the locality referred to in this paper, antiquarian remains which, in more cultivated parts would have been ploughed over, and so defaced and destroyed. While in this locality, situated far amongst the moorland hills and but sparsely peopled, the traces of the race of eld are more plainly to be seen and deciphered.

The accompanying photograph shows a square-

shaped clump of grey stones (at one corner of which the present writer is seen seated), which forms the site and all that remains of the main building. The stones, of various sizes, seen on the near side all down the incline to the edge of the running water, are those that have rolled down from the north-western wall. This part of the wall was, in the memory of the writer's father, some three feet or so in height. Now it is reduced to a shapeless ruin of grey stones. There appears also to have been an enclosing dyke or bulwark around the main building, the remnants of which may yet be traced, on all sides, a few yards outside the ruin, save on the side which slopes steeply down to the water.

PICKY DYKES.

But we must leave the consideration of this, the more sacred memorials of the race of old, and go on to look briefly at what may be called the more secular work-a-day remains which they have left, viz., the "Picky Dykes," or ancient dyke-steethes, those lines of whitened stones which run along the "brecks," or on the rough pasture-land, and disappear underneath the moss. Some of these moss deposits are eight feet deep, and must have begun to form about the beginning of the Christian Era, or perhaps more than two thousand years ago. There are other dykes, or, more correctly, dykes and ditches, of more modern times, dividing and partitioning the rough pasture from the moss-lands, some of which were there from time immemorial, so that everything points to the great antiquity of the older ones. The later ones were built on the surface of the moss, while the earlier ones were built on the clay or gravelly soil underneath the moss. The whole Moss Age must have intervened between the works of the one race of builders and that of the other.

But the *raison-d'être* of the one must have been that of the other. The men of these far away times must

have belonged to a pastoral race; and those ragged lines of grey stones must be the remains of their enclosures, or more likely, boundaries or lines of demarcation of their rough pasture-lands.

Those ancient “dyke-steethes” are much more extensive in this locality than at present appears on the surface. The most northerly one delineated in the appended sketch disappears under the moss, as shown by the dotted line, but it reappears again where a peat-bank has been dug, some six or eight chains further on. Also, recently, in digging out the moss to form a firm track for peat-carting, the stone ridge was again struck at A on sketch. The short piece of dyke running to the burn below the house was carted away in the present writer’s youth, as the waste land there was added to the cultivated fields.

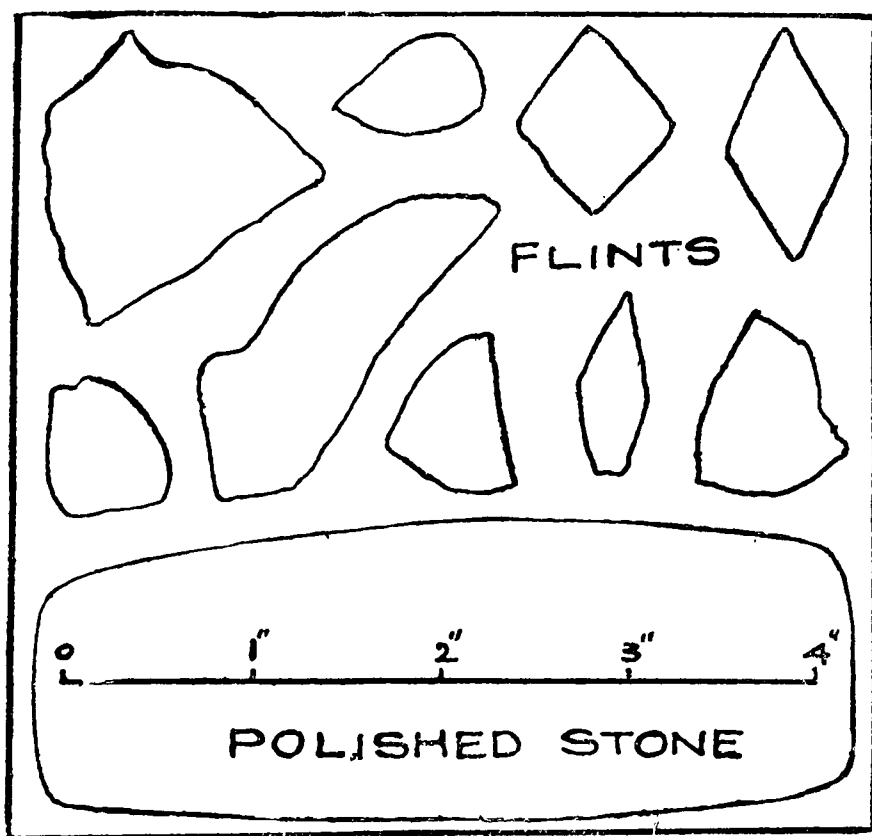
The remains of ancient works and enclosure, marked on the sketch, would appear, as far as their present meagre and all but vanished condition would indicate, to have been the site of one of the rude dwellings of the race who wrought these and all the rest of the prehistoric works referred to as found in this neighbourhood.

A rubbing is given of a few flints, most of them red flints, found in the neighbourhood of this dwelling on the heath. Finer ones were found by the past generation, but were lost. Indeed, the writer has given away better ones than these. The rubbing of the polished stone conveys but an imperfect idea of it. The following notice of it, at the time it was found, is quoted from the *Orcadian* :—

“Whilst engaged in peat-cutting the other day, Mr. Andrew Ritch, farmer, Birsá, felt his “tusker” coming in contact with some hard substance deep down in the moss. It proved to be a polished stone, some $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches, or so, long, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches broad at the middle, and tapering to 1 inch at each end,

$\frac{3}{4}$ inches thick at the middle, and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch at the ends. It is wrought out of a brown-coloured sandstone, of hard close texture, and polished as highly as the composition of the stone will admit, uniform, and complete throughout."

The stone, which was gifted to the present writer by the finder, was found well down in the moss, and some quarter of a mile or more eastward of the ancient site and enclosure referred to above.



Long ago the writer found a wrought ironstone, carved in stripes and rings, which was thought by some authorities to be a sling weapon, and by others, the badge of office of an ancient chief.

But what we would specially call the attention of those interested in such things is what we have called those Picky Dyke-steethes. The subject is new to

Orkney and perhaps elsewhere. To confirm the ancient date of Kit Huntlin's, we may conclude this brief sketch by stating that, while hunting up sheep sometime ago we were interested to find, not far remote from the ancient ruin, another of those old Picky Dyke-steethes, where it had been exposed by peat-cutting. The subject, as we have said, is new : he who runs may read.

NOTES FROM THE TONGUE PRESBYTERY RECORDS.

VI.

(Concluded from p. 38, *ante.*)

[15th July, 1818.—At Golspie. The Presbytery took into consideration the case of Mr. Alexander MacLeod, student in divinity, residing in Bailacladich, parish of Assynt. The Rev. John Kennedy, minister of Kilearnan, had in June of the previous year warmly recommended Mr. MacLeod to the different members of the Presbytery. The Presbytery explained to the Synod the circumstances of the case, and laid before them the certificates which Mr. MacLeod had from Dr. Ritchie, Professor of Divinity, Edinburgh. It was also stated that Mr. MacLeod had the prospect of being settled as a minister in North America.]

[19th October, 1818.—At Tongue. The Presbytery proceeded to take trial of Mr. Alexander MacLeod.¹ He was told the Presbytery had been informed that “he did at one time join a certain party or religious sect in the parish of Assynt who had openly and avowedly seceded from the Established Church of Scotland.” He

¹ Afterwards minister of Uig in Lewis: after the Disruption he was Free Church Minister of Lochalsh and latterly of Rogart.

replied that he had “wholly renounced the party which he once had joined.”¹

[26th November, 1818.—Mr. Alexander MacLeod licensed.]

[17th April, 1819.—At Tongue. Mr. Robert Clark and Mr. Hugh MacLeod licensed.]

[24th November, 1819.—It was reported that the S.P.C.K. on the Presbytery’s recommendation had appointed Mr. Robert Clark to the Eriboll Mission. His commission, however, was retained until the Erribol buildings were repaired.

Mr. Clark ordained.]

[14th January, 1820.—At Tongue. Two letters were produced, one from Mr. Cameron, Creich, the other from Mr. MacBean, requesting the Presbytery to ordain Mr. Hugh MacLeod for the Rosehall Mission. The Presbytery decided not to proceed with the ordination at this meeting.]

[23rd February, 1820.—At Tongue. Letters produced from Mr. MacGillivray, moderator of Dornoch Presbytery, asking this Presbytery to ordain Mr. Hugh MacLeod, as owing to indisposition it was difficult to

¹These were the Assynt Separatists, led by Norman Macleod, who went to Cape Breton about 1817. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Geneva, New York. In 1851 he sailed in a vessel built by himself and his followers for Australia, where he remained for about two years. He then sailed to New Zealand, and finally settled in the district of Waipu, about 70 miles north of Auckland, where he died in 1866, at the patriarchal age of 86. It is said that the life and doctrine of a certain class of ministers in the Church of Scotland, and the teaching of some of his professors, were the cause of his separation from the church of his fathers. There is a short account of his Cape Breton ministry (with portrait) in the *Presbyterian Witness Diamond Jubilee Number* (Dec., 1908, Pictou, Nova Scotia); for his New Zealand ministry see the *History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand*, pp. 78-80. Mr. McLeod was an ecclesiastical warrior who believed in dealing smashing blows. His controversial style has been preserved in tractates which were collected in a small badly printed volume entitled:—*The Present Church of Scotland and a Tint of Normanism, contending in a Dialogue*. No date, nor publisher’s name is given, but the preface is dated from Cape Breton, 30th October, 1841.

get a quorum of their own Presbytery. The Presbytery ordained Mr. MacLeod in accordance with the above request.]

[28th November, 1822.—At Tongue. Mr. Donald Gordon licensed. At an adjourned meeting the Presbytery taking into consideration the necessitous case of Eddrachillis owing to illness of Mr. John MacKenzie did ordain that Mr. Donald Gordon be appointed as an ordained assistant.]

[21st May, 1823.—At Farr. Mr. Findlater informed the Presbytery that Lord Reay and he had recommended Mr. William MacIntyre, student in philosophy, to the vacant school in Durness.]

[16th September, 1823.—At Tongue. Mr. Findlater produced a letter from Lord Reay agreeing to nominate Mr. William MacIntyre to the school of Durness, vacant by the deposition of William Ross, who gave a letter as if from Rev. John MacKenzie, Eddrachillis, to the Professors of Divinity, which was forged.]

[25th November, 1823.—At Tongue. Mr. John MacDonald¹ recommended for Farr school.]

8th April, 1824.—At Tongue. “The Presbytery having duly considered the complaint made by some members regarding the profanation of the Lord’s Day in districts within their bounds, especially by kirkings going to drink at inns immediately after preaching and crowds of people following, which practice is most inimical to religion and morality, did and hereby do recommend to the ministers within their bounds, with the aid of their sessions, to use their best endeavours to suppress such irregularities in the way they see for edification.” They are to apply to the justices for assistance and the landlords of inns are to be asked not to serve whisky on such occasions.

[25th October, 1824.—At Tongue. A petition is presented by the elders and adherents of

¹ Afterwards minister of Helmsdale.

the parish of Eddrachillis against their minister, Mr. John MacKenzie. The petition has the following names adhibited:—George Campbell, teacher; Hector Morrison, ^{his} × _{mark} Badcall; Donald Morrison, do.; Donald MacKay, Shegra; Murdo MacLeod; Donald Lamant, ^{his} × _{mark}; John MacKenzie, Achrisgle; Murdo MacKay, ^{his} × _{mark}; Hugh Ross, ^{his} × _{mark}, Scouriemore; Neil MacKay, ^{his} × _{mark}, do; Roderick MacKenzie, parish catechist; George Ross, schoolmaster of Eddrachillis; Rev. Donald Gordon; Ralph Reid, Esq., Scouriebeg; Robert MacKay, S.P.C.K. teacher, Oldshorebeg; Mrs. Donald MacKay,⁴ Shegra; Hugh MacKay, tacksman, Sandwood; Robert MacKay, Midtown, Melness; Francis MacBain; Gaelic schoolmaster, Edinburgh; Rev. Robert Clark, Duke Street, Glasgow; Angus MacKay, S.P.C.K. teacher, Ru Stoer; Captain Hugh Clark, Achumore; Captain William Scobie, Ardvar; Mrs. Scobie (wife of preceding); Kenneth Scobie (son); John MacKenzie, student in divinity.]

⁴ Better known by her maiden name—Peggy MacDiarmid. A woman of remarkable ability and outstanding piety. There is a short sketch of this noted Christian in Rev Alexander Auld's *Ministers and Men in the Far North*, 2nd edit., p. 218.

ERRATA.

Vol. VII. p. 40, line 4 from foot of page, for *John* Munro read *Hugh* Munro.

p. 44, line 5, "James" has a line drawn through it in the minute, and "John" is written opposite in the margin.

p. 109, line 16, insert semicolon between "influence" and "they." *Their influence, i.e., the Presbytery's influence.*

p. 169, line 15, for *father* read *factor*.

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH IN CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND (1136-1445).

The Pictish
Mission.

THE transition period between the Celtic Church and the Roman Church in the far north of Scotland is lacking in clearness and distinctness, at least, as far as any information which may be gleaned from the written records. The story of the Celtic Church in Caithness and Sutherland is of special interest, as the evidence gleaned from the Irish martyr-ologies and northern place-names seems to point definitely in the direction of a Pictish mission to the Northern Picts. The commonly received view that Caithness and Sutherland were indebted for their Christianity to the great Dalriadic missionary, Columcille of Iona, must now be given up. For, even in the few place-names that seem to commemorate Columcille, there is not wanting evidence that some of them at least commemorate one or other of the many Pictish Colums or Colms. The evidence for the evangelization of the far northern counties by Pictish missionaries, on the other hand, is abundant. The whole subject of the part played by these missionaries in the Christianization of the Northern Picts, as distinct from the Columban missionaries, has been worked out with keen historical insight by the Rev. A. Black Scott, Helmsdale, to whose researches in this particular field we refer all interested.¹ The passing of the Celtic Church, by whatever means effected, in the north, was evidently an event not appreciated by the Northern Picts. This is seen

¹ See his forthcoming *S. Ninian and the Founding of the Celtic Church among the Britons and Picts* to be published by David Nutt, London. See also his articles *Nynia in Northern Pictland* (*Scottish Historical Review*, II.), *S. Maolrubha* (*Ibid.*, VI.); *S. Donnan the Great and his Muinntir* (*Trans. Scottish Ecclesiological Soc.*, I. part III.); and papers on Barr (Finbar) and Drostan, both of which will probably appear in the next volume (XXVII.) of the *Trans. Gael. Soc. of Inverness*.

in the tenacity with which they clung to the commemorations of their old missionaries, whose names have been handed down to us from those distant ages in place-names scattered all over the north.¹ As the Roman Church gained in influence it made an attempt to suppress the Pictish commemorations by some of its own saints, and occasionally we find a Pictish and a Romish saint sharing honours together. The first document in the Records (No. 1, p. 1) is of particular interest, as "the monks dwelling at Dornoch in Caithness" were evidently Culdees, representatives of the old monastic Celtic Church.² Since it is Rögnvald, earl of Orkney (1136-1158), who receives the mandate from King David I., the document could not have been earlier than 1136.

The Monks
at Dornoch

As there are so many technical terms occurring in the ecclesiastical documents in the Records, it may be advisable, before giving a general outline of the history of the mediæval Church in Caithness and Sutherland, to turn attention to its constitution.

I.—CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH IN THE SEE OF CAITHNESS (CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND).

It is not known when the bishopric of Caithness was constituted. The earliest bishops on record are Andrew, John, and Adam, all of whom preceded Gilbert, who signalised his episcopate by giving a constitution for the chapter of his diocese (No. 14, p. 14). The reason for the choice of certain places as the bishop's seat is to a large extent a matter of conjecture. At Brechin there had been a house of Keledei or Culdees, who, in process of time, were transformed into secular canons. At Dornoch there was also a Keledei community, but in Gilbert's time (1222-1245) there was

¹ *Eccles. Hist. of Caithness*, 68-88.

² Reeves *On the Céli-dé, commonly called Culdees in Trans. Royal Irish Academy*, XXIV., 150; see also the Notes at the end of the Records.

Dornoch
chosen as
the bishop's
cathedra.

Caithness
Cathedral
formed on
model of
Lincoln.

in the "cathedral church but one priest serving God" (p. 18). Still, the fact that Dornoch had been an ecclesiastical centre may have influenced Gilbert's predecessors to make choice of Dornoch as their *cathedra*. The constitution of the cathedral of Caithness was modelled, like that of Moray and Glasgow, on the cathedral of Lincoln. Bishop Bricius of Moray had obtained an account of the constitution of Lincoln cathedral in 1212 (*Reg. Moraviensis*), on which the cathedral of Moray was modelled. Bishop Gilbert's connection with Moray explains how the cathedral of Caithness adopted the same model. The cathedral was dedicated to the Virgin (p. 18), and there were to be ten canons, with the bishop *ex-officio* (p. 19). Five of these canons were to be dignitaries—the dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer, and archdeacon. The church of Durness was assigned for providing light and incense to the cathedral church (p. 21).

(1) Cathed-
ral organi-
zation:—

The Dean.

Cathedral Organization.—(1) (a) The *Dean (decanus)* was the administrative head, and possessed disciplinary power not only over every member of the chapter, but also over the lesser clergy who were engaged in the services of the cathedral. In chapters where the bishop was a canon he was inferior to the dean, though from his spiritual pre-eminence acknowledgment in many ways was made of his dignity; but in the chapter of Caithness Gilbert expressly says:—"We ordain . . . that in the said Church there shall be ten canons *over whom, as their head, the bishop shall preside*" (p. 19). And again, after mentioning the other dignitaries, he adds: "*next after the bishop* these persons are the principal and chief in the cathedral church" (p. 20). The dean, unlike the other canons who were appointed by the bishop, was "elected or postulated"

The Bishop
head of the
chapter.

¹ The bishop was also a canon in Moray, Aberdeen, Brechin and Ross; this arrangement had parallels in Salisbury, Lincoln, Chichester, and Lichfield, and St. David's (Wales).

by the whole body of the canons, or by the "greater or saner part of them."¹ The dean's allowance (*prebenda*) was the church of Clyne, with the whole revenues and pertinents, the teind sheaves of the city of Dornoch and town of Embo, with the fourth part of the altarage of Dornoch and the whole land of Mid Dornoch (*Methandurnach*), (p. 19). To the dean, in common with the precentor, chancellor and treasurer, there is assigned a "free toft and croft in the city of Dornoch" and the church of Farr with its whole revenues, except the teinds and revenues of Hallidale² (p. 20). The churches assigned to these dignitaries were to be free from all burdens to the archdeacon, officials and rural deans (p. 20). In later times the dean had a deputy, the sub-dean, who acted in his absence.

The dean's
prebend.

The
Sub-dean.

(b) The *precentor* (*cantor*), or chanter, was next in dignity to the dean. He regulated the music, and admitted to office the boys who took part in the service, saw to their instruction and discipline, and appointed the teacher in the song-school. The precentor of Caithness had, as his prebend, the church of Creich, with its whole revenues, pertinents and chapels, the teind sheaves of Pronsy, Evelix, Strathormlary (*Stradormali*), Astle (*Asdale*), Rearquhar, the fourth part of the altarage of Dornoch, and the whole land of *Uachdar Innis* (*Huctherhinche* or *Hector Comon*), Upper Meadow,³ at Dornoch (p. 19); with a free toft and croft in the city of Dornoch and the church of Farr, with its whole revenues except the tiends and revenues of Hallidale, in common with the dean, chancellor and treasurer (p. 20). His church was to be free from all burden from the archdeacon, officials and rural deans. The

The
Precentor

his prebend

¹ Dowden's *Med. Church in Scotland*, 62, 63.

² These had formerly been given to the church of Reay "on account of the proximity of the said church of Hallidale and its great distance from the church of Farr" (p. 20). Halladale was only a chapel, not a parish church.

³ See Notes at the end of the Records.

The Sub-
chanter or
succentor.

precentor was appointed by the bishop. In later times the precentor, when absent, had a deputy, known as the *subchanter* or *succentor*.

The
Chancellor.

(c) The *chancellor* (*cancellarius*) was third in rank. It was his duty to see that the service books had been correctly transcribed, to compose the letters and charters of the chapter, to read in the meetings of the chapter letters and documents that had to be considered, to prepare the list (*tabula*) of singers and readers told off weekly for the several services. He looked after the books in the library of the chapter, and was necessarily a man of some literary attainments.¹ To the chancellor was assigned the church of Rogart, with its whole revenues, the teind sheaves of Skelbo, that is twelve davachs, and the fourth part of the altarage of Dornoch (p. 19). In common with the dean, precentor and treasurer, there was also assigned a free toft and croft in the city of Dornoch and the church of Farr, with its whole revenues except the teinds and revenues of Hallidale (p. 20). The chancellor's church was to be free from all burden to the archdeacon, officials or rural dean (p. 20). He had also assigned to him in common with the treasurer and archdeacon the whole land of Pitgrudie and the two Herkhenys (which was to be divided among them in equal portions) with the common pasture of Dornoch (p. 20).

The
Treasurer.

(d) The *treasurer* (*thesaurarius*) was fourth in dignity. He was custodian of the treasures of the church, relics, and the *ornamenta*, largely consisting of vessels of silver and gold and costly vestments. To the treasurer of Caithness was assigned the church of Lairg, with its whole revenues, the teind sheaves of Skibo and Cyderhall, except the teinds assigned to the precentor at Strathormlary (Stradormali), and the fourth part of the altarage of the church of Dornoch (pp. 19, 20). In common with the dean, precentor and chancellor, the

¹ Dowden's *Med. Church in Scotland*, 61.

treasurer had assigned to him a free toft and croft in the city of Dornoch and the church of Farr, with its whole revenues except the teinds and revenues of Hallisdale (p. 20). To him also, in common with the chancellor and archdeacon, were assigned the whole land of Pitgrudie and the two Herkhenys (which was to be divided among them in equal portions), with the common pasture of Dornoch (p. 20).

(e) The *archdeacon*, whose chief functions were diocesan, in Gilbert's constitution, is specially mentioned as one of the dignitaries. As *archdeacon* it was his duty to visit the churches in the diocese and to supervise the parochial clergy. He examined candidates for ordination and clerks when presented to benefices. To facilitate his work, parishes in most of the dioceses were grouped in sections, which were known as *deaneries of Christianity*, each presided over by a *dean of Christianity* or *rural dean*. Dr. Dowden says, so far as he is aware, there is no evidence to show that the dioceses of Brechin, Ross, and Caithness were divided into rural deaneries.¹ The archdeacon is often, though wrongly, designated *archdean* in Scottish documents. The similarity of sound between *archidecanus* and *archidiaconus* may account for the mistake, but the most probable explanation for the error is that suggested by Dr. Dowden, viz., that archdean meant the chief of the deans, that is the "deans of Christianity."² To the archdeacon of Caithness were assigned the churches of Bower and Watten with their whole revenue and pertinent. In common with the chancellor and treasurer, he had the whole land of Pitgrudie and the two Herkhenys (which was to be divided among them in

The Archdeacon.

his duties

rural dean or dean of Christianity.

Archdean

The Archdeacon's prebend.

¹ *Med. Church in Scotland*, 216. There is the mention of rural deans (p. 20) in Bishop Gilbert's constitution, but there is no evidence in the ecclesiastical documents in the period from 1136-1445 to indicate that there were deaneries of Christianity in the diocese of Caithness.

² *Ibid.*, 221.

equal portions) with the common pasture of Dornoch (p. 20).

The dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer and archdeacon were known as dignitaries (*principales personæ*), and occupied the four terminal stalls when sitting in the choir; besides them there were five other canons in the cathedral—the Bishop, Abbot of Scone, and three canons, the bishop, of course, being head of the Chapter.

The Bishop (f) The *Bishop's* position in the chapter has already been referred to, and his place in the diocesan organisation will be discussed later on. Bishop Gilbert reserved for the episcopal use six out of the fourteen parish churches in the see, which were probably Golspie (Kilmalie), Loth, Reay, Wick, Thurso and Latheron. The teinds of Torboll and Kinnauld and twenty acres of land at Dornoch, with a toft and croft in the same, were assigned for the support of a vicar ministering on the bishop's behalf in the cathedral (p. 21).

The Abbot of Scone. (g) The *Abbot of Scone*, who acted as a canon of Caithness *ex-officio*, had assigned to him the church of Kildonan, with all its revenues (p. 21).

The three canons. (h) The *three canons* had the parishes of Olig, Dunnet and Canisbay separately assigned to them, with the church of Skinnet to be held in common, and whose fruits were to be partaken only as was appointed with regard to the church of Farr (p. 21), and if none of them happened to be resident then these were to go to the maintenance and decoration of the cathedral church, provided one hundred shillings were first paid to William of Ross, clerk of Bishop Gilbert, and three marks to Eudo, his chaplain.

Their prebends. *Seven priests and three deacons* were also appointed. Each dignitary with the Bishop and Abbot of Scone had to provide a priest to minister for them in their absence (p. 19). The other three canons had to provide three deacons, who were to assist and serve the

priests (p. 19). Each of these priests was to celebrate divine service every day, unless canonically prevented, and both priests and deacons were to be present every hour each day, unless any of them through sickness had leave of the bishop or dean. These deputies of the canons were known as *Vicars of the Choir*, or *Vicars Choral*, sometimes *stallaries* (*stallarii*), that is, vicars attached to the canon's stall, to distinguish them from the vicars in charge of the canon's parish.

their duties

Vicars of the Choir, etc.

A *Penalty for Non-Residence* is mentioned in Bishop Gilbert's constitution. The dean was to be in residence for the half of every year and all the other canons, with the exception of the Abbot of Scone, were to be in residence for three months, unless they had leave from the bishop or chapter, failing which they were to pay twelve pence weekly, during absence, towards the maintenance and decoration of the cathedral church. The Abbot of Scone was specially privileged, for he was permitted to serve in the cathedral church by a priest as his vicar, but neither he nor his successors were compelled to be resident or provide a vicar for his prebendal church of Kildonan (pp. 20, 21). The extent to which non-residence affected the Scottish cathedrals is referred to by Dr. Dowden, and many examples are given in his *Medieval Church in Scotland*, 76-80, but as far as our Records reveal there was no trouble from non-residence in Caithness. Gilbert's constitution concludes by invoking the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the canons and vicars who act faithfully, but upon those who "distract and injure" there is invoked the wrath and indignation of Almighty God in eternal damnation (p. 22).

Penalty for non-residence.

Abbot of Scone privileged

(2) *Diocesan Organisation*.—The method of the appointment of bishops, at least after the transition period from Celtic to Anglo-Norman methods, is well established. After the appointment of Cathedral

(2) Diocesan organization.

election of bishops.

chapters, the ordinary rule was that the chapters in the respective dioceses elected the bishops. The order of election was strictly regulated by Canon Law, and the slightest departure from it gave the Pope an opportunity of declaring that the election "had not been canonically celebrated." There were three modes of

mode of
election:—
(1) *per*
scrutinium.

The
Scrutatores.

election:—(1) *per scrutinium*. By this method the chapter made choice of three members, who took the votes of the chapter one by one. Each vote was given secretly and was recorded in writing by the three Examiners or *Scrutatores*. When the votes were counted the result was announced. He who obtained the votes of the "greater and sounder part" (*major et sanior pars*) of the chapter was declared elected. The following Bishops of Caithness in the period covered by the Records were elected by this method: Alan (p. 110), Thomas de Fingask (p. 115). Hervey of Dundee had also been elected by this method, but he died before his consecration (p. 53).

(2) *per com-*
promissum

(2) *per compromissum*. By this method the Chapter committed the choice to certain persons either of their own body or of outsiders, or to some of their own body conjoined with one or more outsiders. This mode was technically described *per viam compromissi*. The following bishops of Caithness were elected by this method:—Archibald (?Heroch, Hayrock), p. 40; Forcard (Fercard, Ferquhard) Belegaumbe, p. 77; Richard, dean of Caithness, was also elected *per viam compromissi*, but the Pope, using his influence, got the old dean to give up all claims to the bishopric, p. 53.

(3) *per in-*
spirationem

(3) *per inspirationem*. When the whole body of the electors without debate or discussion elected the person whose name had been proposed by some one as if they had been directly under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (*per viam Spiritus Sancti*), it was said to be *per inspirationem*. In the period covered by the Records there was no such election to the see of Caithness.

When a person is said to be *postulated* it implied that ^{Postula} there was some canonical impediment which barred him from taking office. A person of illegitimate birth, the head of a monastic institution, and a bishop in charge of a see could not be elected, but the Chapter petitioned or *postulated* the Pope for a dispensation. The same applied to any one under the canonical age—thirty years. When an election was made two or three of the members of the Chapter were sent to Rome, bearing the writ or “decree” reporting the election, or in the case of a postulation, a request together with a declaration setting forth in express terms the nature of the impediments to a canonical election.¹ If any persons ^{Papal} were disposed to object, either on account of alleged ^{Confirm} irregularity in the procedure, or the alleged unfitness ^{tion of} of the person elected or postulated, they too had to ^{bishop} appear at Rome, either in person or by duly ^{elect.} authenticated procurators. The documents were sometimes submitted to members of the College of Cardinals (pp. 41, 77, 111, 115), at other times to three Scottish Bishops (pp. 30, 71). In the latter case, if the Bishops were satisfied they were authorised to confirm the election “in the name of the Pope,” and make provision for the consecration of the elect. When the Pope refused to confirm an election it was not always the practice to state the reason, except in such general terms as “contrary to the approved canonical form” (p. 31), or the “election had not been canonically performed” (p. 64). In some instances the reason is given, as in the case of Nicholas, Abbot of Scone, whose election was not confirmed because “the said Abbot labours under a deficiency of knowledge intolerable in a prelate” (p. 37). In all such cases the Pope claimed the right of appointing the bishop to the vacant see (p. 64). In the case also of the death of Hervey of Dundee before consecration, the Pope appointed his successor (p. 53).

¹ Dowden's *Med. Church in Scotland*, 27.

PAPAL PROVISIONS AND RESERVATIONS.

As time went on there was a growing tendency on the part of the Popes "providing," as it was technically called, to Scottish bishoprics, that is, making appointments *proprio motu*. The first case in the Records of a direct papal *proprio motu* appointment is that of Andrew, Abbot of the Cistercian Monastery of Coupar, by Pope Boniface VIII. (p. 69). Pope John XXII. (1316) inaugurated a new era, and these papal provisions became the order of the day. The Popes from this date, with some exceptions as we shall see,¹ "reserved" to their own appointment or "provision" not only bishoprics, but all elective offices and dignities of value. While in England these papal "provisions" gave rise to keen resentment,¹ in Scotland the discontent was not quite so marked, and the probable reason is that the Popes, benefiting by their experience with England, moved more cautiously in Scotland. The Chapters continued to make the elections, but the Popes declared the elections of the "reserved" sees null and void, and assumed that the Chapter, in ignorance of the reservation, had proceeded with the election. The Pope then proceeded to appoint the person upon whom the Chapter's choice had fallen (p. 158). The system of papal "reservations" proceeded on the doctrine that every ecclesiastical benefice was in theory at the disposal of the Pope. When a benefice became vacant the Pope, by declaring he had reserved it to his own provision, suspended the rights of the ordinary patron. In the Records there are many instances of reservations of deaneries (pp. 216, 219), precentorships (p. 212), chancellorships (p. 226), archdeaconries (pp. 90, 100, 129, etc.), canonries² (pp. 87, 89, 94, 97, etc.). This led to the innumerable petitions to

al Re-
servations.

¹ Pope John's successor in the case of Bishop Alan (No. 46, pp. 108-112), accepted the Chapter's choice without declaring it null and void.

² Nos. 39 (p. 84), 40 (p. 90), 43 (p. 97), give a very good idea of what a 'reservation' meant.

the Pope which we have recorded in the *Calendar of Papal Registers, Petitions*, and of which we have many illustrations in these Records.

PAPAL DISPENSATIONS.

(1) According to the Canon Law no two benefices with pastoral care could be held by one and the same person. But the Popes got over the difficulty by granting dispensations, hence the many references in these Records to petitions to hold more than one benefice (pp. 32, 120, 213). Some of the Caithness clergy carried pluralities to a high degree of perfection (pp. 120, 128, 131, 151, 154, 194. (2) The Canon Law also forbade the ordination of anyone suffering the "defect of birth" (*defectus natalium*), that is one who ^{"Defect of birth."} had not been born in wedlock. Rome got over the difficulty by granting a dispensation, and apart from the notorious instance of the fifty illegitimates for whom the Bishop of Caithness petitioned in 1381 (No. 128, p. 169), we have quite a number of such petitions in these Records (pp. 201, 209, 220, 240). (3) The Canon Law also forbade the bestowal of benefices upon children, but papal dispensations opened up a way whereby favoured children might be appointed such as the sons of royal persons. The case of Alan Stewart, son of the Earl of Caithness and Atholl, aged twelve years and illegitimate, illustrates the above (p. 198).

PAROCHIAL CLERGY.

Reference has already been made to the Archdeacon and his place in the diocesan organisation, and some

¹ Dr. Dowden says:—"What we have to remark is that dispensations for illegitimacy were granted with so lavish a hand that it is certain that a considerable proportion of the clergy of Scotland, not only among the rank and file, but perhaps in even still greater abundance among the dignitaries and high officials of the church, was drawn from the offspring of irregular connexions."—*Med. Church in Scotland*, 280. For cases of dispensations for illegitimacy, see Index under Dispensations, papal.

attention must now be directed to the parochial clergy. Every canon whose prebend was a parish church was bound to provide a deputy to take spiritual charge of the parish. The canon was the rector, and his deputy was designated the vicar. In early times the clergyman appointed was removable at will, but owing to later enactments the vicars having permanency of tenure were known as *perpetual vicars*. In regard to the stipend sometimes the *garbal tithes* or *greater tithes* were assigned to the canon, while the *lesser tithes*¹ were given to the vicar. In other cases the whole tithes of a parish were assigned to the rector, who paid his vicar a fixed sum of money or *pension* as it was called.

CONSISTORIAL COURTS.

In each diocese there was a consistorial court, presided over by a lawyer skilled in the Canon Law. This judge was known as the *official*, and in the Records we have references to him in No. 9, pp. 16, 20; No. 189, p. 235. According to Dr. Dowden,² he was a deputy, not an inferior, judge, and from his decisions there was ordinarily no appeal to the bishop. In the diocese of St. Andrews there were two *officials* for each of the two archdeaconries into which it was divided. The consistorial court dealt with such cases as matrimonial suits, including questions of legitimacy, bastardy and dowry. The probate and interpretative construction of wills also came within its review. Slander, disputes as to patronage and non-payment of tithes, assaults on ecclesiastical persons and brawling in sacred places were some of the matters dealt with by this Court.

¹ The garbal tithes (*decimae garbarum*) were the tithes of the sheaves (*garbae*) of all kinds of grain. These are sometimes called the *greater tithes* as distinguished from the tithes of the young of sheep, kine, and other animals, of milk, butter, cheese, wool, etc., which were called the *lesser tithes*. Dowden's *Med. Church in Scotland*, pp. 162, 163.

² *Med. Church in Scotland*, 288.

APPENDIX.

Charter by King David I., granting Hector Comon to Andrew, Bishop of Caithness.

Register de Dunfermelyn, No. 24. Lawrie's *Early Scottish Charters*, 179.

Circa 1150.

Scone.

David Rex Scottorum, omnibus probis hominibus tocius terrae suae salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse A. Episcopo de Katenes, Hector Comon liberam et quietam ab omni servitio excepto communi exercitu. Testibus, GG. Episcopo Dunkeldense, Duncan, comite, Gillandres de Scona, Alwyn Mac Archil. Apud Scona.

(*Translation.*)

David, King of Scots, to all good men of his whole realm, greeting. Know ye that I have given and granted to Andrew, Bishop of Caithness, Hector Comon, free and quit from all service except in the common army; witnesses, Gregory, Bishop of Dunkeld; Earl Duncan, Gillandres of Scone, Alwyn son of Archil; At Scone.

Charter by King James I to Morgan Neilson of the Lands of Golval, etc.

Registrum Magni Sigilli, Lib. iii., No. 65.

March 20, 1429-30.

Perth.

Rex concessit Morgundo Nelesoun, pro ejus fideli servitio in captione quondam Thome Nelsoun, rebellis regis, fratris ejus carnalis, alias impenso et impendendo in posterum,—terras de Galvale et de Balehegliss in Strathelovdele, de Achaness, Alcaassmore, Leynsatmore et Inveran, vicecomitatu Inverness:—Tenendas dicto Morgundo et heredibus ejus de corpore ejus legitime procreatis in feodo: Faciendo tres sectas curie, etc., apud Invernys annuatim cum wardis, etc.

(*Translation.*)

The King [James I.] grants to Morgan Neilson for

his faithful service in the capture of the deceased Thomas Neilson, the King's rebel, his natural brother, likewise for service rendered and to be rendered in time coming the lands of Golval and Kirktown in Strath Halladale, Achness, Altasmole, Linsidemore and Inveran, in the sheriffdom of Inverness; to be held by the said Morgan and his heirs lawfully procreated of his body in fee; Rendering three suits of court, etc., at Inverness yearly, with wards, etc.

NEWS NOTES.

Northern Chronicle. The Frasers of Belladrum, continued, Jan. 6, Feb. 24. "Celtic Missionaries on the Continent," Saint Columbanus, by Rev. Archibald Scott, Helmsdale, March 10.

John O'Groat Journal. Review of SAGA-BOOK, Dec. 18. The Geology of Caithness, review of the Geological Society's latest memoir, Feb. 5. "Records of the Earldom of Orkney," letter from A. W. Johnston, March 5.

Orkadian. The Gannetry at "The Stack," Orkney Islands, by J. H. Gurney, F.Z.S. (from "The Ibis" for October), Nov. 7. Dr. Craven's gift to Aberdeen University, of the "Kirkwall Bibliothek," 500 volumes and 50 MSS., Dec. 19. Rev. Daniel McNeill, M.D., an appreciation, Jan. 30. "Records of the Earldom of Orkney," review and correspondence, Jan. 23; Feb. 6, 20, 27. Scottish History Society, annual meeting, Dec. 26.

Orkney Herald. "Records of the Earldom of Orkney," correspondence Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27, Feb. 10, 17, 24. Old Norse Law in Orkney, note, March 3.

Shetland News. "Mansie's Röd," in the dialect, continued weekly. "Records of the Earldom of Orkney," letter by A. W. Johnston, March 6.

Shetland Times. "The Norse discovery of America," by John Nicolson, March 6.

Scotsman. Review of "Records of the Earldom of Orkney," edited for the Scottish History Society by J. Storer Clouston, and "Orkney and Shetland Records," vol. I., Viking Society, edited by A. W. and Amy Johnston, Dec. 24.

Montreal Gazette. Review of *Old-Love Miscellany*, Dec. 5.

Ancient Church Dedications in Scotland (non-Scriptural dedications) by James M. Mackinlay, F.S.A., is announced by Messrs. Douglas and Foulis, Edinburgh, at 12s. 6d. net. The Editor regrets that a copy will not be sent for review.



THE MARQUIS OF STAFFORD AND LADY EVELYN GOWER.
From a mezzotint by Samuel Cousins after Sir E. Landseer.

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND.

VOL. VIII.

PART III.

JULY, 1915.

NOTES.

VIKING FUND.—To tide the Society over the War, the President, Mr. James Gray, has offered to contribute £20, if nineteen other members will each subscribe £10. A few members have been written to, and the following have already responded: Professor W. P. Ker, £10 (paid); Miss Horsford, £15 (paid); Mr. W. H. Young, £10 (paid); Sir John R. G. Sinclair, Bt., £2 2s. (paid); Professor C. W. C. Oman, £1 1s. (paid); Mr. J. T. Smith Leask, £1 2s. 6d. (paid); Mr. Ernest Payne, £1 1s. (promised); Mr. John Kitching, £10 (promised). Any members who feel disposed to help should communicate with the Honorary Secretary.

MISCELLANY.—As Low's *Tour* in Orkney was offered to the Society on condition that it was printed complete in one number, it forms the bulk of this issue; consequently Shetland, Caithness and Sutherland will receive fuller treatment in the October number.

THE SUTHERLAND FAMILY.—By the courtesy and kind permission of Messrs. Maggs Brothers, 109, Strand, a reproduction is given of a large mezzotint by Samuel Cousins, after Sir E. Landseer, R.A., size, $26\frac{1}{4} \times 19\frac{7}{8}$ inches, 1841, brilliantly printed in colours, which is probably unique in this state. The portraits are of the Marquess of Stafford (1828-1892) and Lady Evelyn Gower (died 1869). The Marquess was Lieut.-Colonel 1st Sutherland Volunteers, and succeeded his father, as third Duke of Sutherland, in 1861. Lady Evelyn Gower married, in 1843, Charles, twelfth Lord Blan-

tyre. Messrs. Maggs' Catalogue, No. 335, also contains the portrait of Miss Frances Isabella Gordon, granddaughter of the third Duke of Gordon, from the painting by Sir J. Reynolds, represented by five cherub heads in different positions. Also George, fifth Duke of Gordon.

“OF THAT ILK.”—Nichole Ayth, “of that ilk,” was elected “Lawman-generale of all Zetland,” in the Ting Holm of Tingwale, July 27th, 1532. From this statement one would imagine that a good Norse óðal family, at this early date (only 64 years after the transference of the islands from Norway to Scotland), had already adopted the Scottish fashion of using a place-surname, with the addition of the eccentric and uncouth Scottish provincialism, “of that ilk.” However, in 1576, by mere chance, we find that his son, Magnus Reid, of Ayth, bore a good Scottish surname. So here we have an instance of a Scotsman adopting a Shetland place-surname instead of his own fixed Scottish surname of Reid. (See Balfour's *Oppressions*, 36, 37).

The family of Halcro, in Orkney, bearing a place-surname which is alone represented by a genuine place-name in Caithness, acquired the place called Holland, in South Ronaldsey, and gave it the alternative name of Halcro, and thereafter styled themselves “Halcro of that ilk.” This was also in the beginning of the sixteenth century. That this family was of Caithness origin is supported by its many Caithness alliances. Their Caithness connexion may account for the unique explanation of *roith*, as the right of redeeming alienated lands (which is narrated in their Scottish royal charter of primogeniture, in 1544), on the supposition that they associated this incidental feature of óðal *ráð* with the Gaelic *rath*, a surety or pledge.

The Scottish family of Balfour, which settled in Orkney in the 16th century, and which afterwards

became the senior branch of the family, have since supplemented their seniority by founding "Balfour," in Shapinsey.

From these typical examples it is reasonable and safe to assume that the concurrency of the Scottish Lowland settlement of Orkney with the appearance of place-surnames "of that ilk," in Orkney, is not a coincidence, but points to the adoption of Orkney place-surnames by the Scottish settlers, especially in the case of those who used the eccentric Scottish and un-Norse designation, "of that ilk." To found a new family, with a new name all to itself, and "of that ilk" (be "that ilk" only a few "rigs," as was frequently the case), would be quite in keeping with the conceit of mediocre Scottish adventurers. We have numerous known instances of persons with Scottish names masquerading in Orkney place-surnames, which would have been a political advantage in the case of fugitives, of which there were many in the islands—"broken Hielan men," and such like riff-raff.

The designation, "of that ilk," is unknown and foreign to Norse custom. O.N. *ilkafóðr*, feet of a polecat, *ilkvistr*, a toe (Fritzner), *ilki*, the sole of a foot (*Orkneyinga*). The nearest approach in O.N. is, *iðglíkr*, adj., identical, > *i-líkr*.

It is therefore safe to assume that most, if not all, families "of that ilk," in Orkney and Shetland, are of Scottish origin in the male line. Of course, they would intermarry with native women and acquire *óðul* by hook or by crook. The Scottish settlers were the chief favourites or "parasites" as well as the chief opponents of the Stewart earls, and were also the chief "champions" of *óðal* rights, as is shown in Balfour's *Oppressions*.—A. W. J.

LYKEN COW.—This term occurs in 1542, in *Orkney and Shetland Records*, Vol. I., 76, in connexion with

St. Andrews, the meaning not being clear. The family mentioned was the Fressells or Frasers, a Gaelic name. In *Records of the Earldom of Orkney*, p. 290, in 1574, in the same district, occurs: "ane lykand kow with calff," which appears to explain the term, viz., a cow in or with calf. The old Norse names for a cow in calf are, *kýr með fangi*, *kálf-bær*, and *kálf-full*; the Gaelic term being *bó-laoigh*, *bó*, a cow, and *laoigh*, a calf. *Lykand*, or *lyken* cow with calf, may therefore be partly a translation and partly a corruption of *bó-laoigh*: **laoigh-en* cow with calf.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

"KINDLY TENANTS" OF ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.—In 1626, the bishop and chapter of Orkney granted a charter of heritable feufarm to Mr. Harie Aitkin of various (udal) lands in Orphir which had been "sold and disposed" to Mr. Aitkin by the udallers thereof, and of the 9 pennyland of Grundwatter and quoy thereof, called Skelbuster, the "tak and kyndnes" of which had been "assigned and disposed" to Mr. Aitkin by Robert Bannatyne, sometime "kyndlie tenant" of the same. (Protocol Book of D. Heart, No. 252, Gen. Reg. House).

The only other references to kindly tenants in the islands, known to the writer, are the following. In the answers to the earl of Morton, in the litigation about the weights and skatt, January 18, 1751, p. 11, there is a reference to "the tenants or possessors of the king's property lands, whether these be feuars in the modern sense by written charters, or kindly tenants or udallers without charters. . . . Many of the udallers took charters of their lands . . . in the time of *Stewart* earl of Orkney." Although the "king's property lands" did not include the udal lands, the latter are so included here by the earl of Morton. The point is, however, that the *udallers* were equated with "the kindly tenants of the king" in Lochmaben (see p. 17, *ibid*), who were at that time the only kindly tenants left in Scotland,

and who, like the udallers, held their lands without charters. The erroneous inclusion of the udallers among the owners of the "property lands" of the earldom, their description as "kindly tenants," and the statement that they took charters in the time of the Stewart earls probably accounts for Hibbert's statement: "The earliest feuars of the Crown estates were named the kindly tenants of the king" (*Description*, 1822, 318. ed. 1891, 132).

The sources of Hibbert's information on feudal grants in Orkney and Shetland are cited as "Memorials," of 1776, in the action by Sir Lawrence Dundas, "relative to his assumed right of superiority" (*Description*, p. 327). These Memorials have not been consulted by the writer, but they evidently contain a mis-statement about the kindly tenants, similar to that contained in the above quoted Answers by the earl of Morton, who was Dundas's predecessor in the earldom estate.

There were, originally, two classes of kindly tenants in Scotland, viz., (1) hereditary tenants, [subject to legal ejection and increase of rent], who enjoyed a sort of fixity of tenure on account of their ancestors having been in occupation before them, and evidently confined to the tenancies of Crown and church lands; this class is now extinct (see E.D.D., s.v.); (2) "the king's kindly tenants" of the Barony or Four Towns of Lochmaben, who hold their lands by bare possession and without charter. King Robert the Bruce (who owned Lochmaben Castle), on his succession to the throne, is said to have granted these lands to the household servants or garrison of the castle, to be held without charter, for the payment of a small rent to the Crown. "The tenants' right was renewed by James VI. and Charles II., confirmed by the Court of Session, and by a decree of the British House of Peers, the 28th December, 1726. and 14th January, 1727." The property of these lands is transferable by delivery and possession only, the

name of the new owner being entered in the rental-book of the hereditary keeper of the castle, Lord Stormont, now earl of Mansfield (see *Old Stat. Acct.*, VII., 239).

“Kindly” means kin-ly, of the same kin. The tenancy itself was called a “kindlie” or “kindnes.” With regard to the “kindnes” of Grundwater, unless it can be proved that Robert Bannatyne succeeded his father in the tenancy, or acquired it from another hereditary tenant, the term is merely applied to his long or 19 years’ lease (as opposed to the usual three years’ lease), the remainder of which he sold to Aitkin, who, on the expiry of the lease, obtained a feu of the land from the bishop, as is stated in *Peterkin’s Rental*, No. V. (bishop Graham’s Rental, 1615-1639): Grundwater 9d. land paying an annual rent, and gersum every third year, ‘this set in a nineteen years’ tack’ to Mr. Harie Aitkine, commissary, and thereafter feued to him and pays no gersum, in augmentation, 6s.

William Bannatyne, son of John Bannatyne, burgess of Lanark, appears to have come to Orkney about 1587, when he got a lease of a house in Kirkwall. He bought Gairsay in 1588. His wife, Ann Halcro, died 1612. He had a son Robert, “who was a writer,” and occupied the mill of Kirbister, Orphir, which he sold in 1618. This Robert married Barbra Irvine, and had a son Robert, who got Hobister in 1621 (*MS. “Notes on the Bellendens of Orkney,”* 1908, by James Mac-William).

It is not clear which Robert sold the lease of Grundwater. Grundwater was bought by Earl William (before 1470), and remained a part of the “property lands” of the earldom until 1614, when it was transferred to the bishopric, in the exchange and consolidation of these two estates, which then took place.

Can any reader send the reference to “kindly tenants” in the *Memorials of 1776*, and notices of any “kindlies” in Orkney or Shetland?—A. W. JOHNSTON.

QUERIES.

ORKNEY LAWYERS (p. 15, *ante*).—As biographical notices of Charles Steuart and Joshua Johnston are given in this number, it would be interesting if any readers could give similar notices of the other lawyers and persons mentioned, viz., Patrick Boag, John Stowt, and Mr. John Riddock. In addition to these, the following names also occur:—James McCalla, Stromness, Magnus Cromartie, sometime merchant in Stromness, James Stewart, “Mr. Stewart, my dear brother Joannes Nisbett.”

The following additional notes from the volume will be of interest:—

A form of Renunciation has a reference to “the deceased James Lumsden, my cussen german” (fol. 165). There is a form of “A disposition of lands in the country of Orkney,” in which the name of Harie Grahame occurs (fol. 171); he was born 1648, and died 1718. In a form of Charter for letting a ship, is mentioned, “David Gray, skipper and master under God of the barque” which was “sett and lett” to Sir Hugh Patersone on behalf of “the noble earle” (fol. 187). There is a later addition in modern handwriting of a “Disposition, W[illiam] D[ouglas] of E[gilsha] to A[lexander] D[ouglas] his eldest lawfull sone of the estate and lands of E[gilsha], bearing sundrie clauses in good style, etc.” In this disposition is mentioned a contract of marriage, of April 12, 1688, between Alexander Douglas, eldest son of William Douglas of Egilsha, and Jonet Scott, relict of umquwhile A. C. of W. With the consent of George Leslie, of K., advocate, William disposes his estate to his son, including a tack of teinds of Zell and Fetlar, in the country of Zetland, reserving 11 merk land of Luseter, in Zell, for a glebe and manse for the minister and reader; and a similar tack of Flotay, Walls and Stromness, which had been set by the late bishop, in April,

1687. The messuage and manor place of Egilsha, called K., is mentioned. The disposition was written by William Sempill, servitor to John Erveing, writer, Edinburgh, and was subscribed 12th and 21st July, 1701, at the Cannongate and Edinburgh, by Will. Douglass and Geo. Leslie, before James Hamiltoun, &c.

What is the name of the manor place of Egilsey, "K"? Who was Jonet Scott's first husband, "A. C. of W."?—A. W. J.

JOHN ROSE OF BROALEY.—In a 17th century MS. volume of philosophic and scientific subjects, in the writer's possession, is written "John Rose of Broaley is the lawfull owner of this book, 1710, 27 July. A man of understanding is convinced by rule." Who was he, and where is Broaley? Also "James Halcro, 1709," "Elizabeth, William, Thomas, James, and Charles Halcro."—A. W. J.

REPLY.

"ROITH AND UPPA" (V., 154).—The following chronological illustrations of the changes in the legal description of *óðal* (udal land) and its *hlunnindi* (appurtenances) will help to explain the mysterious term *uppa* :—

16th century : "*réttr* and *ráð eign óðal* and *sam- eign*."

17th century : "*óðal*, as well property as commonty." Rights of commonty are frequently given in detail, such as "the *privilege* of cutting peats and pasturing cattle *upon* the common hill."

1631 : udal land (in Rousey) "and *privilege* of *uppa* thereof" (D. Heart's Protocol Book, No. 555, Gen. Reg. House).

1748: udal land (in Hara) "with the *roith* and *uppa* of the same" (original MS. with Mr. J. Storer Clouston).

"*Réttr* and *ráð eign óðal*," refers to the right, rule and possession of the *óðal* itself, together with its contiguous or outlying private pasture, etc.; while *sam- eign*, joint possession, must refer to the *privilege* of common pastures, etc., *upon* the hill or commonty.

An *óðalsmaðr* (udaller) enjoyed the *ráð* or rule of his *óðal*, and by his own *ráð* he alienated or redeemed it. After the transference of Orkney to Scotland a new class of landowners arose in the buyers of earldom and church lands, and Mackenzie, in his *Grievances*, maintained that the genuine udaller assumed the distinctive designation of "roithman" (*ráð-maðr*), *i.e.*, the possessor of *óðal ráð*, in order to distinguish him from the new landowners; but the writer would suggest that the *bona fide* *óðalsmaðr* assumed the name of *ráð-maðr* to differentiate him from the owners of alienated *óðul* (udal lands), who appear to have been also called *óðalsmenn*, and are referred to as such, under the generic term "uthale men" (*óðalsmenn*) in the rentals of the Scottish skatt-collectors. As the members of the assize of the law-thing were called "roithmen and roithmen's sons" in the beginning of the 16th century, it would appear that the members of the assize, at that time, were limited to the genuine *óðalsmenn*. *Ráð* is once defined (1544) as the right to redeem alienated *óðal*, but this can only have been a temporarily restricted and one-sided meaning of the word (see p. 114). An *óðalsmaðr* was *ráð-maðr* of his *óðal*, whether it was in his actual possession or otherwise alienated, and this is the only meaning of the term which will explain its use in all cases.

As *ráð* refers to the *óðal*, it follows that *uppa* in "roith and uppa" refers to the commonty; *uppa* (O.N. *upp á*, upon) corresponding with *upon* in the regular

expression, "upon the commonty." It may be a relic of some such expression as "upp á fjalli," *upon* the hill, or "upp á almenning," *upon* the commonty; in the same way as "afore" is now used in the phrase: "to gang afore," to go before [the cliff], *i.e.*, to commit suicide by jumping over the cliff into the sea.—
A. W. JOHNSTON.

A VISIT TO SHETLAND IN 1832.

(From the Journal of Edward Charlton, M.D.)

XIV.

(Continued from p. 84, *ante*).

NORTHMAVINE (*continued*).

A little distance from these,¹ low down on the banks of Nithista,² occurs actinolite, of a beautiful leek green colour, and in masses of large size, while in some specimens the crystals of this mineral are disseminated separately, like those from the Tyrol, in a matrix of pearly talc. At the Gio of Gordiestack,³ on the west, chlorite is met with in abundance, with pearly nacrite of a reddish pink hue, and in the chlorite are imbedded numerous octohedrons of magnetic iron ore. Close to this spot is a vein of light pistachio green epidote, with well-defined crystals. The kyanite is also found in great abundance at Hillswick imbedded in quartz blocks in mica slate. Many of the specimens I brought from thence have a splendid lustre, and are generally of a light pink or flesh colour. It is on the western side of

¹ *i.e.*, strata of mica slate.

² Usually Neddister, which Jakobsen thinks may be identical with the "Nwtasæther for nordhan Mawid" of 1490, ON. **nauta-setr*, cattle farm.

³ ON. *garða-stakkr*? *garðr* > *gord* in Shetland.

the promontory that the grandest rock scenery is presented to the eye. The Drongs,¹ a mighty mass of granite, rise between two and three hundred feet from the ocean, at the distance of about half a mile from the shore. Under certain aspects these huge and isolated rocks present the appearance of towers and of a castellated building, while from the north or south, where their sharpened edge is presented to the spectator, they form narrow, slender stacks and pinnacles. During the long summer nights, when, though the sun has gone down, a bright red and yellow sky tinges the north till it melts into the roseate hue of morn, the summits of the Drongs, white with the droppings of innumerable sea-fowls, show out like the sails of some huge phantom ship, peering above the mist which, at that hour, often floats lazily and low over the surface of the ocean. [A water-colour drawing of the "Drongs at midnight," by W. Brodrick, is given, but cannot be satisfactorily reproduced here.]

To the north of Hillswick² Ness, and above the bay, immediately west of the church, rises a high cliff of red granite. From a spot, about one hundred feet from the summit of this precipice, there gushes out, especially after long-continued rains, a mud spring (if it may be so called), carrying with it a large quantity of red clay intermixed with numerous fragments of felspar. My attendant, Lawrie Robertson, slung himself, with a rope, over the giddy height, to obtain some of this remarkable product, which has long been a subject of wonder to the Shetlanders. Of course, it may be easily explained. The water filters, from above, into some crevice in the granite rock, carrying with it a quantity of the red soil from the surface. The grosser particles of the soil are deposited in the passage through the rock, the finer, when well amalgamated, form the red-

¹ ON. *drangr*, pointed rock.

² *Hildis-vík*, from Hildir, a man's name (Jakobsen).

dish clay which pours out often in a continuous stream from the surface of the cliff.

Tuesday, September 11th. At 6 a.m. I set off for Tangwick, and reached that hospitable mansion by seven, in good time to breakfast with Mr. Cheyne, the brother of the worthy proprietor of Ollaberry.¹ He was an aged and very infirm man, but very kind and gentle.² He was dreadfully affected with a violent chronic cough, which rendered him at times very difficult to understand. He showed me a curious piece of coral which had lately been brought to him from the haaf, or deep-sea fishing, and which bore a rude, though striking, resemblance to the human face and figure. It was, no doubt, regarded with awe by the superstitious Shetlanders, who would certainly believe it to be a petrified mermaid or a great sea-trow converted into cranzie.³

On my way to Tangwick I passed by Doreholm,⁴ the finest perforated arch in Shetland. The height from the ocean to the top of the arch is ninety feet, and the breadth proportionally great. The summit of the rock affords good pasturage for sheep. From hence I continued my journey to Eshaness,⁵ a station equal in importance to that of Gloup Voe, and then turned northwards to seek the Grind of the Navir.⁶ Along the whole of the west coast of Northmavine,⁷ from

¹ Óla(fs)-berg; berg > berri.

² John Cheyne, of Tangwick, son of James Cheyne and Ann Gifford, and brother of Arthur Cheyne, of Ollaberry, died 1840, and succeeded by his son Harry (Grant).

³ *kransi*, coral, *millepora polymorpha*, ON. *krans*, *kranz*, m., Dan. *krans*, wreath, garland, in Norwegian also *klase*, *klynge* (Jakobsen); Eng. crants.

⁴ ON. **dura-hólmr*, door-holm? See illustration p. 65, *ante*.

⁵ ON. **esja*, f. (Norwegian, "esja," partly a kind of steatite, partly a harder sort of stone, which is easily cleft in flakes)—hence *Esjanes*, the geological characteristic of which is volcanic stone, lava, in accordance with Tudor (Jakobsen).

⁶ See frontispiece Vol. VII.

⁷ ON. **mæf-cið*, narrow isthmus.

Stenness to the mouth of Roeness Voe,¹ a mural rampart of porphyry binds the amygdaloidal rocks, as if to protect the more fragile material from the Atlantic. But at the Grind of the Navir, the barrier itself has given way to so mighty an engine of destruction, a passage has been burst in the porphyry wall, which here is at least forty yards in thickness, and the huge ruins strewn beyond the breach attest the power of the conquering element. Masses of stone, several tons in weight, have been hurled to the distance of three or four hundred yards, and have there been piled one upon the other till they, again, have formed a barrier to any further encroachments of the ocean. Still, however, does the original breach widen every year; and, during the stormy winter of 1833-34, many hundred tons of rock were torn from their bed and forced up far upon the land. The word *grind* is of Norse extraction, and signifies an opening or wicket in a wall, and nowhere is this more applicable than in the present instance. The bed of the breach is by no means on a level with the surface of the ocean, being at least twenty feet above high-water mark. What, then, must be the force of that wave which can tear stones from their position at so great a height, and, more than this, can project them some hundred yards upon the plain? But the foundation itself, of the Grind, is beginning to give way. In 1834, Mr. Cholmely told me that he had observed a small hole or funnel on the right side of the Grind, through which, though elevated twenty feet above the ocean level, the waves spouted up with great force and formed a species of marine fountain on a grand scale. I had closely examined all parts of the Grind two years before Cholmely's visit, and this singular phenomenon, had it then existed, would undoubtedly have attracted my

¹ON. **hrauns-vágr*, *hraun*, stony ground, *vágr*, a creek. In Shetland ON. *hraun* > *røni*. (Jakobsen). There is a point at Hillswick, called Roeness, ON. *rauða-nes*, red ness.

attention, but my not having noticed it warrants the conclusion that it had been formed by the storms of the preceding winter. But, I well remember then that, a heavier wave than usual put me in no small peril as I stood in the Grind to break off a specimen of the beautiful porphyry, as if the jealous waters were resolved to keep to themselves the right of quarrying and destroying the barrier of rock. Indeed the whole aspect of this spot is that of some vast excavation by the hands of the strong men [of] old, but the roar of the angry sea is louder than the clang of hammers or the blasts of the miner. The wind, on the day that I visited the Grind, blew strongly from the south-west, and the white foam of the troubled ocean was borne to the height of one or two hundred feet above the water, and strewed the green-sward like flakes of winter's snow. Here and there I observed long streaks of small broken stones, and how they had been thus located on the green and verdant herbage. My guide, Arthur Robertson, assured me that they were thrown up from the sea during the winter's gales. I confess that I could discover no other cause for the phenomenon, and am, therefore, constrained to believe that these pebbles have been hurled over a bar of at least one hundred feet in height, by the force of the winter's storms.

To the north-west of the Grind is to be seen Ossa Skerry,¹ one of the wildest holms in Shetland, and tenanted only by sea-birds, and lashed by the Atlantic waves. Beyond this, and considerably to the right, Roeness Hill upraises its bare and rugged summit, while, behind, stretches a long and desolate moor enlivened by few appearances of cultivation.

In a small lake,² to the eastward of the Grind, is a pretty perfect brough, with a stone causeway leading

¹ ON. *áss*, a rocky ridge (Jakobsen).

² Loch of Priest Houlland? (see Tudor, 536). In the rental of *circa*, 1500 it is Prest Heland. Jakobsen thinks that place-names in *Prest* point to the Keltic *papas* or priests, see also Low, 136.

to it, a little raised above the water's edge. "Here," said my guide, with an arch smile, "a tree once grew, whose top met and interlaced with one that sprang from the summit of Roeness Hill."¹ But Arthur Robertson had unfortunately forgotten the period of the destruction of these wonderful trees, nor could he tell what use was made of the wood they must have supplied. If the tree fell to the west when cut down, we have at once the origin of the Grind of Navir.²

A little to the south of the Grind of the Navir are the Holes of Scraada,³ a fearful yawning cleft, of whose existence you are not aware till close upon the brink. The length of the excavation is about [dimensions omitted]. It is two hundred and forty yards from the sea, yet communicates with it by a subterraneous passage, through which the waves enter, and some bolder Shetlanders have even explored the whole length of this dismal gallery in boats. During the heavy gales of 1833, the rock pigeons, which roost here in great numbers, were drowned in multitudes by the heavy surf rolling up to the roof of the cavern. The sea lay calm and still in this inland basin, while not three hundred yards off, the ocean, though unseen, roared hoarsely against the rocky barrier. A little before we arrived at the Grind, my guide led me to the brink of the precipice and bade me take off my shoes in preparation for a climb. He disappeared over the brink and I followed him down the face of the cliff for about twenty or thirty yards, till we stood before the mouth of a cavern. "This," said he, "is the 'barn of Scraada'; you have heard of it before." I had; I

¹ON. **hrauns-fell*, hill of the stony ground; in Pont's map, 1646, "Renisfelt hill," see Jakobsen.

²This reminds one of the Icelandic story of two disappointed lovers who committed suicide and were buried, one on each side of a church, and from the grave of each grew a tree, and the branches of both trees became entwined over the roof of the church.

³Can this be ON. *skratti*, a goblin, wizard, *vatna-skratti*, a water-sprite?

knew it as one of the great resorts of the hunted natives during the last war, when the press-gang desolated the country. It was hither that they had often fled, that by their number and by the natural strength of their position they might bid defiance to the cruelty of the laws. Above them the rock was nearly perpendicular, and the greatest care was required in the descent, which admitted of but one man at a time; while below, at the depth of one hundred feet, rolled the dark ocean. The platform before the cave is not more than four feet square, and below that the rock resumes its perpendicularity sheer down into the sea. The cave is not large, but dry and comfortable within, and has, no doubt, been the scene of many a night of anxious misery.

On my return from the Grind of the Navir, I found a letter at Hillswick from Mr. Yorston, the banker in Lerwick. I had written to him a few days before for some money, and, stupidly enough, I found that my cheque had been left behind at Gloup. Henderson, who appeared to be pretty well tired of geology, immediately offered to go back to Gloup for it, to which I assented, and he packed up everything for a start on the following morning.

VISITATIONS AND PORTRAITS.

CHARLES STEUART.

(See p. 15, *ante*.)

Charles Steuart, Commissary and Stewart Clerk of Orkney, was the second son of John Steuart, writer in Edinburgh, and Cicill Scott, his wife. He was baptised at Edinburgh, 20th January 1675, the witnesses being "Mr. Charles Ker, of Abotsrule, Sir George Maxwell of Pollockmaxwell, John Cunninghame of Enterkine, Mr. John Stuart, of Askog, Advocat, Charles Stuart, Comisar. of Dunkeld, Francis Scott, writer, and Charles Robertson,

Merchant.” Charles Mitchell wrote to him, 10th Sept., 1703 as “Kind Godson,” and said that when the French spared his letters “the complement has been wholly designed ffor you as proceeding from the due veneration they have for yor great name.” He was made Stewart Clerk of Orkney (a position, according to George Chalmers, “more honourable than lucrative”) 8th November, 1698. He was then “writter in Edinburgh,” a Notary Public. He was admitted as a Burgess of Wick 30th August, 1702, signed the declaration of Allegiance to Queen Anne as “Admiral Clerk of Orkney.” He was ‘Admiral Substitute’ on 5 June 1712, and was made Commissary Clerk of Orkney in 1725, through the influence of his cousin, William Steuart of Weyland, M.P., King’s Remembrancer, whose father, Thomas Steuart, of Weyland, had held the same office. He was one of the witnesses, on 26th Oct., 1725, of the slaughter of Capain Moodie of Melsetter in the Broad Street of Kirkwall by the Stewarts of Burray, and it is mentioned that “the two young Honymans and the Stewart Clerk kept Sir James back.” He had obtained earlier from Sir Archibald Stewart of Burray “the house and yaird . . . lying upon the head of the broad street of Kirkwall.” He died at Kirkwall, 4th March, 1731. His portrait exists, in the possession of James Steuart, Esq., W.S. He married three times. 1st, in 1704, Jean Black, widow of William Orem, writer in Kirkwall, and had two children, who died young. 2nd, at Kirkwall, 28th April 1715, Marjorie, eldest daughter of William Traill of Westness, and Barbara Balfour, his wife. She died in 1726, leaving issue. 3rd, 13th February 1731, Sibilla, youngest daughter of Mr. William Mackenzie, Commissary of Orkney, who survived him.—A. F. S.

[A portrait of Mr. Steuart will be given in a future number.—EDITOR.]

JOSHUA JOHNSTON.

(See p. 15, *ante*.)

Joshua Johnston, son of John Johnston, merchant, Stromness, and Marjorie Crafts (daughter of John Crafts, shipowner, London, and Marjorie Loutitt, of Lyking, Sandwick), born Saturday, 16th, baptised 17th January, 1719/20, died June 20th, 1794. He married, January 19th, 1749, Margaret, daughter and heiress of William Halcro, of Coubister, and Margaret Honyman. On March 24th, 1738, he was indentured for two years to Mr. John Ridock, Stewart Clerk of Orkney, the fee being 200 marks. He was "created" Notary Public, February 14th, 1745, by the Lords of Council and Session, and in the certificate he is described as "writer in Edinburgh." He practised as a solicitor in Stromness, and acted as agent for his native town in the action against Kirkwall (see p. 14, *ante*), which was begun by his father. He had with other issue, John, who succeeded his mother in the entailed estate of Coubister.

The MS. book of juridical forms was probably given by Mr. Charles Steuart, Stewart Clerk, to Mr. John Riddock, Stewart Clerk, by whom it was given to his pupil, Mr. Joshua Johnston. No portrait of Joshua Johnston exists, but his son John wrote beneath an engraved portrait of Kenneth III.: "A striking likeness of Mr. Joshua Johnston, of Stromness, Orkney," which is reproduced here, together with a silhouette of his son John and a photograph of his grandson James.

A. W. J.





A STRIKING LIKENESS OF MR.
JOSHUA JOHNSTON, N.P.

Born 1720; Died 1794.

*From an engraved portrait of Kenneth III.
in Quintilian's "Institutes of the
Orator," Vol. I.*



JOHN JOHNSTON, OF COUBISTER.

Born 1760; Died 1821.

From the original silhouette dated 1806.



JAMES JOHNSTON, OF COUBISTER.

Born 1798; Died 1887.

*From a photograph by J. Moffat,
Edinburgh.*

TOUR
Through the North Isles and part of the
Mainland of
ORKNEY
IN THE YEAR 1778

By
REV. GEORGE LOW
Author of "Fauna Orcadensis," etc.

LONDON
Printed for the
VIKING SOCIETY FOR NORTHERN RESEARCH
University of London
1915

TOUR IN ORKNEY, 1778.

IN 1879 "A Tour through the Islands of Orkney and Shetland," in 1774, by the Rev. George Low, edited by Dr. Joseph Anderson, was published by Messrs. Peace & Son, Kirkwall. That tour, so far as Orkney was concerned, dealt mainly with the southern isles. But in the year 1778 Low accomplished his projected visit to the northern isles as well, and wrote "a tolerably good description of them," as he stated in a letter to Mr. Paton, the Edinburgh antiquary. The manuscript, however, disappeared, and Dr. Anderson, when issuing the "Tour" of 1774, above referred to, deplored its loss. Fortunately, it has since been recovered, and is now in the possession of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. It is contained in a quarto volume entitled—

Journal Tour thro' the North Isles and part of the Mainland of Orkney, 1778. With additions by a later hand. By Mr. Low, Minister, employed for the purpose by Thos. Pennant, Esq.

The part describing the districts in question occupies thirty pages of the volume, and comprises Evie, Wyre, Rousay, Egilshay, Eday, Fara, Westrey and Papa Westrey. The 208 pages which follow are part of a history of Orkney, founded on Torffæus. The beginning and the end are wanting. It bears the bookmark of "Thomas Stewart Traill, M.D.," and on the fly-leaf are the following notes, viz. :—

"This volume was picked up on a bookstall at Leeds in 1837, and presented to me by my friend, John Hogg, Esq., of that town. It formed a part of Low's MS. collections about Orkney. The fragments of the history of Earl Sigurd is an abridged translation of Torfæus, as his history of Orkney certainly was,—T. S. T."

“ Bought at a book sale at Dowell’s on 8 May, 1899, by Sir Arthur Mitchell. It came to the sale from the house of the late Dr. Omond, Charlotte Square.—A. M.”

CONTENTS (in Sir Arthur’s handwriting):—

1. Tour thro’ the North Isles and part of the Mainland of Orkney, 1778.
2. Abridged Translation of parts of Torfæus.
3. Draft of Low’s letter to Pennant of 12 April, 1773. Inserted at the end.
4. Letter from Mr. Louttit, 7 Nov., 1833, with Biographical Notices of Mr. Low. Inserted at the end.”

The MS. is not accompanied by drawings, maps, or other illustrations, though these have at one time been in existence.

The author, the Rev. George Low, an eminent naturalist, to whom we owe the “Fauna Orcadensis,” was a native of Edzell, in Forfarshire. For some years tutor to the family of Mr. Robert Graham, Stromness, he received the appointment of minister of Harray and Birsay in 1774; and at the instigation of Thomas Pennant, author of “Arctic Zoology,” and other scientific friends, he prosecuted his laborious investigations in the natural history and antiquities of Orkney and Shetland, which bear such striking testimony to his talents and to his ill-requited zeal.

By the kindness of the Council of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the portion of the volume comprising the “Tour” has now been transcribed, and authority given for its being printed. The rendering is *verbatim et literatim*, and the antiquated punctuation has been largely preserved.

I am indebted to Colonel H. H. Johnston for notes on the plants quoted by Low as having been found

by him in Orkney. This appears in the form of an Appendix. Mr. Alfred W. Johnston has also been good enough to supply some further explanatory Notes on the place-names. These notes bear his initials, A. W. J.

GILBERT GOUDIE.

Edinburgh, March, 1915.

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TOUR, 1778.

EVIE P[ARISH.]

July 1st. Set out for the North Isles thro' Evie parish, which is from Costa head to the other extremity about seven English miles long, but the breadth inconsiderable, seldom exceeding a mile; lies along shore in a stripe facing the North, abounds in Corn and grass, the farmhouses everywhere close together, mostly separate from the cultivated grounds which lie between them and the seashore. The manure used in this parish is partly sea ware laid up to rott, and partly house dung, both which produces good crops.

On the west Evie is bounded by Costa head, a high rock which separates it from Birsá, and form one side of a sound. It is often dangerous to boats passing this way, as it always occasions squalls which often prove fatal. It lodges a few of the common rock birds, but none remarkable.

There are several ruinous Pictish Castles round the shores of Evie, of the same plan and dimensions with those formerly described, as at Burgar and elsewhere. A few Tumuli are likewise observable along the shore, but they as well as the Church of St. Nicholas have lost the faculty of shining in the night-time!¹

Near Aikerness a small weedy loch gives shelter in the summer time to a vast flock of Pewits, Coots, and a few of the Dusky Grebe, all which hatch there. Opposite to the loch, in a small sandy bay, vast numbers of spout fish are annually caught at spring tides, and are by some as eagerly sought after as Oysters.

¹ According to Wallace, in his *Description of the Isles of Orkney*.—"In the parish of Evie near the sea are some small hillocks, which frequently in the night-time appear all in a fire; likewise the Kirk of Evie called St. Nicholas is seen full of light as if torches or candles were burning in it all night. This amazes the people greatly, but possiblief it is nothing else but some thick glutinous Meteor that receives that light in the night-time."

ENHALLOW.

Over against Evie lies Enhallow, a small isle about half a mile long, inhabited by two families. This is one of the islands of Orkney on which a Cat is said not to live. It is happily situated for fishing, particularly such fish as delight in Tideways and Eddies.¹

WIRE.

July 2. Crossed for Wire, in which the most observable particular is the Castle of Coppirow or Cubberow (as it is here pronounced) a small, square building, fifteen feet of a side, built with lime, but now entirely in ruins. It was built by Kolbein, an Orkney gentleman, some little time before the year 1149, and so fortified as to stand a siege.² It stands on a fine green hillock, with a commanding view of the adjacent isles, is surrounded with a rampart; but, however it might have been a place of strength in the twelfth century, neither its dimensions, walls of about seven feet thick, nor its vast mound would render it nowaday an object of any terror.

Here for the first time in Orkney saw the *Ranun[culus] (aquat[ilis])*³ foliis peltatis in a puddle near the Bue.

The Church is now roofless, has been an old popish Chapel, the graves in the yard mostly seven feet long, the people very tall, shaped much like the Gramsey men.

This isle is happier than many of the North isles in being supplied within itself with peats for fewel. It is in general bare, and the corn this season very poor.

¹ The keen eye of Low on this occasion failed in Enhallow to recognise the remains there of the vanished Monastery of Orkney, which rewarded the search of the Norwegian Authors L. Dietrichson and Johan Meyer, as described in their *Monumenta Orcadica*, Kristiania and London, 1906. The church had been previously discovered and measured by Sir Henry Dryden in 1866.

² This Castle of Kolbein is referred to in the *Saga of Hakon Hakonsson*, and also in the *Orkneyinga Saga*.

³ See Appendix.

ROUSA.

July 3rd. Crossed Wire sound for Rousa. The Sound full of large Seals, which shelter on the point of Wire and a blind rock opposite to it. Large flocks of Dunter Geese, mostly Cocks, all round.

Rousa is a large hilly isle fitter for pasturage than tillage. It is about 5 miles over between Quendal and Scockness, inhabited mostly round the skirts. The hills are partly covered with heath sheltering numbers of moorfowl, and partly wet and foggy. In the Hills are found most of the plants described in Hoy, together with the *Epilobium angustifolium*,¹ growing to a vast height here in the burn of Trumbland. The plant Twayblade² is likewise pretty frequent. In the rocks are found Hawks, Eagles and the ordinary rock fowls. In the lochs of the Hills, Raingeese and Ducks; among the wet mossy spots, Snipes, Curliews, and other waders.

In Rousa they make much use of the Segroot¹ for barking leather, which however is better when mixed with Tormentil¹ or Woodbark.¹

The Antiquities taken notice of in Rousa are a few standing stones, the largest I observed was at Yetness, and only 7 feet high and $5\frac{1}{2}$ broad; another at Westoval.³ Swandale consists of small houses at the

¹ See Appendix.

² Twoblade, *ophrys bifolia*, B.P. (Wallace, reprint, 178). See Appendix.

³ Captain John Craigie, of S.S. "Orcadia," a native of Rousey, states that there are only two standing stones in the island, viz., one called Langstane, at the modern farm now called No. 5, Frotoft, but formerly Langstane, and the other at Faraclett, Sourin. The latter has been identified by Mr. Robert Marwick, Broad Street, Kirkwall, a native of Rousey, as the "Yetness Stane," situated near the north-east corner of the island, on the farm of Faraclett, Sourin; it faces east and west. The ground rises sharply to the west and slopes down to the east. There is a small loch to the north-east. The local tradition is that on every Hogmanay, Yetness Stane leaves its place and goes down for a dip in the loch; "On one occasion a local worthy saw the stone in transit." Mr. John Logie, Trumbland House, states that the site of the present cottages near the Langstane was formerly uncultivated and overgrown with short, thick heather, and was called Hestoval or Westoval, and here the young men played "ba" on New-year's Day. At that time the nearest house to the stone was called Cot-a-Fea.—A. W. J.

foot of Bellybrake, step by step on the rocks, with all the air of Hermitages.¹ A few Tumuli are observable along the shore near Frottet, and a Pictish Castle or two in ruins. Upon two of the Hills are Warts, for discoveries at sea, and to spread the alarm in case of danger.

At Quandale is curious hollid rock, several others of which are observable in Orkney. As to the camps of Jupiter Fring,² what is called such lies about a mile

¹ Wallace's *Description* (reprint, 20), mentions that hawks and falcons nest at Bellibrake and Quendal in Rousa. Mr. Robert Marwick writes: "Swandale is in a valley. The ground rises in terraces to the west and also, in like manner, to the east. It stretches out, nearly level, to the north, facing Westrey Firth and slopes downwards, gently, to the south. There is a large stretch of 'brake' land to the westward of Swandale which has belonged to the place for a considerable time, and this, I think, must be 'Bellybrake.' It slopes down to the rocks facing Westrey Firth, and the cliffs there are from 80 to 150 feet high. Hawks nest there commonly yet. I have never heard of any remains of houses or cells near the place." Possibly Low confused the location of the "hermitages" with that of the Pict's house which is situated at the north-west corner of the loch, close to the sea, in a small park called "the park of the Tafts," near the farm of Faraclett.

Captain John Craigie has heard the name Bellyback (pron. Bell-ye-back) given to Kierfield (pron. Keerfee), by North Ronaldsey people, as a fishing-ground mark as seen from the eastward, so that it would be in line with Faraclett Head, which latter may be "Bellybrake."

Mr. John Logie has sent a description of the Pict's house which was excavated by the late General Burroughs.—A. W. J.

² "The name of the Camp of Jupiter Fring which it bears, is the only circumstance which has brought it into notice or made it remarkable. It has borne this extraordinary appellation for a long time, but it is not known by whom or on what occasion it was bestowed on it." Barry, *History of Orkney Islands*.

The name "Jupiter Fring" is not now known, and the place is simply called "The Camps." The Camps lie at the junction of Frotoft Hill, or Marlaryar, and Blotchniefeld, and consist of a mid-brae, an oblong natural turf-covered mound which runs up and down the hill, with fairly deep trenches on either side, separating it from two other braes, one on each side. In the trench between the mid-brae and the brae on the south-west, there is a well, called "the well of the Camps," which was said to be bottomless, about eight or ten feet in diameter and with a small green islet in it at the side nearest the mid-brae. The place is also said to have been a nesting-place of the ern or eagle, which is also mentioned by Barry.—A. W. J.

The name "Jupiter Fring" may be the corrupted form of an old Norse term, but that is uncertain, and it would be unprofitable, as it is unnecessary, to indulge in conjecture what that term might be.

or more N.E. from Westness in a hollow betwixt two Hills and opening to the North. It consists of a small Hillock or mound rising in marsh ground, but without the least visible mark of art, and known to the inhabitants by the above name, but for what reason is hard to say and scarce worth while to enquire.

Several most beautiful Burns in Rousa, particularly that at Saurin, full of Trout, as also the loch from which it proceeds. At Saviskeel (the most pleasant corner of the isle) a fine loch with a holm and chapel on it. About these lakes, and in the sea, numbers of otters are found; the fur of them being valuable, they are generally sought after.

EGILSHA.

July 7th. Crossed Howasound for Egilsha, opposite to Rousa. Egilsha is from north to south about three miles long, the greatest breadth one mile, a beautiful little isle, well inhabited, and fertile. At Howa is a large house, once the seat of the Douglasses of Egilsha, with a loch adjoining, frequented by various sorts of wild fowl. What most readily catches the attention of a stranger in this isle is the Church, dedicated to St. Magnus, and very probably built on the spot where he was martyred. This is one of the steepled churches of Orkney. The steeple is 70 feet high and pretty entire, as is the Church and Quire, above which is the Vestry.

In our return to Rousa a large Scate rose from the bottom of the Sound and clapt itself to the oars of the Boat; which this fish frequently does, and to the Bottom especially if the same be white.

The Holm of Egilsha keeps a few sheep and affords Tang for kelp, but nothing remarkable.

Kiliholm affords pasture for a few horses in the summer season, and sheep. I observed on it several Herons, which makes me imagine these build on some of the rocks about these islands.

The Greenholms are kept entirely for pasture, and all the above give Tang for kelp in plenty, which greatly raises their value to the different proprietors. All of them bred vast variety of wild fowl, but since kelp burning was so much practised, these have almost entirely absconded. Indeed if we may believe our Fishermen, the same has happened to the Fish, these likewise have been driven far to sea by the smoke. It is certain by all accounts Cod and Ling are not to be had at the same distance our old Fishermen usually caught them nor in the same quantities.

EDA.

July 9th. Crossed a most rapid firth and land at Eda, an island from Warness to Redhead about $7\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, and from Ferness to Bacaland two, but almost cut in two by Ferness bay. Eda is a hilly island, thinly inhabited, especially the west side. The greatest part of the Island is covered with moss, and affords Peats for fuel to the Islands of Sanda, North Ronaldsha, and part of Westra.

The Church (formerly a Popish Chapel) stands on the east side of the island, the Choir still entire and vaulted. Besides this there are many small Chapels round the island but all in ruins. To the northward of the Church observed a good many small Tumuli scattered through the moors and hills, and here the inhabitants have a tradition a battle was struck of old, and these are the graves of the slain.

Ferness bay is rather open, but is frequented in summer by ships. Pass over the mossy hills by a loch which gives water to a mill, till I come to the most remarkable standing stone in this island. It is called by the inhabitants Sator's stone, and measures in height 15 feet, $5\frac{1}{2}$ broad, and only 9 inches thick, greatly ragged by age and the weather. Several others are

scattered through the Hills of Eda the names and History of which are entirely lost.

Sator's Stone is inscribed with the following short history of an honest Surgeon of a man-of-war, who sojourned some time in the Orkneys.

Andreas Matheson hucusque fugit a Veneficiis Ducis Weller 1755.

This Gentleman with good sense and some learning was so frightened for his Captain's Spells that he did not think himself safe from their influence till he arrived at this distant corner, and even on occasion imagined they reached him in Eda.

The wild inhabitants of the moors of Eda are Moor-fowls, Snipes, Curlews and the Dirty Aulin.

Arrive at Calf Sound, a most excellent and safe harbour formed by the Calf of Eda, well known to most Seamen who trade to the East sea.¹

At Calf Sound stands a house built by John, Earl of Carrick, who likewise is said to have fled thither, but on account of some family uneasiness. It seems the Earl loved his situation so that he erected a Salt work on the opposite Calf, and I have been informed by a late Proprietor had procured a Charter for a Royal Burgh to be erected at Calf Sound, which was to be called (as the house now is) by his title. His death however, which happened soon after, put an end to the design. Indeed not anywhere in Orkney could such a project have been more easily carried into Execution than here, as the Calf is full of most excellent fewel for firing and from the Island is inexhaustible, besides the conveniency and easy access to the harbour rendered this spot a most eligible situation for a Burgh. The north entrance to the harbour is formed by the high rocks called Red and Grey heads, and from Sator's

¹ This was the scene of the capture of John Gow Smith (the "Pirate" of Sir Walter Scott), in 1724, by James Fea of Clestran. Smith, with some of his crew, was condemned in London, and hanged at Rotherhithe, on 11th June following.

stone forms an excellent landscape. The other entry towards the south-east is low but equally safe, and when once a ship is in she is shrowded by the high lands around from the influence of every wind.

The Calf lies opposite to Carrick, is one continued peat moss, and of the best kind, little inferior to pit coal for blackness, hardness, and a strong, clear and lasting flame. Here likewise is pasture for a great number of sheep, the wool of which is very valuable and as elsewhere manufactured into Stockings, Stuffs and coarse cloathes.

In the Grey head are found Eagles, falcons and a few rock birds, the Red head is not so steep, frequently intermixed with Grassy tufts which I was told sheltered a few Lyres in breeding time.

WESTRA.

On a hill to the westward of Carrick is a Wart which I passed and took boat at Cusvey for the island of Westra. In our way passed Fara and the Holm of Fara, neither of them containing anything remarkable, except a great deal of Tang for Kelp which the workmen were now busy in preparing for market, indeed at this season in a calm day the whole N. Isles seem on fire.

July 11th. Land at Rapness in Westra, after crossing a small but turbulent sound, in which lies Red Holm, so called from its colour but not remarkable.

The soil about Rapness is wet, but tolerably well cultivated. To the N.E. the coast is high and rocky, frequented by Sea-fowl. Several Caves along this side, particularly one which would be easily passed by the most attentive observer, were it not pointed out by the inhabitants. It lies in the face of a steep shelving precipice, to the entrance we are led by a narrow and dangerous footpath; the mouth opens between two jutting rocks, which is so large as easily to receive a

single person, but widens into a large Cavern as you proceed. Here several Gentlemen passed great part of a winter in the end of the unfortunate struggle which happened about the middle of the present Century,¹ neither is it possible for any number of men to dislodge its inhabitants but by starving, as the least touch from a person in the Entrance drives the assailant down the precipice into Eternity.

Surrounded the Bay of Tuquoy, the soil after passing the Dikes of Rapness mostly moss. This is the only Peat moss in the island, and being in the hands of one Heritor must, notwithstanding his good nature, be hard upon the other inhabitants.

By Garth, Tirlet, Tuquoy, and about the Manse the crops are good, and the soil well cultivated, the farm houses and Cottages by far the neatest I had yet observed in Orkney, with an air [of] cleanliness for which many of the other isles are not at all distinguished.

Between Tuquoy and Break several farms have been lost by sand blowing, and were it not for a small lake which covers the former I imagine it would have long ago undergone the same fate. I am the more inclined to this opinion from the information received from Mr. Trail the present proprietor, that the Loch which is grassy had formerly been the summer habitation of vast flocks of birds that hatched among the weeds, but of late years has been entirely deserted by them, because of its shallowness.

July 13th. Bend my course along the west shores of Westra. From the Manse almost to the House of Noup the Coast is high and rocky, inhabited by innumerable wild-fowl, some of which are yearly caught in Nets, and a few shot. Fitty hill is moderately high and commands a most extensive view of the

¹ This was in 1746, when Stewart of Brough, William Balfour, and other Jacobites, had to take shelter in this cave after Culloden.

Isles to the Fair isle, and in a very clear day part of Schetland and even Foula. Noup head is an abrupt precipice about fathoms high. Immediately before it, lies the Skerry of Less, of which Mr. Wallace gravely informs us "it has this strange property, that if a man go upon it, having ane iron upon him, the Sea will instantly swell in such a Tempestuous way, that no boat can come near to take him off, and the sea will not be callmed till the Iron be thrown away."

Wallace was credulous, but the truth is, nobody in his witts would go upon the Skerry of Less with anything slippery on his feet, as it's entirely covered with Slake, which makes it difficult for any person to keep his footing, and iron nails in one shoe would increase the difficulty; however, the inhabitants find it convenient to go to it in good weather as they always find plenty of Limpets for Bait, but ever ascend it with their feet bare for a steady step.

Between Rapness and Noup head, Westra is about 8 miles long, and its greatest breadth from Kirbust to Cleat $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles. The uncultivated part, either deep moss or hard channely thin soil.

In my way from the manse to Pierowall discovered a *Primula foliis dentatis rugosis floribus luteis fastigiatis*,¹ probably an unique in Orkney.

Pierowall is the only safe harbour in Westra, nor is it capable of receiving but small vessels. Near it is a fine Mill built by William Balfour Esqre. of Trenabay, and supplied with water from two lochs in its neighbourhood.

A short step from Pierowall stands Noutland castle, an unfinished work, said to be built by Gilbert Balfour for the reception of Earl Bothwell after his marriage with Mary Q. of Scots.² The lower great hall is still

¹ See Appendix.

² This is of course nonsense. The Castle was built in the 15th century, and, as part of the Church property in Orkney, was acquired by Sir Gilbert Balfour from Bishop Adam Bothwell. It has remained since then in the family of the Balfours of Trenaby.

entire, and is a specimen of lofty architecture. The Grand staircase is now greatly demolished as are several other parts, the stones being carried off to other works. Above the chimney of the upper story is a coat of arms now much defaced, with the shield declining; the Heralds must account for this, but if the Castle was built for Bothwell, may it not point out his at that time declining fortune? Scarce a yard of the wall but is pierced for small arms, which makes it apparent the owner dreaded inimical visits. Round Noutland Castle the fields are covered with Corns and Grass in abundance, this being by far the richest and most agreeable corner of the island. Soon, however, does the scene alter, we proceed but a few yards northward from Noutland till all is involved in desolation.

This desolate scene continues for more than a mile, and seems to be on the increase. Nor is it owing to want of care to prevent its spreading, many means have been tried to put a stop to its progress, but in vain. A whole district or town¹ consisting of many fine farms is entirely destroyed, nor is this by being immediately overwhelmed with sand; the Earth is entirely blown away, nothing remaining but the bare channel and in many places the Rock, which is flat with little inclination.

The Theory of this affair seems to have been as follows, and which I gathered from the grounds in the neighbourhood.

The rock being supposed (as it is now) bare, the Sand shower proceeding from the bay to the westward, covers it over with a load of broken Shells, part of which concreting with the weather form a thin crust, into which, after they begin to be pulverised by the sun and frost, the smaller plants insinuate themselves and form small patches of Sward.

Another Sand shower succeeds and not only pre-

¹ This is *Tun*, an aggregate of small farms, a "township."

serves these tender plants from the influence of winter, but affords them nourishment against next season when they grow stronger; others intermix, and so amongst these the grasses which soon cover the late deformities with a lovely green. Things thus go on in rapid succession, till the earth by the exuviae of the plants, their roots striking downwards and interweaving, is meliorated and kept so firm and close, till this new formed and beautiful spot becomes an object with the farmer, or otherwise has its surface broke. But there is little danger while the plants strike their roots to the bottom; however, as the sand lodges amongst the Grass and is retained there, this must thicken the soil and drive the plant yearly farther from the original rocky surface, of consequence the fibres it had insinuated into its fissures become yearly weaker, till at last they lose hold entirely. Then, and not till then, it becomes dangerous to meddle with the upper Surface, because as soon as the stormy blasts get below the roots of the grass they immediately set the sand amoving, leaving the plants without hold, still undermining the weaker parts till at last the whole is either carried off; or here and there a vast lump standing, presents us with the most shocking idea of deformity; now a fruitful field, and to-morrow a wilderness.

As I approached the house of Trinabay the earth is beginning to sward in small patches with here and there a tuft of Bent which is very useful in such shifting sands, but always renders the earth it fixes barren.

At this time the whole corn grounds, gardens, etc., round Noutland Castle by a storm of northwest wind, were deluged with Sand. In some places about garden walls it lay near a foot thick, and this is very frequently the case.

The shifting of the Sand has laid open many particulars which had been hid for hundreds of years under (in some places) more than 20 feet of Sand.

Ancient burying-places are very frequent here. These are of two sorts, the Tumulus, or grave, made up into a vast heap of stones and rubbish, or the second kind which has the grave simply set round with a tire of small stones on end. These last are generally in clusters and even with the Sand.

In examining these we find besides the bones of men, those of cows, horses, dogs and sheep; besides war-like instruments of all kinds then in use, as Battle Axes, Two-handed Swords, broad Swords, Helmets, Swords made of the jaw bone of a whale, daggers, etc. Also instruments in use for the common necessities of life, as Knives and Combs. Likewise matter of ornament, as beads, brotches, chains, &c. Also many particulars the use of which is now totally lost, as a round flat piece of marble about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches in diameter, several stones like whetstones but seemingly never have been used, a very small iron vessel like a head piece only $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in the hollow, much wounded as if with the stroke of a Sword or Ax. In one was found a metal spoon, and a neat Glass Cup which may contain about two Gills Scottish measure. In another a great number of Stones formed into such whirls¹ as in Scotland were formerly in use to turn a Spindle. In one was found a Gold ring encircling a thigh bone. Quare. How it was put on?

There seems to be little doubt but the Tumuli are burying places of the natural inhabitants, as we find them scattered all over the Country. It will then become a question to whom belong these graves so different in stile from the former. It is certain they differ extremely from those found in the Mainland,²

¹ Whirls, *i.e.* *Whorls*. Apparently its use had not come under the author's observation, though known in some districts at a much later date.

² [*marginal note.*] We shall have occasion to take notice of the different methods of Urn and Stone coffin burying, as also of burning the dead, when we come to describe the Mainland Parishes of Stromness and Sandwick.

the other isles, and even from some on the same island, and at a very short distance from them. It is likewise certain that many northern nations used the same method of burying their dead. The Romans used the tumulus; the like did the Germans, Norwegians and other Teutonic nations. Nor is it improbable the Western Highlanders at a certain aera did the same, however from some passages of Ossian's poems we find the method of burial much the same as above described; "Four Stones rise on the Grave of Cathbat."¹ We find they likewise buried with them their Arms and favourite Dogs, as also the Horn of the Deer as a symbol of Hunting. It is beyond a doubt many skirmishes happened between the Orkney-men and the Islanders,² and this in very different areas, might not therefore these be the graves of an invading enemy? and very possibly from the Western Isles, either formed by the inhabitants of the Island where they fell, or which is more probable by their own countrymen, as we see by the same Ossain how anxious they were lest their friends were deprived of the rites of sepulture. Another peculiarity in these Graves sets the matter almost out of doubt that the Western Highlanders lie here. In digging, after turning off a large quantity of sand a stratum of clay covers the Bones. This likewise was the case among the Highlanders as we are informed in a note by the Translator of Ossain, where he tells us "after opening the grave to a sufficient depth they lined the bottom with fine clay; and on this they laid the body of the deceased, and if a Warrior, his Sword and the heads of twelve arrows by his side. Above they laid another stratum of clay, in which they placed the horn of a deer as the Symbol of hunting. The whole was covered with fine mould, and four

¹ Ossian, *alias* Macpherson, is here taken as an approximately contemporary authority.

² That is the Hebrideans.

stones placed on end to mark the extent of the grave.”¹ As to the number of the stones they do not seem to be fixt, as we see by the same poems that the graves of the deceased were marked sometimes with one,² sometimes with two, and oftener no doubt with more than four gray stones. Neither need we wonder at the want of a deer’s horn or the arrow heads, as it is probable their descents upon Orkney were not for partys of pleasure but war³; and the arrow heads, if any were, must long ago have mouldered into rust, as the swords mostly now are.

Standing stones are infrequent in Westra. I only observed one near Pierowall with a hole in it.

Burghs [*i.e.*, “Brochs,” or Pictish Castles, as now termed] are pretty frequent round the shore, but all in ruins.

Some years ago Westra was blessed with a fine fishing of Cod and Ling, but this has greatly failed; while I was at Noutland the fishermen brought ashore a great number of very large Halibut, the capture of the day; every fish of which was immediately divided among the proprietors and the pieces carried off.

To the northward of Noutland Castle and especially about Tranabay, fresh water is very scarce, and even difficult to be had for digging.

July 16th. Crossed the sound between Westra and Papa Westra. In the passage, observe two or three small rocks yielding tang for Kelp, called the Holms of Aikerness.

[PAPA WESTRA.]

P.W. Papa Westra is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long, and scarce one mile broad, a most beautiful little isle, rich in excellent corn and luxuriant natural grass. The

¹ [*marginal note.*] Vid. Oss. po. oct. ed. p. 11, note.

² [*marginal note.*] Ib. p. 60 *et passim*.

³ These war-like expeditions from the Hebrides, in the centuries preceding the Reformation, were notorious.

uncultivated part like a carpet spread with all the flowers in season.

The shores of Papa Westra are all low except at the Moul-head, which is well inhabited by various Rock-fowl, many of which are annually caught in Nets for their feathers and flesh.

To the eastward of the House of Holland lies the chapel dedicated to St. Tredwain. It stands in a holm of a small loch, once famous for the cures said to be performed by its salutary waters, through the intercession of this she Saint, but now little frequented.

Observed on it a few pairs of the Red scolop toed Sandpiper which continue here thro' the summer, and build. It is the last swimming bird we have in Orkney.

The south end of the Island abounds with Rabbits, which are much valued for their flesh and skins.

July 17th. Visited the Holm of Papa, the only isle in Orkney where wild-fowl are encouraged to build, owing to the present Proprietor Mr. Traill of Holland, who hinders them from being disturbed by the kelp burners, or others whose business sends them thither. Late in the season as it was, I found the Great black and white Gull (Br. Zool: 416) the Scorie (Ib. Bl. and White Gull, 422) and the Great White Gull (Ib. Com. Gull. 424) with their young still walking through the stones though indeed many had gone to sea. I found several Harle Ducks¹ nests, some with 9, other with 10 Eggs; one or two Dunters² yet hatching, with 5 large Eggs bedded in their warm Down. Besides Pigeons and Stares, Tystes³ build under the loose stones; and Sea Swallows among them. Mr. Traill at the proper season takes a great number of Gulls' eggs, and about

¹ [*Margin.*] Goosander. Br. z. 436.

² [*Margin.*] Eider. Ib. 454. Mem. The Cocks entirely desert the island in the hatching season, and keep in small flocks either by themselves or with a barren female or two in company.

³ [*Margin.*] Black Guillemot. B. zool. 412.

35 Dozen young Gulls, but leaves the Dunters entirely undisturbed, and indeed they seem to be sensible of their privileges, and swim about the isle with the greatest freedom, nor do they seem to be much afraid of the human race.

Several years ago there was a Herring fishery off this isle but this has been long discontinued.

WESTRA.

July 18th. Repassed to Westra, landed at Cleat, the seat of James Stewart of Burgh. The Corns round Cleat good, tho' the soil but ordinary.

In the neighbourhood stands the Church of the West Parish, by far the neatest in Orkney.

Many of the people of Westra are subject of the same disease, before taken notice of in Unst and Fetlor, and may be seen under the description of these islands.¹

Upon the shore near Cleat observe a ruin similar to these formerly described, thought by a Gentleman well skilled in Orkney antiquities to have been a place of sacrifice, from the number of Bones of Cattle found about it. This however I should think scarce enough to prove it so; these might have been the bones of the cattle slain for the subsistence of the defenders of a fort, as we find at the Burgh of Burness on the mainland numbers of Bones of Oxen and Horns of Deer, and at Dingeshow in Deerness vast quantities of Limpet shells, none of which last could be used in that manner. Besides places of sacrifices were generally on a wide extended plain.

The small Holms of Rapness, called Wart Holm and Rusk Holm, afford little remarkable. Sometimes a few Dunter-geese nestle on the former, and from it I saw a most beautifull and entire skeleton of the common Fishing Frog (Br. Zool. 93), excellently well preserved.

Near Wart Holm is a fierce and rapid tide called the

¹ Convulsive fits, or Epilepsy, chiefly among young women.

Rull, which rages with that violence even in the calmest weather, that it is dangerous for small vessels; but if a west wind blows with an Ebb tide there is no venturing near it.

July 21st. Took boat for Sanda, passed the Red and Gray Heads of Eda, over a most rapid tide, and tumbling sea, saw a few North Capers¹ tumbling about, as they always do in a high sea. A sharp wind brought us into the tail of Lashy Roust on the Sanda side of the Sound, which both lash't and wash't us to some tune. Landed in Sanda, but as I had a good opportunity for N. Ronaldsha I passed about thither, leaving the Inspection of Sanda untill my return.

July 22nd. Passed N. Ronaldsha firth, one of the most rapid in the Orknies.

With the above the story terminates, and there is much reason to fear that the accounts of the remaining islands, North Ronaldsey, Sandey, Stronsey, and others, from the careful pen of Low, may be regarded as for ever lost, apart from the brief references to them which appear in the published "Tour" of 1774. The recovery of the portion now printed is, however, something to be thankful for.

It will be observed that the author set out on 1st July, 1778, and the closing entry is of the 22nd of that month, the "Tour" up to that point having thus occupied

¹ "The Grampus (*dolphinus orca*, Lin. Syst.) is seen in great numbers on most of our coasts, and very often in strong and impetuous currents, frisking and tumbling about in a strange and amusing manner" (Barry's *Orkney*, 1808, 303). Mr. Magnus Spence writes that the uncle of a neighbour of his, who had been a whale-fisher, related that, on rounding the North Cape, he saw large numbers of the Grampus. Possibly they were called 'North Capers' (a name now unknown in Orkney) because they were thought to come from the North Cape. Captain John Craigie, of the S.S. "Orcadia," writes that "the grampus does at times sport about tideways."—A. W. J.

exactly three weeks. Of that time no small part must have been spent in tedious and difficult travelling by sea from island to island, in open boats; and his earnest and careful investigations during that short period, with limited and not always trustworthy sources of information available, entitle Low to the admiration and gratitude of all who are interested in the past time conditions of the territories of Orkney and Shetland.

G. G.

APPENDIX.

BOTANICAL NOTES.

“Wire. Here for the first time in Orkney saw the *Ranun.* (aquat.) foliis peltatis in a puddle near the Bue,” p. 136.

The aggregate species *Ranunculus aquatilis* (Linn.) has been split up by modern botanists into several segregate species, of which four have been found in Orkney, viz., *Ranunculus trichophyllus* (Chaix), *R. Drouetii* (F. Schultz), and its variety *Godronii* (Gren), *R. heterophyllus* (Weber), and *R. Baudotii* (Godr). Of these four segregate species, the *Water Buttercup* seen by Low in Wire (Viera) was probably *Ranunculus heterophyllus* (Weber), but, without seeing specimens of the plant, one cannot be certain of its name from the meagre description “foliis peltatis.”

“Rousa. *Epilobium angustifolium*, growing to a vast height here in the burn of Trumbland,” p. 137.

Epilobium angustifolium (Linn.), the *French Willow* or *Rose-bay* is rare in Orkney, where, in addition to Trumbland Burn in Rousay, it has been recorded from near the Dwarfie Stone in Hoy, and from Naversdale and Head of Holland in Mainland. A cultivated form of the *French Willow* with shorter capsules, *E. brachycarpum*, (Leight.) is grown in gardens in Orkney to the present day.

“The plant *Twayblade* is likewise pretty frequent,” p. 137.

Two species of *Twayblade* have been recorded from Rousay, viz., *Listera cordata* (Br.), the *Lesser Twayblade*, and *L. ovata* (Br.), the *Common Twayblade*, but it is impossible to state to which of these two species Low refers. The Rev. Dr. Barry records *Listera cordata* (Br.) under the name “*Ophrys Cordata*”) only, as growing in Orkney, “in a valley in Hoy,”

154 *The Medieval Church in Caithness & Sutherland.*

in his "History of the Orkney Islands," 2nd edition, p. 289 (1808), and he does not mention the name of the other species.

"Segroot," p. 137.

The rootstock of *Iris Pseudacorus* (Linn.), the *Yellow Flag*, called *Seg* in Orkney. This species is common in Orkney.

"Tormentil," p. 137.

Potentilla erecta (Hampe) (synonyms:—*P. sylvestris* (Neck), *P. Tormentilla* (Neck), and *Tormentilla erecta*), the *Tormentil*, called *Bark* in Orkney, has a thick woody rootstock containing tannin. This species is very common in Orkney.

"Woodbark," p. 137, probably refers to the commercial bark sold for tanning purposes.

"Westra. In my way from the manse to Pierowall discovered *Primula, follis dentatis rugosis floribus luteis fastigiatis*, probably an unique in Orkney," p. 144.

Primula veris (Linn.), the *Cowslip*, is not mentioned by Wallace or Barry, but Low's discovery of this species in Westray has been confirmed by Dr. J. S. Flett, who found it on Tuquoy Links. (*Vide* Spence's "Flora Orcadensis," p. 47 (1914)).

I am indebted to Dr. B. Daydon Jackson, General Secretary of the Linnean Society, London, for notes on the extracts from Low's manuscript with reference to *Ranunculus aquatilis* (Linn.), and *Primula veris* (Linn.).

HENRY HALCRO JOHNSTON.

Gibraltar,

10th May, 1915.

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH IN CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND

(1136-1445).

II.—THE GENERAL HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN THE SEE OF CAITHNESS (CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND).

The period during which the Roman Church in the diocese of Caithness gradually gained ascendancy over the Celtic Church until the triumph of the former under the episcopate of Gilbert (1222-45) may be roughly set down to a hundred years. Little is known of Andrew,

the first bishop of the See, except that he appears frequently as a witness of royal charters,¹ and the probability is that he found much more congenial society at the court than in his far northern diocese. Andrew was present at Northampton, 25th January, 1175-6, when the Scottish bishops declined to submit to the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of York. His successor, John, was evidently a man of some independence, for Pope Innocent III. directs the bishops of Orkney and Ross to compel John, bishop of Caithness, from preventing the payment of one penny from every house in the county of Caithness, granted by Harald, earl of Caithness, in the time of Pope Alexander III. (1159-81), and duly collected in the time of the late bishop Andrew (No. 3, pp. 2-4). It was this bishop who suffered so cruelly in his castle at Scrabster (Skarabólstaðr) in having his tongue cut out, and also, according to the *Orkneyinga Saga*, his eyes put out.¹ The penance meted out to Lumberd for cutting out the bishop's tongue is set forth in No. 4, pp. 5-7. It is sufficiently drastic, and gives abundant evidence that the Pope's arm was longer than Cæsar's, when in the far northern parts of Scotland a decree from Rome imposing a heavy penance not only was promulgated but actually carried into effect. Lumberd had imposed upon him a penance that was not only to satisfy his offence but to terrify others. He was to "walk openly, in the sight of all beholders, naked and barefoot, except in breeches and a short and sleeveless woollen vest, having his tongue tied with a thin cord and drawn out for a little while, so that it protrudes beyond his lips, the ends of the cord being fastened to his neck, and this he shall do for fifteen days continuously throughout the land

Andrew,
first bishop
of Caith-
ness.

John,
second
bishop of
Caithness.

his tongue
cut out.

Lumberd
punished
for the
crime.

His
sentence.

¹ A collection of references to his appearances as witness will be found in *Origines Parochiales Scotiæ*, II., part II., 598, and in Dowden's *Bishops of Scotland*, 232.

² *Orkneyinga Saga*, 196.

whence he came, and where the bishop was mutilated and the surrounding district, carrying rods in his hand with which, when he comes to the entrance of a church, but which he shall in no wise enter, throwing himself on the ground, he shall cause himself to be disciplined; and so in silence and fasting he shall spend the day until the evening, and then for the support of nature partake of only bread and water. When the fifteen days are expired he shall prepare to set out within a month for Jerusalem, and there for three years sweat in the service of the Cross, never uplifting arms against Christians; and for eleven years he shall fast every sixth day on bread and water, unless by the indulgence of some discreet priest, either on account of his weakness of body, or the heat of summer, this abstinence is modified" (pp. 6-7).

Adam,
third
bishop of
Caithness.

The
bishop's
exactions.

Bishop
Adam
burnt.

Pope
Honorius,
blessing.

The third bishop on record, Adam, ended his days tragically at Halkirk, on 11th September, 1222. According to the Saga writer, it was an ancient custom that the bishop should receive a spann of butter for every twenty cows. Bishop Adam wished to increase the impost, and asked a spann for every fifteen cows, and then for every twelve, and finally for every ten. The increasing impost irritated the *bændr*, and on the refusal of Earl John to interfere in the quarrel, the exasperated Caithness men assembled on a hill near the village of Halkirk, and then set off for the bishop's castle. The bishop was seized, and shut into a small house, which was set on fire.¹ King Alexander II. took severe vengeance for this outrage, cutting off the hands and feet of eighty people. The king's zeal is highly praised in the letter Pope Honorius III. addressed to the bishops of St. Andrews, Glasgow, Dunkeld, and Dunblane, and the Pope "implores the mercy of God to be with him wherever he may be, and establish

¹*Orkneyinga Saga*, 200; Wyntoun's *Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland*, II., 239; III., 256.

him for his heavenly kingdom, to make him a great name, and bestow upon him rest from all his enemies" (p. 26). The Pope says that when he heard of the bishop's cruel death: "our soul was terrified, our heart trembled, and our ears shook with the dreadfulness of that iniquity"; but king Alexander's terrible revenge calmed the papal heart and mitigated the grief which had rent it (No. 10, pp. 23-27). With the advent of Gilbert a new era dawned for the Roman Church in the diocese of Caithness. The new bishop had a gift for organizing, and his influence was strengthened by his connection with the house of De Moravia. His effort to bring ecclesiastical order and system into the diocese of Caithness is clearly outlined in his Constitution (No. 9, pp. 14-23) to which reference has been fully made in the preceding pages. The exact date of his election is not known, though it is related that it took place before the king and his army. That it should have taken place when king Alexander came north to avenge the murder of bishop Adam is not an unlikely thing. Bishop Gilbert was not only an ecclesiastic, but he held a stake in the land of his large diocese, as Nos. 6, pp. 9-10; 7, pp. 11, 12; 11, pp. 27, 28, clearly show. Gilbert was succeeded by bishops William and Walter Baltrodi (No. 12, pp. 28-32), to whom further reference will be found in the list of bishops of Caithness appended to this Introduction. Some time after the death of bishop Walter the Chapter elected Nicolas, abbot of Scone, but his election was set aside by Pope Gregory X., on the ground that "the said abbot labours under a deficiency of knowledge intolerable in a prelate" (No. 14, pp. 37, 38). The Chapter then proceeded to the election of Archibald, archdeacon of Moray, who at the time of his election was not in priest's orders. It was during bishop Archibald's episcopate that the famous new valuation of ecclesiastical property in Scotland took place. Pope Gregory's

Bishop
Gilbert.

Date of his
election.

His
successors.

Election of
Nicholas,
Abbot of
Scone,
annulled.

Archibald,
Arch-
deacon of
Moray
elected.

Tithes
for the
Crusades.

ambition had been to send a crusade to the Holy Land, and at the Council of Lyons (1274), at which all the Scottish bishops were present with the exception of those of Dunkeld and Moray, who were to remain in Scotland *pro statu ecclesiae servando*. The Council decreed that a tenth of all church revenues during the

Boiamund
de Vicci
sent to
Scotland to
collect the
tax.

six following years should be collected for the relief of the Holy Land.¹ Boiamund de Vicci, an Italian, was

The "real
worth"
(*verus valor*)
valuation.

sent to Scotland to collect the tax. He met the clergy at Perth, and intimated that not only payment would be enforced by excommunication, but that the properties

of the church must be revalued according to their real worth (*verus valor*). The clergy protested against this revaluation, and persuaded Boiamund to return to Rome with a petition beseeching that the old assessment might be accepted. The appeal failed, and Boiamund returned to Scotland to enforce the new assessment,

Bagimont's
Roll.

which, under the name of "Bagimont's Roll,"² became, and remained until the Reformation, the basis of taxation on all church property.³

The tithes collected from the diocese of Caithness for

¹ This was not the first collection in Scotland for the Crusades. At a Church Council held at Perth in 1212, it was resolved to support the Crusade proclaimed by Innocent III. (*Scotichronicon*, viii., 78). The Crusade inaugurated by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) was commended to Scotland by a special legate, and in 1247 Pope Innocent IV. commanded the bishop of Dunkeld to collect the *twentieth* of all ecclesiastical revenues in Scotland for aiding the Crusades (*C. P. R. Letters*, I., 237).

² Boiamund's name underwent some strange transformations such as *Bagimont* in "Bagimont's Roll" and sometimes as *Ragman* in "Ragman Roll." Latterly Ragman Roll was applied to acts of fealty and homage done by the Scottish nobility to Edward I. in 1296.

³ MacEwen's *Hist. of the Church in Scotland*, I., 237. The tax seems to have been paid with punctuality for the first two years (1275 and 1276) for which Boiamund's accounts are preserved. At the end of the fifth year Boiamund receives a mandate from Rome to warn those who had incurred excommunication by non-payment (*C. P. R. Letters*, I., 465). Boiamund, himself, also was accused of not sending the money to Rome, but offered as an excuse the King's prohibition (*Ibid.* I., 469, 478).

the intended crusade of Gregory X., which never came to anything, are given in Nos. 16, pp. 42, 43; 35, pp. 81-83. The amount collected for the year 1275 amounted to £36 9s. 4d., and for the following year to £45 11s. 10d.¹

The tithes collected in Caithness and Sutherland

In 1275 a long standing dispute between the Church of Caithness and the earls of Sutherland was brought to an end by an agreement entered into between bishop Archibald and William, earl of Sutherland (No. 17, pp. 43-49).

Dispute between bishops of Caithness and Sutherland settled, 1275

On the death of bishop Archibald the Chapter elected Richard, dean of Caithness, to the vacant see. Richard's character was anything but that which might be expected of a bishop. The Pope, in his letter to the bishops of St. Andrews and Aberdeen and to the *Minister provincialis* of the Minor Friars in Scotland, states that Henry de Nottingham confessed that the dean had a son more than thirty years old and that he was said to have another, though Henry did not believe it. The Pope had also been informed that the dean had been struck by paralysis, and that he was so worn out by age that he could not duly execute the duties of the pastoral office. The old dean was persuaded to resign his right arising from the election, which he did. If the charges against the dean's moral character were true then they throw anything but a pleasant light on the moral tone of the Chapter of Caithness at this date. On the resignation of Richard, Hervey de Donodei (Dundee) was appointed, but died at Rome before his consecration, whereupon Pope Martin IV. appointed Alan de St. Edmund to the vacant see (No. 18, pp.

Richard, dean of Caithness, elected to vacant see.

Henry of Nottingham's report of his character.

He is persuaded to resign.

Hervey of Dundee elected, but dies at Rome before consecration.

¹ As these sums represent a tenth of the value of ecclesiastical property in the diocese, the value of such property would be £364 13s. 4d., and £455 18s. 4d. for the respective years. To be strictly accurate, however, the sums contributed by the clergy, who had to supply "procurations" or a money payment in lieu of entertainment, to the papal collector, should be deducted from the above. But even with this allowance if the purchasing power of money was about twenty-four times as great as now the above sums represent a vast amount from a poor diocese.

Alan de St.
Edmund
elected to
the vacant
see.

49-55). Alan, from his connection with Archdeacon Hugh of Evesham, an Englishman, often figures in transactions with Edward I. after the death of Alexander III. (1285-6). He was appointed chancellor of Scotland by Edward, and in 1291 he commands the Keeper of Darnaway Forest to provide Alan with 40 oaks for the fabric of the church of Caithness (No. 21, pp. 60, 61). Bishop Alan was succeeded by Adam, precentor of Ross (Nos. 22, pp. 61, 62; 23, pp. 62-65), and Andrew, abbot of Coupar (Nos. 26, pp. 67-70; 28, pp. 70-72).

(To be continued.)

NEWS NOTES.

John O' Groat Journal. Obituary, Sir Arthur Bignold (March 26). "Fifty years ago" (March 19, etc.), being extracts from the *Journal* of 1865, including report of excavations of the King's Castle, Kirkwall, when old cannon-balls were discovered. Geology of Caithness (April 16). Pulteney Notes, 1818. Pulteneytown in days gone by, 1861, etc. (June 18). Some Caithnessian Letters, J. T. Calder (May 14), J. McIvor (21), John Rhind (28). A Golspie Dame's trip to London, 20 years ago (May 28, June 4, 11). Battle of StrathSteven (June 18). Local games and customs (May 19)—Knifag, beddies, dicky, braxie (marbles). Old Canisbay Names—a review of "Parish Registers of Canisbay, 1662-1666," edited by Rev. D. Beaton, with notes on the families of Mowat, Groat, Dunnet, Wares, Sinclair, Kennedy, Manson, Bremner, Bain, etc. (March 26). Notes on Caithness Bird Life—gannet (May 7). Literature: Review, *Old-Lore Miscellany* (April 28), and *Transactions* of the Gaelic Society of Inverness (April 9).

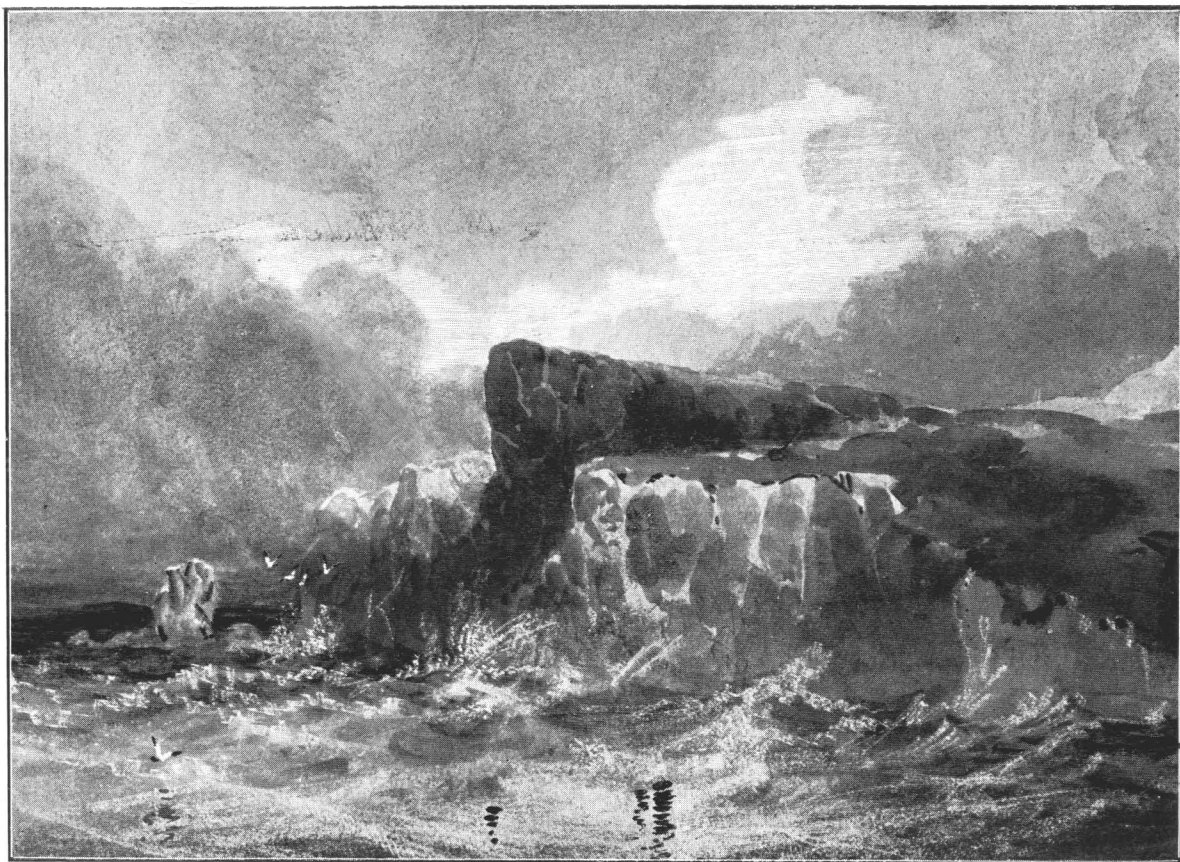
Northern Chronicle. The Frasers of Belladrum (April 14, May 5). The Macneils of Barra, a question of chieftainship (March 31, June 9). Description of the Fire at Dunrobin Castle (June 16). Review: *Old-Lore Miscellany* (April 28).

Orcadian. Orkney and Shetland Society of London, founded 1819, first dinner, 1915 (April 10). "The Castin' o' the Peats" in Flotta, described (May 22). Obituary, Sir Thomas Clouston (April 24).

Orkney Herald. Nature Notes—Goosander and Linnet (April 14), King-eider, etc. (June 16), Short-toed Lark at Fair Isle (May 19). Reviews: *Old-Lore Miscellany*, Angus' *Glossary of the Shetland Dialect*. The Burgesses Oath of 1686 (May 5). Obituary, Sir Thomas Clouston (April 28), Sir Arthur Bignold (March 31).

Shetland News. "Mansie's Röd," a valuable ramble in the dialect (continued weekly).

Shetland Times. The offices and works of this paper were completely destroyed by fire on April 18th. These have now been rebuilt, with entirely new plant, and the first number of this time-honoured journal was issued on June 19th, with appreciations from Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby and the Rev. John Spence. We wish the proprietors greater success than ever.



HEADS OF GROCKEN, HILLSWICK.

From the original water-colour drawing by G. Richardson, in Dr. Edward Charlton's "Visit to Shetland in 1832."

Old-lore Miscellany

OF

ORKNEY, SHETLAND, CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND.

VOL. VIII. PART IV. OCTOBER, 1915.

NOTES.

VIKING WAR FUND.—It will be of great assistance to the Council if Members will, on the receipt of this number, promptly send their subscriptions for 1916, together with a donation, to meet the increased expenditure now entailed.

CAITHNESS FAMILIES.—1674, Feb. 4. Malcom Grott, portioner of Dungansbay, sold under reversion to John Grott, his eldest son, two pennylands and three octons land in the town of Dungasbey and Stembuster, in parish of Cannasbie, two tenements of land in burgh of Wick, then possessed by John Naughtie, merchant, Wm. Cormack, sailor, Jas. Patoun, Donald Lyell and Elspeth Blair, together with the “manner place” and dwelling house with the ferry belonging to the same. Written by Thos. Moir, writer, Kirkwall, subscribed at Halcro; witnesses, Jas. Kynnaird of Burwick, Wm. Grott, in Herstan, Wm. Grott, in Isbus.

1681, March 16. Sasine, John Kennedie, elder, upon a proportion of land within the Nethirtoun of Stromay. Geo. Sinclair, son of deceased lieut.-colonel Sinclair, in Thurso, on behalf of John Kennedye, elder of Stromay, holding bond of alienation by Jeane Kennedye, with consent of James Ross, now her husband, who received 1600 merks Scots and sold their proportion of the land in Nethirtoun of Stromay. Bond dated April 15, 1678. Names mentioned: Alexr. Andero,

Stromay, Mr. Andrew Levistoun, writer, schoolmaster at Cluny, signed at Kirkhill of Cluny, George Bogg, officer at kirk of Cluny, Robt. Read, son of Alex. Read, and John Mowat, servitor to Mr. James Ross. Sasine witnesses, Andrew Beeg, Wm. Simpstone and John Ham, Stroma. N.P., Donald Durham, clerk of the diocese of Caithness.

1683, July 26. Charter of confirmation to Mr. Robert Dunbar, of Ouckingill, of a tenement in Wick, by Andrew, bishop of Caithness, with the consent of the deacon and chapter of our cathedral church in Dornoch, dated at Scrabster. It narrates (1) a disposition of Dec. 15, 1681, granted by John Grott, portioner of Duncansbey, to Robert Dunbar, of a tenement in Wick sometime called "Grott's tenement," having the tenement of the late Geo. Abernethie and John Sinclair [of Ulbster] on east, tenement of the late Wm. Caldell on the west, the Long Shead at the north, the Cross of the burgh of Wick at the south, with houses, etc., grassings, delveines, peat banks, stackhills, &c., (2) the previous document. Written by Wm. Smith, writer, Thurso; witnesses, Mr. Wm. Sinclair, commissary of Caithness, Harie Wood, eldest son of the bishop, John Wood, servitor to the bishop; three others sign, Jo. Rose, A. Shaw, A. Mansone. The chapter: Mr. Jas. Gray, dean, Mr. J. Dempster, treasurer, Mr. Hugh Rose, chanter, Wal. Rose, chancellor, Alexr. Gibsoun, archdeacon, Jas. Fullerstone, parson of Dunnet, -Mr. Tarres, parson of Olrick, Ja. Innes, parson of Canisbay.

1687, Dec. 21 and 31. Sasine in favour of Sir Alex. Mackenzie of Broomhill of an annual rent in Stromay. John Kennedie, elder of Stromay and Jeane McKenzie his spouse, with Hendrie Lyell in Stromay as procurator for Sir Alexr. MacKenzie, gave sasine of £45 Scots out of Neithertoune in Stromay, being one half of the nine and a half pennylands of old extent, in the parish of Canasbie and sheriffdom of Caithness, bounded as

follows: the dyke of Tofts on the south, the ocean sea on the east and north, and the Burn of Ramigo on the west. Redeemable for £750 Scots. Dated at Kirkwall and Stromay. Witnesses, John Grott, portioner of Dungesbey, John Begg and Walter Robsone, Stromay, and Thos. Delday, Kirkwall, Andrew Lyell, clerk of the diocese of Caithness. At Wick, Jan. 10, 1688, produced by Jas. Davieson and regd. by Wm. Campbell, clerk depute.

1688, April 23. Sasine, Sir Alex. McKenzie, of Stroma. Witnesses to disposition, Wm. Mackenzie, commissary of Orkney, Jas. Morisone, merchant, Kirkwall, and Andrew Lyell. Witnesses to sasine, John Dunnet, schoolmaster at Cannasbay, and Wm. Lyell, servitor to John Kennedie.

The original MSS. are in the possession of Mr. John Nicolson, Nybster, Caithness.—A. W. J.

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

[To save space it will suffice to state that the farms paid rent at the rate of £1 18s., 3 firlots [of meal], $\frac{1}{2}$ goose, 3 poultry, 30 screa, per octo or $\frac{1}{8}$ th pennyland, and that each farm, irrespective of its size, paid 2 barrels of oyl. The following is a list of tenants and their holdings.]

Donald Bowar, 3 octos.

Donald Henderson, 1 fardinland.

Peter Mudy, 1 fardinland.

Donald Bowar, youngest,
1 fd. land.

Thomas Kennedy, 1 octo
and a half. He payes
for the Ley quoy, 3 fir-
lots, 2 geese.

Edward Rosie, 1 fardin-
land.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>Alexr. Rosie, 3 octos and a croft, [which latter paid] 2 firlots, and $\frac{1}{2}$ goose.</p> <p>William Linclater, 3 octos.</p> <p>Robert Mudy, 1 fardinland.</p> <p>Margaret Bowar, 1 fardinland.</p> <p>Donald Bowar, 1 fardinland.</p> <p>Andrew Rosie, a house without land and payes £3, 3 poultry [no oil].</p> <p>David Rosie, 1 fardinland.</p> | <p>Alexr. Manson, 1 octo and a half.</p> <p>Alexr. Lyel, 1 octo and a half.</p> <p>Margaret Bowar, elder, 1 octo [no oil].</p> <p>James Petry, a quoy and payes £1, 1 firлот 2 pecks, and 2 barrels of oil.</p> <p>Murdow Kennedy, a half pennyland and a half octo [paid no geese, poultry, screa nor oil.]</p> <p>Isobell Tennent, a croft, and payes the 3rd sheaf and teind.</p> |
|---|--|

The MS. of the above is in the possession of Mr. John Nicolson, Nybster, Caithness. *Screa*, *scrae*, is the sun-dried coal-fish, O.N. *skreið*, f. (1) a shoal of fish, (2) dried fish as food and as an export; *skreiðar-garðr*, a platform for drying fish; *skreiðar-hlaði*, a pile of *skreið*; *skreiðar-tiund*, *-tollr*, *skreið-teind*, *-toll*. *Octo*, *octon*, O.N. *áttundi*, an eighth; applied in the above charters and rental to one-eighth of a pennyland, which, in Orkney, is usually described as "a half-farthing land."—A. W. J.

FINDING OF ANCIENT BURYING PLACE AT STENNESS, ORKNEY.—An ancient burial place containing a stone cist has been found about five chains from the circle around the mound of Maeshowe, on the farm of Tormiston. Whilst a roadman, Isaac Newlands, was working at a quarry opened up a few years ago, he made the discovery. It is peculiar in this respect that it is on perfectly level ground, covered with heather.

Small stone cists which were previously found in the neighbourhood were on raised ground or small mounds. This cist was covered on the top by 2 feet 6 inches of earth, and on the surface the grave had been begun on a space of about 12 feet in diameter. From the surface to the bottom of the cist the depth was 5 feet 3 inches, and the excavations had gone through 2 feet 3 inches of solid rock. The length of the cist itself is 5 feet, the breadth 4 feet 6 inches, and the depth 2 feet 9 inches. On each of the north, east, west sides and top of the grave there is one large stone slab. The south side consists of rough building with a small doorway about 24 inches by 18 inches. The cist contained a quantity of moist greasy clay, and brown and black ashes in the bottom. Some people who have examined the cist are of opinion that it is as old as Maeshowe. The last cist found in the vicinity was on the farm of Lochside. It was about 4 feet long, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet high, with stone slabs surrounding it on raised ground. There were two skeletons in this cist. These crumbled away when exposed to the air.—*Orcadian*, August 14th.

REPLY.

LYKEN OR LYKAND COW WITH CALF (p. 115, *ante*).—It is possible that this is O.N. after all. O.N. *liggja*, to lie, is also used in the sense to have carnal knowledge of, although rarely used of animals; with acc. *liggja konu*, stuprare, hence **legin kú*, a lain with (pregnant) cow. Cf. Sco. *to lig*, (1) to lie, (2) to have carnal knowledge of, (3) to bring forth young (of ewes), the ewes are said to be “ligging” (ppl, *liggen*, lain), meaning, bringing forth, *i.e.*, pregnant.—A. W. J.

QUERY.

LOSS OF CAITHNESS EMIGRANTS AT NEWFOUNDLAND IN 1807.—In some editions of the Gaelic poems of Donald Matheson, Kildonan, there are two by Samuel

Matheson—*Marbh-rann do Sherra M'Culloch, a bhat-hadh air a Phort-Mhor fagus do Dhornoch* (An Elegy on Sheriff M'Culloch, who was drowned at the Meikle Ferry near Dornoch), and *Marbh-rann do'n Mhuintear a bhathadh aig Nuafoundland air an Laong chaidh e Gallaobh* (An Elegy on those who were drowned at Newfoundland in a ship that went from Caithness). Perhaps some of the readers of the *Miscellany* will be able to give information about this catastrophe. In his recently issued *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica*, the Rev. D. MacLean has the following note on the event:—

“ We have made a full inquiry regarding the loss of this vessel. The facts are as follows. Some of the tenants on Sir John Sinclair's estate were apprised of Sir John's intention to turn parts of his estate into large sheep farms. They resolved not to wait until evicted, but emigrate to Canada. They were joined also by a large number of the poor people, who made up their minds to seek their fortune in the New World. In early September, in the year 1807, a large brig, after calling at one or two places, arrived at Scrabster Roads, and during Friday and Saturday of the Martinmas Market at Thurso, completed her boarding of the passengers and their luggage. A violent storm, which destroyed the crops of the district, delayed the vessel in harbour for ten days. She then sailed on a tediously long voyage till she reached the banks of Newfoundland, where she got becalmed in a thick fog, so that she had to anchor. A violent gale arose, and the vessel drifted from her moorings to a rock-bound coast. To make matters worse the seamen were drunk. At last the vessel was so shattered against the rocks that she foundered. It is said that Alexander Gunn, of Coilteil, sang on deck the 46th Psalm in Gaelic, and as the vessel was actually sinking he uttered aloud: *O thusa a Thighearna da geill na duilean dian cur agus buain aig an aon am*. It used to be believed in the north that

only three souls were saved. A lady lives in England at present (1906) to whom a survivor communicated full details of the loss of the ill-fated ship, and the sufferings of the survivors in Newfoundland, who had to walk twelve miles, wet and hungry, through ice and snow, to the nearest habitation. Thirteen souls were saved. A Thurso correspondent, in reporting the sad loss of the vessel to the *Inverness Journal* in 1808, called her *The Rambler of Leith.*" It would be interesting to get some further information on this event, which must have brought sorrow to many northern homes.—D. B.

THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH IN CAITHNESS AND SUTHERLAND (1136-1445).

(Concluded from p. 160, *ante*).

On the abdication of John Balliol in 1296 King Edward I. took the government of Scotland into his own hands, and in the following year he conferred the archdeaconry of Caithness upon Ferquhard de Belegaume (No. 27, p. 70). In the great struggle for Independence the Scottish Churchmen took a strongly patriotic course. The Popes whose pontificates covered the period were Boniface VIII. (1294-1303), Benedict XI. (1303-4), Clement V. (1305-14), and John XXII. (1316-34). To begin with, Rome maintained a friendly attitude to Scotland, her "special daughter." After Wallace's defeat at Falkirk he appealed to the Pope who called upon Edward to liberate two Scottish bishops. This injunction was repeated in 1300, and Edward was summoned before the Roman Curia. The English king indignantly repudiated the Pope's rights to deal with political matters, and led his army northwards to invade Scotland, whereupon Boniface VIII.,

The Scot-
tish
Struggle
for Inde-
pendence.

Scottish
Church-
men keenly
patriotic.

Rome's
attitude to
Scotland
in the
Struggle.

Boniface
favours
England.

without a word of explanation, abandoned the Scottish cause, and in August, 1302, addressed Edward as "his illustrious and very dear brother in Christ." From this date onwards the weight of Rome was thrown on the English side. The Scottish bishops, however, with one or two exceptions, took their country's side, notwithstanding the papal attitude and the rebuke administered to them by Pope Boniface's letter in 1302.

Ferquhard
de Belegambe
appointed
bishop.

Edward's
interference
in regard to
"temporalities."

Words in
the papal
bull
rejected by
the new
bishop.

Papal sen-
tence re-
moved
from Bruce.

Papal
Reserva-
tions.

In 1306 Edward commands the guardians of Scotland to deliver the temporalities of the bishopric to Ferquhard, whose election was confirmed by Clement V. in 1306 (No. 32, pp. 74-78), but as there were certain words in the papal bull of confirmation as to these temporalities "which appeared prejudicial to the King's right," and as "the bishop renounced the bull *quoad* these and acknowledged that he held the temporalities of the king," they were restored to Ferquhard (No. 33, p. 79). Bishop Ferquhard¹ at first favoured Edward, but in 1309 he adhered to the cause of Bruce. The papal anathemas launched against Bruce did nothing to withdraw from his cause the support of the clergy, and though the Battle of Bannockburn gave Scotland her place as a nation and Bruce as her King, the attitude of Rome remained unchanged until after the Treaty of Northampton (1328), when Bruce was restored to the favour of the Church and addressed as "our dearest son, Robert, the illustrious King of Scotland."² In the preceding pages it has already been pointed out that under Pope John XXII., a system of reserving ecclesiastical benefices for the papal disposal

¹For Leonard [de Flisco], who is described as bishop-elect of Caithness (No. 36, p. 83), see list of Bishops of Caithness appended to this Introduction.

²The best account of the papal attitude to the Scottish struggle for Independence will be found in MacEwen's *Hist. of the Church in Scotland*, I., 252-276.

was inaugurated on a scale hitherto unpractised in Scotland. Petitions for benefices and papal "provisions" became the order of the day, and from 1329 (No. 39, pp. 84-90) to 1445 (No. 192, pp. 238-240) there are abundant illustrations of these papal "provisions."

Bishop Ferquhard was succeeded by David, of whom scarcely anything is known. He, in turn, was succeeded by Alan, archdeacon of Aberdeen, who was appointed by Pope Benedict XII., after having been elected by the Chapter of Caithness (No. 46, pp. 108-112). The Pope, contrary to the usual custom adopted since the introduction of the reservation of benefices, did not declare this capitular election null and void. Alan's successor, Thomas of Fingask, was appointed by Pope Clement VI. (No. 49, pp. 113-116). Bishop Thomas was delegated by the clergy to treat with the English King for the ransom of King David,¹ and in connection with this safe-conducts were granted to him (Nos. 64, p. 127; 72, p. 130). In 1368, Malcolm, canon of Caithness and also of Orkney, was elected by the Chapter, but in accordance with the usual papal procedure the election was declared null and void, as the Pope Urban V. had reserved the appointment to himself. He, then, appointed Malcolm to the vacant see (No. 117, pp. 156-159). The period covered by the episcopates of David, Alan, Thomas de Fingask and Malcolm has been described as one of the dreariest and most dismal in the history of Scotland, and though there is little to give us any clue of the state of affairs in the diocese of Caithness, it is probable a like condition of things existed as farther south.²

We now come to the period of the great Papal Schism

¹ *Acts of the Parliament of Scotland*, I., 515, 518.

² There is humiliating evidence of the lack of morality among the priesthood during this period as is shown in MacEwen's *Hist. of the Church in Scotland*, I., 292.

Bishop
Ferqu-
hard's
successors.

Bishop
Thomas de
Fingask
appointed
to treat for
ransom of
David II.

Malcolm
elected
bishop.

Election
declared
null and
void, there-
after
Malcolm
appointed
by the Pope

The Papal
Schism,
1378-1424.

(1378-1424), which affected Scotland as it did the whole of Christendom. Scotland cast in its lot with the anti-Popes,¹ Clement VII.² and Benedict XIII., and from 17th November, 1378 (No. 123, p. 166) to 11th December, 1418, the ecclesiastical appointments in Scotland were made by these two anti-Popes. The first bishop appointed by Clement VII. to the see of Caithness was Alexander Man, and if, as Eubel says, he was appointed on 21st October, 1381, he lost no time in setting about his duties, for on 10th December, 1381, there is a petition from Alexander, bishop of Caithness, "for licence to dispense fifty persons of illegitimate birth, so that they may be ordained and hold a benefice"; the petition is granted for twenty-five. He also petitions for "licence to dispense twenty persons related in the third or fourth degree so that they may intermarry": the petition is granted for six (No. 128, p. 169). The date of bishop Alexander's death is not known, but in 1402 Pope Boniface IX., in nominating Conrad as bishop of Sodor, says in his decree: "Whereas the church of Sodor is recently deprived of the comfort of a pastor because we caused our venerable brother John, bishop of Caithness, then bishop of Sodor, although in absence, to be released from his government of the church of Sodor" (No. 140, pp. 178-9). There is no evidence that John exercised his episcopal rights in Caithness, and as Scotland adhered to the anti-Popes,

Alexander
Man
appointed
bishop.

Petition for
the license
to dispense
50 persons
of illegiti-
mate birth.

Pope
Boniface's
appoint-
ment of
John as
bishop of
Caithness.

¹Popes Clement VII. and Benedict XIII., though designated anti-Popes, were personally free from most of the stains which disgraced their Italian rivals.

²Clement showed his favour to Scotland on his appointment by sending a nuncio authorising him to depose the adherents of his rival Pope Urban VI., and make appointments to the vacancies so created, to bestow 'livings' on poor clerks and admit 200 bastards to the priesthood after administering tonsure, to license 200 portable altars and to give 20 dispensations of marriage to next of kin, with 300 plenary remissions (MacEwen's *Hist. of the Church in Scotland*, I., 305, 306; *C. P. R. Letters*, IV., 240-2).

the probability is that John's appointment by Boniface IX. was ignored.¹ At the same time there is a sufficiently long period between the date given by Keith of bishop Alexander's death (1395) and the date of the appointment of his successor, Alexander de Vaus (1414), to allow for John's episcopate. The question as to whether John exercised episcopal functions in the see of Caithness or not must meantime be left undecided; the present evidence, however, gives no indication that he did. The next bishop appointed by Benedict XIII. (anti-Pope), as already indicated, was bishop Alexander de Vaus, who, according to Eubel, was appointed in 1414. It was during bishop Alexander de Vaus' episcopate that Scotland's allegiance to the anti-Popes terminated. Benedict XIII. left Avignon in 1403, and made his home at Nice, Genoa, Savona,

Question as to whether John exercised episcopal functions in Caithness.

Alexander de Vaus appointed bishop.

Scotland casts off allegiance to Benedict VIII., 1418.

¹The Popes and the anti-Popes occasionally poached on each other's preserves, and these double appointments have caused no small confusion to students anxious to unravel the tangled skein of the past. Mr. A. W. Johnston has given a list of the double appointments as far as Orkney is concerned (*Old Lore Miscellany*, III., 151) and Dr. Dowden also gives a list for Galloway (*Bishops of Scotland*, 375). He makes reference also to the difficulty of giving a correct list of the bishops of the see of Sodor through these double appointments (*Ibid.*, 286-288). On 14 February, 1407-8 Benedict XIII. (anti-Pope) appointed Alexander de Vaus, afterwards bishop of Caithness, to be bishop of Orkney, and in his decree he guards against interference with the interests of the archbishop of Trondheim in these words:—"That these presents shall work no prejudice hereafter to our venerable brother, the archbishop of Trondheim, to whom the foresaid church by metropolitan law is known to be subject" (*Orkney and Shetland Records*, I., 244). It is significant, however, that while Orkney is always reckoned as adhering to the Italian Popes that Pope Martin V. in appointing Mr. Nicholas Tunnoh to the archdeaconry of Caithness, in his reference to this appointment, says:—"This canonship and a prebend of the said church canonically joined therewith became vacant when our venerable brother, Alexander, bishop of Caithness, formally elect of Orkney, and at that time archdeacon of the said church of Caithness, was during the vacancy of the Church of Orkney provided to that see by Peter de Luna, sometime called Benedict the Thirteenth by his following, *to which those parts then adhered.*" (No. 158, p. 206). The words in italics, however, evidently refer to Scotland and not to Orkney, as one might at first sight read them.

Condition
of affairs in
Scotland
during
Benedict's
pontificate.

Benedict
deposed by
Council of
Constance,
1417.

Perpignan, and Peniscola in turn, from which places he dated his decrees, as many of the Records indicate. Latterly only Scotland and Aragon acknowledged him. He exercised no control over his officials. His own secretary, Nicolas de Clémanges, has left a gruesome picture of the state of things during Benedict's pontificate: "In regard to the cure of souls nowadays, no mention is made of divine services or the salvation or edification of the people; the one question is about their revenues—not what a benefice supplies to a resident servant of the Church, but what it will yield to one who is far away, and perhaps never intends to visit it. No one obtains a benefice without constant and repeated solicitation."¹ The latter statement is abundantly borne out by the petitions from the diocese of Caithness during Benedict's pontificate. Matters were no better managed by the Italian Popes, and at last a demand for a General Council, to restore unity and introduce reforms, became an accomplished fact. The Council met at Pisa, declared the papacy vacant, and appointed Alexander V.; but Gregory and Benedict, the rival Popes, ignored the appointment. Alexander V. soon gave way to John XXIII., concerning whom Milman says: it "shocks belief that even in those times a man whose life had been so wicked should ascend to the papacy."² At length the Council of Constance met, which began its work by burning Hus in 1414, and in 1417 set aside the three rival Popes and appointed Martin V. in their stead. The Scots had no representatives at Constance, for about eighteen months after his deposition petitions were sent from Scotland to

¹ Creighton's *Hist. of the Papacy*, I., 301, 375.

² Neander's verdict is stronger still. He describes him as "The greatest monster that had ever, or at least that had since the abominations in the tenth and eleventh centuries, polluted the papal chair." (*General Hist. of the Christian Religion and Church*, IX., 121).

Benedict XIII. In October, 1418,¹ a General Council of the Three Estates of the realm met at Perth, and after considerable argument² it was decided that Scotland should cast in its lot with the adherents of Pope Martin V. During Benedict's pontificate, marriage dispensations were granted to Walter, earl of Caithness, and Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Graham (No. 142, pp. 180-182), and John de Sutherland and Margaret de Duff (No. 153, pp. 198-200). It was Benedict, also, who granted to Alan Stewart, illegitimate son of Walter, earl of Caithness and Atholl, dispensations to hold the canonry and prebend of Menmuir, "notwithstanding he is illegitimate and twelve years of age" (No. 152, p. 198), and also the canonries and prebends of Cruden in Aberdeen and other benefices successively held by him for two years since his fifteenth year when studying arts in the University of St. Andrews (No. 54, p. 200). On 11th December, 1418, which must have been among the last petitions granted by Benedict, he gives a dispensation to Alan Stewart to hold benefices and cathedral dignities and to exchange them (No. 155, p. 200).

General Council of the Three Estates rejects Benedict.

Some of Benedict's dispensations in the see of Caithness.

Near the end of the episcopate of bishop Alexander de Vaus a dispute arose between Nicholas Tunnoh (Tunno, Tunok) and Alexander Barberii about the archdeaconry of Caithness (No. 157, pp. 202, 203). It was finally settled in favour of Tunnoh by Pope Martin V. (No. 158, pp. 203-208). In 1422 Alexander

Dispute about archdeaconry of Caithness.

¹ Sir Archibald A. Dunbar following Bower gives the date as 2nd October, 1417 (*Scottish Kings*, 186), but Pope Martin had not been elected as early as this. The date, as pointed out by Dr. Hay Fleming, is October, 1418. (*Reformation in Scotland*, 21).

² The arguments adduced on either side are given in the *Scotichronicon*, XV., 25.

³ For dispute on the question of the right to the deanery see *C. P. R. Letters*, VIII.

Alexander
de Vaus's
successors.

Appoint-
ment to the
parish
churches of
Latheron
and
Dunbeath.

A simon-
iacal trans-
action.

Official of
Caithness
to enquire
into the
matter.

Another
simoniacal
transaction

de Vaus was translated to Whithorn (No. 160, p. 209), and was succeeded by John de Cranach, dean of Ross (Nos. 163, p. 210; 164, p. 211). On his translation to Brechin, in 1426, Robert of Strathbrock was appointed in his place (No. 165, p. 211). In 1428 the Pope gives a mandate to bishop Robert to appoint John Rossell to the parish churches of Latheron and Dunbeath (No. 167, p. 212) in place of William of Sutherland, who held the benefice for more than a year though unordained, and though summoned to give it up retained it notwithstanding for seven years. In a document dated 3rd February, 1444-5, there is reference made to a simoniacal transaction (No. 189, pp. 235, 236) in which Richard of Holland, priest, is said to have entered into a bargain with William of Sutherland, archdeacon of Caithness, whereby it was agreed that William would exchange his archdeaconry for Richard's canonry and prebend of Ross, and would pay in his stead a certain yearly money pension which William had simoniacally bound himself to pay to Alexander de Ratir, priest of the diocese of Caithness; this exchange, it is added, was carried through by Robert, bishop of Caithness, who had special power from Thomas, bishop of Ross. The official of Caithness is commanded by the Pope to look into the matter, and if he find the charge brought by Alexander of Sutherland, who holds "the poor hospital without cure of St. Mary (? St. Magnus) in the said diocese, value not exceeding £6 sterling," to remove William from the archdeaconry and appoint Alexander of Sutherland in his place. In another document (No. 191, pp. 237, 238) dated two months later (3 April, 1445), Andrew de Tulloch becomes involved in a series of simoniacal transactions, in which the prebend of Canisbay has a place, and the Pope appoints certain bishops to grant absolution to him, "enjoining penance, dispense him on account of irregularity contracted by celebrating

mass, etc., when under the said sentences and rehabilitate him" (No. 191, p. 238).

Pope Martin V. was succeeded by Pope Eugenius IV.,¹ and one of the last documents in this volume is a decree allowing Thomas of Tulloch to accept the canonry of Caithness with the prebend of Canisbay, which Thomas of Tulloch, bishop of Orkney, had resigned (No. 192, pp. 238-240).

Pontificate
of Eugenius
IV.

RARE ORKNEY BIRDS.

BY MAGNUS SPENCE.

THE Orkneys, with their many land-locked bays, large inland lochs and tarns on the moors, form excellent, well-sheltered winter habitats, and, owing to their shallow waters, splendid feeding ground for sea and fresh-water birds of all kinds.

During last winter we had one of these periodic visits of the Little Auk (*Mergulus alle*), which happens once in a dozen years or so. In Barry it is stated: "The Little Auk may be seen on our rocks pretty often." Barry seems either not to have been familiar with the bird, or at least not to have known the interesting chain of sequence in its history. Heddle says: "These birds occasionally appear in great numbers during winter." He gives 1803, 1812 and 1846 as years of

¹ Pope Eugenius IV. was deposed by the Council of Basle in 1439, and Felix V. was elected in his place by three men. Felix found many supporters in Scotland (*C. P. R. Letters*, VIII., 238). The *Scotichronicon* referring to a period about six years after the foregoing date says:—"State and Church were at variance; the one excommunicated the other; men were guided by their own whims rather than by regard for principle, and the authority of Him who has given power to bind and loose was wholly despised (XVI., 6)." Though deposed, Eugenius still continued Pope and gradually his cause prevailed in Scotland. In 1443 Scotland declared for "our holy Fadir the Pope Eugene" (*Acts Parl. of Scotland*, II., 33). In 1449 Felix resigned and his cause in Scotland came to an end.

their periodic visits. This is the ring of a true naturalist and observer. Both give the Orkney name of it—*Rotchie*. I find it is a bird that is very little known by fishermen and others familiar with bird-life in the land-locked bays of our islands. It has often been mistaken for the Tystie. Buckley and Harvie Brown give 1885 as one of the years of its visitation. Dunn, in his racy description of excursions and observations in Orkney, has no mention of this bird. Evidently he had not seen it. I have quoted the foregoing authorities because, the first week of this year, Little Auks were in large numbers round Orkney and Caithness. The first brought me was about Christmas. It was brought by school girls who, during playtime, found one alive near the Post Office, $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile from the sea. Life was ebbing away quickly, and it only survived for a few minutes. On New-year's-day another was brought me. It had been caught nearly one mile from the sea. It was in a lively condition. I tried it in a large bath of water. It attempted to fly, but evidently required several square yards of surface before it could get the momentum necessary to raise its flight to get over the edge of the bath. I placed it under a wire rabbit fence all night. In the morning it was evident that rats had got under the framework and killed my Rotchie. One day, afterwards, I had a walk round the head of Newark Bay, when, within a space of 1,000 yards of the shore, I found six Rotchies with their breasts and entrails eaten away. This was doubtless the work of gulls, especially the Great Black-backed gull. I learned also, from two reliable farmers who had been out to sea fishing cod, that in the neighbourhood of Copinsay, on the Mainland side, there were hundreds of these pretty little birds. These birds have never been known to nest in the Orkneys—in fact, very few people seem to be familiar with them. The last time I knew of one being caught on land was during the period of snow and

storm in 1895. Its home is in the Arctic Ocean, especially in the neighbourhood of Iceland, where they can be seen in great numbers. The irregular visits of the Little Auks are no doubt due to weather conditions. They seem unable to face a storm; but rather allow themselves to be driven before it. Those found on land and shore were there because they were unable to stem the velocity of the wind. During the frequent cyclonic disturbances, of which we had such a number last winter, they were driven before the gale to our shores. Our gales last winter had nearly all come from the south-east. When a large cyclone has its centre over Scotland, the gale over the north of Scotland is a south-east one; but in the neighbourhood of Iceland it will be a north gale. These frequent north gales will bring the Rotchies down the Atlantic to the latitude of Orkney when westerly breezes and current will bring them to the Orkneys.

The Loomie, Raingoose, or the Red-throated Diver (*colymbus septentrionalis*) is a bird of considerable interest. It is rather rare, but a few live here all winter. The old Norse name is *lómr*, which is also metaphorically, from the cry of these birds, used as meaning a cry, lamentation, *e.g.*, *bar-lómr*, wailing, complaining. It is called Raingoose because when its familiar cry was heard it was a sure, or supposed, sign of the near approach of rain. This was no doubt during the spring or early summer. Orcadians would have no need of watching for some indication of coming rain in winter, as more, generally, falls than is wanted; but during a dry spring eager listeners would be anxiously waiting to hear the familiar, prophetic cry. This bird builds on the edge of small lochs and tarns in the lonely moors and secluded valleys. The lochs frequented by them were named Loomaghins, from loomie, the bird, and ghin, or shun, from O.N. *tjörn*, a tarn. These are to be found all over Orkney. To mention a few: one

between St. Andrews and Holm; in Isbister, Birsay; in Bigswell, Stenness; in Rousay, etc. Its nest is built so near the water's edge that after a heavy rainfall it is in danger of being flooded. I remember seeing a nest with addled eggs, on which the Raingoose was still sitting, on the edge of the Little Water, Rousay. This reminds me of a cognate name in Greeny, Birsay. In the middle of cultivated land there was a little loch—now drained—called Bustraghin, in which water stood there for five or six months. On the analogy of Loomaghin this derivation should be from Bustard, the bird, and *ghin*. There is no evidence that Bustards (which is not a Norse name) ever lived in Orkney, with the exception of one shot by Mr. Stevenson, Stronsay, in 1886. Dr. Jacobson thinks it may be derived from *bólstaðar tjörn*, the tarn of the farm.

THE "CAPTURE" OF SHETLAND, 1667.

WITH NOTES BY R. STUART BRUCE.

NOT long ago I received from my friend, Heer J. F. de Balbian Verster, of Amsterdam, the following curious description of an abortive attempt on the part of the Dutch to effect the capture of the Shetland Islands. I think that all Shetlanders will be interested and amused with the quaint tale, which I reproduce practically as Heer de Balbian Verster sent it to me.

Immediately after "de tocht naar Chatham," as the Hollanders call the Medway Raid, the bulk of the Dutch fleet stayed for some time near the mouth of the Thames; but several squadrons went cruising along the English coasts, and a strong one was directed to the north to capture or "incorporate" the Shetlands [Hitland] and await and convoy the "Retourvloot," or returning East India fleet, safely to Holland.

This "eskader," "smaldeel," or squadron, was commanded by at least two flag-officers who had taken a large part in the expedition to the Medway, which the Dutch say is to be "regarded as a revenge" for the "scandalous raid" of Sir Robert Holmes, who the year before (9th-10th August, 1666) came to the isle of Terschelling and burned 140 fishing boats and merchant ships. He was guided by a traitor named Heemskerk, a Dutch captain "who fled to the enemy," *i.e.*, the English, after what the Dutch call "the disastrous battle of Lowestoft," 3rd June, 1665.

Samuel Pepys, in his Diary, writes (30th June, 1667):—

"... It seems very remarkable to me, and of great honour to the Dutch, that those of them that did go on shore to Gillingham, though they went in fear of their lives, and were some of them killed, and notwithstanding their provocation at Shelling (correctly : Terschelling¹), yet killed none of our people, nor plundered their houses, but did take some things of easy carriage, and left the rest, and not a house burned; and which is to our eternal disgrace, that what my Lord Douglas' men, who came after them, found there, they plundered and took all away, and the watermen that carried us did further tell us, that our own soldiers are far more terrible to those people of the country-towns than the Dutch themselves."

The squadron, Shetland-bound, consisted of 17 or 18 men-of-war, one "brander" [a fireship], one provision ship and 4 galliots. The Commanders and the Flag-ships were:—

1. Lieut. Admiral Willem Joseph Baron van Ghent (Admiralty Board of Amsterdam).

"De Dolphyn," 84 pieces of cannon, 475 mariners, 75 soldiers.

¹ The Island near the entrance to the Zuyder Zee, on which Holmes landed.

2. Vice-Admiral Jan or Johan de Liefde (Admiralty Board of Rotterdam).

"De Ridderschap (nobility) van Hollant," 60 pieces, 285 mariners, 50 soldiers.

3. Schout-by-nacht (Rear-Admiral) Hendrik Bruynsveldt (Admiralty Board of Friesland).

"Prins Henrik Casimir," 72 pieces, 300 mariners, 60 soldiers.

We may now turn to the letter of de Liefde, and we have also to vouch the story, a unique document (there existing no other record by any of the commanders or captains in this expedition); the complete logbook of Rear-Admiral Bruynsveldt. It is in the Provincial Library of Friesland at Leeuwarden.

The Dutch squadron was lying on the early morning of 11th July, 1667, a little to the eastward of Hitland (Shetland) and De Liefde sent a letter ashore by the hands of "an old man." It runs:—

"To the respectable and discreet Robbert Sinklaer (Robert Sinclair), living near the Sand-bay at Hitland.

Favourable Friend,

Whereas we have come here at present with a squadron of considerable ships and amongst them some of our largest ones, under the command of the honourable lord Willem Joseph van Ghent, lieutenant admiral, and myself as vice-admiral, and the honourable Heer Bronsveldt as schout-by-nacht, in order to look for the squadron of admiral Smidt¹ or the English naval power for the time being in the north, and as we have a thousand soldiers of the land militia on board our ships, we are in a position, if we choose to do so, to bring harm to the inhabitants of Hitland by burning their houses or robbing them of their cattle; but notwithstanding this, we can assure you by order of the lieutenant-admiral and ourselves, his

¹ Sir Jeremy Smith.

chief officers in the fleet, that the inhabitants of Hitland will not be harmed in the least degree whatever by our men, but, on the contrary, all the old alliances and friendships will be entertained as before, and if anyone would like to bring fish or sheep to our ships, he will be duly paid for it. Of this you and all the inhabitants really can be sure.

I will remain with my respects,

your good friend,

JAN DE LIEFFDE.

on board the land's ship (man-of-war of the Dutch Republic) "De Ridderschap van Holland," off Hitland at Bressa Sound, 30th June) 1667."

11th July)

The admiral added to his letter a post scriptum, in which he says that he had, in addition to the old man, the bearer of his letter,

"still another man that we have taken by force
"from the land with us, keeping him till the next
"morning on board of the admiral's ship in order
"to serve ourselves by him occasionally, but we
"will do him no harm whatever, his wife can be
"sure of this."

This second man is evidently the Lourens Jacobsen aftermentioned.

We may now turn to Bruynsveldt's Journal.

The writer tells us that Lieutenant-admiral van Ghent was ordered by De Ruyter to convoy with his squadron "half sea" to Hellevoetsluis (the harbour of Rotterdam), the "Royal Charles," the "Essex" and other English ships taken on the Medway.

Wednesday 29/19 June, the said ships and that of *De Liefde* ran ashore on the Dutch coast. "This was very troublesome," but in the evening when the water was high, all the ships were free again. [They must surely have been very carelessly handled.] Next day

(20th June) the squadron took leave of the ships homeward-bound and sailed to the north.

Monday 24th June. This morning vice-admiral De Liefde and the writer (Bruynsveldt) went on board the admiral, who read them his secret orders. The squadron was to sail straight forward to Hitland to conquer it with God's help, to enter the harbour of "Bresont" (Bressay Sound), and send a cruiser to Feröo (the Faröes) there to reconnoitre with the East India Company's yachts "de Bock" and "de Geyt."

The following days nothing particular happened until *Saturday 29th June*, when the ships saw Hanglip (the Noup of Noss, island of Noss near Bressay).

The admiral (van Ghent) in council ordered a yacht to take a letter to the governor of the Faröe islands, and another message to the East India ships if any were there. The remainder of the squadron was to stay off Shetland and the yacht had to rejoin it there, after having looked for the English squadron of admiral "Smidt" or others. In the meantime Van Ghent's squadron would see what they could do at Shetland to carry out their orders. In the afternoon they saw two ships "that endeavoured to flee"; one of them was taken but the other escaped.

Sunday 30th June. In the morning they spoke a "Puye" (a small ship, one-masted, sprit-rigged and similar to a tjalk, but finer ended) that had been five days ago with the admiral of the blue flag, Sir Jeremy Smith, who was cruising to encounter the Dutch East Indian return ships, and had, the master said, taken one of them already. In the afternoon the flag officers and captains went on board the admiral's ship. They met there one Captain Swart with the first officer of a Scottish privateer (not previously mentioned) who had together taken the flûte "de Rommelpott," (which had evidently been recaptured by Van Ghent's squadron) from Lange-

sont (Langesund?) bound to Nantes, and some others, amongst whom were two "Dogger" fishermen who had been five days previously with the English fleet. It was not possible to gather from them any distinct information of the state of affairs on the islands of Shetland except that the Governor "Sencklaer" was there with a regiment of 1000 men and that he had made a fortification of 40 pieces [according to what follows there were 80]. It was resolved that a "sloop" should be sent ashore with a man who was born at Shetland, he now being on board the admiral's ship. He was ordered to return next day.

Monday 1st July. During the night it had been quiet and very misty, but in the morning the fog lifted. In the afternoon "a good wind came," and the ships drew closer to the land. "Then the drums were beaten and a shot with light cannon was fired to warn the ships to keep clear of one another because it grew foggy again." That afternoon skipper Turck with his galliot "De Jaager" returned from the land and brought two "Hitten" (men of Shetland) with him, one of them an old "patroon" (or skipper) who was over a hundred years of age, called Olert Smits, and the other about 30 years old, called Lourens Jacobsen. The former declared that on the island in the "Buys Baey" (Herringbuss bay, now Lerwick harbour), a fortress had been built, a large one in prospect, with 3 batteries the one above the other, and very well armed with at least 80 pieces of cannon, including 5 heavy pieces of metal (*i.e.*, superior to the others, which were iron guns). That the Governor was called Willem Sencklaer, that he had in his fortress 350 soldiers, and about 500 men of the inhabitants who were in the service as well, and were armed with swords and guns. In case of alarm the whole population was mobilised and then there was a force of 3000 men altogether. The younger man declared all this to be true, and he added to the narra-

tive that the inhabitants were "longing for our coming, and that they were used very badly by the English." This man remained on board admiral van Ghent's ship because he was afraid he would be hanged if he went ashore again. The old "Patroon" was taken ashore in the galliot, and he departed very satisfied indeed after receiving by the admiral's order "something delicate."

A council of war was then held and admiral van Ghent proposed that the flûte "de Rommelpott" (rumbling pot) should remain with the fleet, fearing that she risked to be taken again if she was sent away alone. According to this the vice-admiral (de Liefde) and I (Bruynsveldt) by order of the admiral went on board the flûte "de Rommelpott" and we found her to be an old vessel of perhaps 17 or 18 years, the mates assuring us that she was very leaky. It was resolved that the vessel should be transformed as a brander (*i.e.*, a fireship) in the service of the fleet and everything was ordered to fit her out for the purpose.

Tuesday 2nd July. In the morning the galliot "de Krakelingh" returned and reported that she had seen no vessels off Fairhill [Fair Isle].

The squadron sailed N.E., the admiral in the centre, de Liefde starboard, we [Bruynsveldt's ships] at bak-boord [*i.e.*, on the port side]. Skipper Jan Turck reported that as soon as the sloop had approached the shore and he had disembarked the old "Hit" a large crowd gathered on the beach in order to meet him. The crew had seen that the people treated the old man very badly, and they concluded from this that if the other man¹ was sent ashore he would probably be hanged.

Wednesday 3rd July. The squadron still sailed N.E.

¹Lourens Jacobsen.—In 1674 there was a skipper of that name on the galliot "Frisia" (Admiralty Board of Friesland), who afterwards called himself "Quast." So that it is possible that Jacobsen, fearing what his reception would be should he return ashore at Shetland, enlisted in the Dutch Service.

up the coast of Shetland and met two small vessels coming from Amsterdam and various other ships. They reached the north of Hitland [probably the Skaw of Unst] where four frigates [a mistake for "galliot"] were directed to "Doggershaven" [Burrafirth— island of Unst] to get water and look for Scottish privateers.

Van Ghent seems to have thought that his squadron was not of sufficient strength to cope with the Shetlandic defence, and accordingly his ships rounded the "Nordhoek van Hitland" [the Skaw of Unst] on the 4th July, and found the four galliots off "Doggershaven." The ships then cruised slowly in the direction of the Faröes, and on the 8th a gale sprang up in which de Liefde's ship was considerably damaged and had her mainsail blown out of the bolt ropes. It took three days to repair the vessel, after the storm. The weather now improving they again made sail in a northerly direction.

The whole expedition was a failure, the squadron sailed "week after week," and at last it returned to Holland about the end of August, with many sick men, and the remainder of the crews almost starving for "want of provision." Indeed the latter part of Bruynsveldt's log is full of the buying and selling of bread from one captain to another, reports of the dead and sick, &c.

One cannot help thinking that Admiral van Ghent gave undue credence to the words of the "oude Hit"; who, on his part, I am sure, exaggerated considerably the military resources of Shetland at that time, but Hibbert (*A Description of the Shetland Isles*, p. 283) says:—

"On the south of the Town (of Lerwick) is the citadel, built A.D. 1665, which adds much to the beauty of the place: its erection is said to have cost £28,000 sterling. In the Dutch war of that time

Lerwick was garrisoned for three years by 300 men, commanded by Colonel William Sinclair, a Shetland gentleman, and they were supplied by about twenty or thirty cannon."

This colonel was William Sinclair of Ustaness, and he had a brother Robert, who might be the Robert who lived near the "Sand-bay."

One wonders why the Admiral did not make an attempt to carry out his orders and effect the capture of Shetland? It seems probable that he could have taken the isles, but as he did not do so we must leave our curiosity unappeased with regard to this little known incident in the history of the Shetland Islands.

A VISIT TO SHETLAND IN 1832.

(From the Journal of Edward Charlton, M.D.).

XV.

(Concluded from p. 122, *ante*.)

NORTHMAVINE (*continued*).

Wednesday, 12th September. A heavy rain all day. Lawrence Robertson, however, went to the Ness and procured me some fine specimens of porphyry and of syenitic greenstone. At night I walked down to Arthur Halcro's, where I found some fine pieces of Rhoetizite in a heap of minerals near his door. The son of old Halcro had been dr. Hibbert's assistant in Shetland, and these specimens had been collected with a view of transmitting them to the south. I afterwards met this young man in Lerwick, and purchased the few minerals that he still possessed.

Thursday, September 13th. At nine a.m. I started for Ollaberry, accompanied by Lawrence Robertson, to

whom I consigned the specimens from the eastern coast of Northmavine; and he returned with them to Hills-wick. Day fair, but calm.

Friday, 14th September, was spent in geologising, again, the productive banks of Colafirth. On my journey thither I stopped at a cottage (as was my wont) and procured two small stone implements of Norse origin. The one had apparently been a chisel, the other, of beautiful green hypersthene, perhaps a hammer. On this day I observed five or six of the turnstones congregated on a small low rock in Colafjord and still retaining their beautiful summer plumage. In the same voe I saw five herons of the common species, and the only birds of the kind I ever met with in Shetland. The day was very rainy, and I returned wet and hungry to the mansion of Ollaberry at 7 p.m.

Saturday, 15th September. Mr. Cheyne presented me with a fine specimen of the pipe-fish which he had picked up, dead, upon the shore. I returned to Hills-wick to await there Mr. Yorston's answer, and, to my great joy, it had arrived.

Sunday, 16th September. Though the day was tremendously wet, the inhabitants flocked from a considerable distance to the church. Mr. Henry Cheyne, a young advocate from Edinburgh, and a natural son of Mr. Cheyne of Tangwick, came from Busta in a boat. He had been there regarding the trial of Gifford *v.* Gifford of Busta, wherein a young man, educated, I believe, in America, attempted on a plea of bastardy to dispossess the present most honoured proprietor, but his endeavours were eventually fruitless. Miss Henderson of Bardista, from whose brother¹ Dr. Hibbert collected so many interesting facts regarding Shetland, remained with us the whole day.

Monday, 17th September. I had returned to Hills-

¹ William Henderson, of Bardista, succeeded 1803, died 1824; his sister, Anne, died 1852 (Grant); was she the one mentioned?

wick in order to proceed to Papa Stour, but the adverse wind and weather prevented me from accomplishing my visit to that island. In company with the revd. Archibald Robertson,¹ minister of Mid Yell, we set off for Ollaberry, and I intended from thence to take shipping for Gloup. This time I followed a different route to Ollaberry, going by water from Hillswick to the head of the Hammer Voe. We took leave of the hospitable mr. Gifford and his family, and embarked immediately in front of the house. The day was dark and drizzly, and the mist hung so heavy upon the ness that I was unable to get a sight of the beautiful rocks at the extremity of that promontory. A large seal, or haaf-fish, was swimming about in the bay, and took little or no notice of us as we pulled within a few yards of him. Presently he dived, and in a very short time reappeared with a large flounder in his mouth, with which he swam leisurely towards the shore, though I have no doubt that he concluded his luncheon long before he reached the rocks. We lunched at the reverend mr. Stevenson's² of Fairy Bank, and I then walked with mr. Robertson over to Ollaberry.

YELL.

Tuesday, 18th September. It blew a tremendous gale this morning from the south-east, but I was so anxious to get to Gloup that all mr. Cheyne's arguments and entreaties were in vain, and I found four boatmen ready to risk the passage of the Sound of Yell. We accordingly ran out of the inlet of Ollaberry and were soon in a boiling sea. Our boat, fortunately, was a large one and very seaworthy, and the crew had gallant hearts, so that, although very much drenched with the dashing spray, we ran to West Sandwick, a

¹ Rev. *James* Robertson; see p. 80, *ante*.

² Rev. William Stevenson, a native of Cumbernauld, presented to Northmaven, 1830, translated to Bothkenner, 1848 (*Fasti*).

distance of four miles, in forty minutes. I took a second breakfast with mr. Ogilvy (I am not sure that it was not my third meal that morning), and then got a fine little fellow, from one of the cottages, to carry my knapsack to Gloup. Our route was nearly the same as before, and my youthful guide ran along at a pace that rendered it difficult, even for me, to keep pace with him. As we descended towards Qualfiord Voe I espied, seated on the top of a heather bush, a beautiful snow bunting, which had, no doubt, just arrived from more northern regions, and still retained its brilliant summer dress. The little bird was exceedingly fearless, and allowed me to approach within a yard of it without exhibiting any symptoms of alarm. It was the only specimen I ever saw in that plumage. When near Gloup Voe we were met by some severe showers of hail, but we soon surmounted all difficulties and came down upon the peaceful waters of the Voe, and from thence to the house of Gloup, where I found letters awaiting me from the south.

Wednesday, 19th September. H[enderson] and I went off to Houland and to Papal Ness to shoot pigeons. We, however, obtained only two, for the people, of whom there were a great many in the fields busy with the hay and harvest, drove them away by shouting whenever I approached near to them. I was greatly surprised at the demonstration of popular feeling, and was at a loss to account for it, when I discovered, from an old man, that H[enderson] had shot six of his geese two days before in Gloup Voe, under the pretence that they were wild ones. To screen himself, or rather by way of a joke, he laid all the blame upon the Englishman, who was at that moment quietly resting at Ollaberry. I had no small difficulty in convincing them that I was not the culprit; but, however, H[enderson] paid for the geese, and the matter ended quietly.

Thursday, 20th September. I remained at home the

greater part of the day, for without it was rainy and cold, and birds were now becoming scarce. It is time to be going south.

Friday, 21st September. I remained all day in the house, packing, till the evening, when I crossed the Voe to Westafirth and purchased a lamb, of the moorit or brown and white variety, for one shilling and sixpence. I wished to take with me to England not only the beautiful natural history productions of these islands but also to carry away whatever was remarkable in the dress of the Shetland people. For this purpose I purchased, to-day, from James Moir, a skin coat and fishing boots, and procured a pair of breeches, mittens, and a night-cap to render my fishing-dress complete. From James Moir I also bought a couple of seal-skins, at half a crown each, and these now form a comfortable case for my fowling-piece. The lamb, which I had purchased this morning, I slaughtered this night with my dirk, and laid it by to skin it on the following morning. The seal-skins that I got were of the common species, the *phoca vitulina*,¹ and I in vain endeavoured, while in Shetland, to obtain a skin of *phoca barbata*, or haaf-fish.

Saturday, 22nd September. I was engaged during the greater part of the morning in skinning and preparing my lamb previous to packing it up. Having accomplished this trifling job, which was, however, by no means an agreeable one, I took my fishing-rod, which I had never touched since I came to Shetland, and went to fish at the head of the Voe. In a very short time I had killed about two dozen, among which was a fine sea-trout.

Lectori benevoli.—Here my journal breaks off, and, at the distance of ten years, I can recall to mind but little of what passed from this day till my final depar-

¹ Called *tang-fish*, i.e., inshore seal, in Shetland, to distinguish it from the *haf-fish*, or deep-sea seal.

ture from Shetland on the 10th of October. The heavy luggage was transported to Culiavoe in mr. Pole's boat, and then on a subsequent day, I think the 29th of September, I joined the "Magnus Troil," and, with William Cameron, sailed for Ollaberry. Here we once more fell in with our kind entertainer, mr. Cheyne, and after touching at Mossbank we landed at Lerwick. Here I found mr. Henderson, and we again took up our residence under the hospitable roof of mr. Hay.

From the 2nd of October, when the "Magnus Troil" was ready for sea, we were detained by a strong and steady south wind until the 10th of that month. During this long period I managed to employ myself in geologising the neighbouring country, but my excursions were always limited by the fear that the wind might change in my absence. I walked one day over to Scalloway, and slept at the house of mr. Scott, another day I was at Gardie, and upon the 9th I set off for the island of Noss. I left Lerwick at 7 a.m., and continued my excursion till 6 or 7 p.m., when I returned greatly fatigued, and, I am sorry to say, somewhat elated by an old witch's potations administered to me in the island of Bressay. The wind had changed during my absence, and I narrowly escaped being left behind. The next morning we were afloat, and at 6 a.m. moved out of the harbour. There was a motley crew on board, sundry merchants from Lerwick and half a dozen sailors from the Greenland seas, who were returning to Leith after having lost their ship and barely saved their lives in those inhospitable regions. They were, however, a merry, careless set, and had rightly adhered to the ancient custom of enjoying themselves when on shore, as they were all, more or less, intoxicated when they came on board.

The morning was fine, but there was an awful ground-swell setting in from the south-east, the quarter from whence the wind had blown during the last fort-

night. I had been sick enough when I rose in the morning on dry land, from the potations of the preceding evening, but now, a calm, seconded by a groundswell such as this, when the topmasts of the ships in company were, at times, scarcely visible, effectually discomposed my inward man, and I was sea-sick again, and for the last time. I had always been a pretty good and hearty sailor in this respect, and for two years before this time had become so inured to the motion of the waves, when shooting on the Firth of Forth, that the thought of being affected by them seldom entered into my mind.

We made but little way, and at night were still off the coast. The next evening we passed the Fair Isle, and the wind began to freshen. This day I had been quite well, and indeed I was quite revived yesterday by a huge plate of boiled beef and potatoes, which I managed to dispose of while sitting in my berth. I was busily engaged all this day in studying the management of the ship, and at night I retired to my berth with my head stuffed full of nautical terms, added to a good supper and an abundant supply of grog. Oh, what a malicious pleasure did I take in annoying one Gilbert Robertson, a shop-keeper of Lerwick, who had been the foremost of the opponents during the quarantine. I saw that he was dreadfully afraid of this disorder, and did all in my power to add to his terrors by the most harrowing descriptions of its ravages. But the next morning brought other topics of conversation.

About 4 a.m. I was awakened by the violent bounding of the ship, and by shouts upon deck, with the trampling of many feet. Chairs, hats and coats were dancing about the cabin, and I was soon painfully convinced of the propensity to motion imparted to everything, by my provision of ship's biscuit and butter which I had taken to bed, as was my custom, and which seldom saw light again, leaping out of my

berth. I could hear the heavy seas roaring as they advanced against the ship, and then there was a kind of pause, and then a shock, which almost tossed me up against the top of my berth. After this there was another calm, and then came three or four such rude knocks in succession, and at the conclusion of these, like rain after thunder, the briny flood poured along the decks and fell, drip, drip, down the companion ladder. Of course, all was made fast above, and I lay still, wondering how they would cook the beef-steaks for breakfast, when, after a heavier sea than usual, I heard a cry, and as it passed along the deck I thought it signified the boom was carried away. This was awful news, indeed, for to that identical boom was appended a magnificent piece of beef, from whence were to be derived the steaks for breakfast and for dinner. I jumped out of bed, put on my clothes, without being once capsized, found my way to the door and up the companion ladder, and then took advantage of a lull to open one door of the narrow hatchway and to get upon deck. It was a wild scene now indeed. With the exception of the mate, who was at the wheel, with another man to help him, the whole crew were forward on the bow-sprit, from which the jib-boom had been carried away a few minutes before. This loss they were endeavouring to repair, and first and foremost in the perilous task was the captain, James Ganson. As I came up the mate cried to me to keep below, as it was not weather for a gentleman to be on deck. But I remained, and watched with the wildest delight the commotion of the storm. Danger there was little or none, the sea broke furiously enough over us, but not so as to require that we should lash ourselves to anything to avoid being carried overboard. At breakfast and at dinner there was a miserable muster, and I spent the evening, for want of better society, among the jolly tars in the forecastle. And a merry night we made of

it. The next day we ran past Stonehaven, the Bell Rock and the May, and off the Bass picked up a pilot, who proved to be my old boatman, John Seaton. We ran into Leith Roads that night, and the next morning I found my way, somewhat unsteadily, along Leith Walk up to Edinburgh, where I arrived safe on the 14th of October, 1832, after an absence from Scotland of somewhat more than three months.

FINIS.

APPENDIX No. I.¹

ON THE STONE-AXES AND OTHER REMAINS OF ANTIQUITY IN SHETLAND, WITH A COMPARISON BETWEEN THESE AND SIMILAR AXES AND REMAINS IN NORTHUMBERLAND AND THE ADJACENT COUNTIES.

[It will suffice here to give dr. Charlton's description of the stone-axes which he obtained in Shetland in 1832], for there, in spite of the assertion of Chalmers in his *Caledonia*, these weapons are met with in much greater abundance than in countries farther to the south. I might, indeed, have procured many more had it not been for an absurd, though lucrative, prejudice regarding them that prevails among these islands. The Shetlanders have not preserved the slightest tradition regarding the people by whom these weapons were used, and they suppose them to have dropped from the clouds during thunderstorms, and to be endowed with the power of protecting the houses, in which they are preserved, from the effects of lightning. But the fortunate owner of these charms has a still more cogent motive for retaining them in his possession, for they are extensively employed in the cure of disease. The sick person touches or is touched by the stone-axe, and then, from the appearance or absence of moisture on the polished surface, they augur the death or the recovery of the patient. Of late years it is true that, through the exertions of enlightened men, the belief in the charm has been greatly weakened, though it is still employed in the remote parts of the country. It was from

¹ The author's Journal of his tour in 1832 was written, from his notes, in 1843, together with the appendices; while the journal of his tour in 1834, which occupies the beginning of the ms., appears to have been written in that year, the earlier tour being added nine years afterwards.

this cause, no doubt, that I was foiled in repeated attempts to obtain a very large and perfect specimen of the single-edged stone-axe, which was nearly 15 inches in length, and altogether a most desirable prize. It was the property of an individual in Northmavine; but this man, secure as he esteemed himself from the thunderbolt, has had good reason to doubt the efficacy of the charm, as his house has been twice struck by the electric fluid.

We will now proceed to the examination of the specimens I have laid before the Society.¹ I may premise that they all differ in some respects from those in the Museum.

No. I. is six inches and a half in length, by two inches and a half at its greatest breadth, and diminishes in width, as in thickness, towards either extremity, its greatest thickness being $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch. It is formed of a very compact green porphyry, which dr. Hibbert thinks must have been brought from the Scandinavian peninsula. It is, however, possible that among the numerous porphyry beds of the Shetland islands the individual one may have been overlooked which furnished the material for these weapons. The specimen before us is polished on every side with considerable care, but the greatest pains have been bestowed upon that portion which forms the cutting edge, and which comprises but two inches of the whole circumference, while at the other extremity it is slightly blunted off.

No. II. is an axe formed of a different stone and of much ruder workmanship. In dimensions it nearly resembles the foregoing, but tapers towards the blunt extremity, and is irregularly convex on the other side and slightly concave on the other. The cutting edge is not greater in extent than No. I., and the stone of which it is composed, though to some it may appear more quartzose and banded, is a hornstone porphyry.

No. III. is a small thick stone-axe or chisel, 3 inches long, by an inch and half at its greatest breadth, decreasing slightly in width towards the thicker end. The cutting edge has been broken away, and the opposite extremity has never been polished.

No. IV. is of a totally different form, though of the same material; it is oval (irregularly), five inches in length by $3\frac{1}{2}$ at its greatest breadth, which thence rather rapidly decreases to one inch and a half. Its greatest thickness is not more than a quarter of an inch. It is difficult to say how far the cutting edge has been extended, it does not, at any rate, appear to have occupied more than one-half of the circumference. One portion,

¹ Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (founded 1813), of which he was Secretary for many years, their publication being *Archæologia Aeliana*.

however, which is nearly straight, and about $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length, seems to have been purposely blunted, while the jagged obtuseness of the rest is probably the result of blows inflicted or sustained.

No. V. is a beautifully formed axe of flint, from a cairn in the neighbourhood of Corsoer in Denmark. I arrived at the spot in the afternoon of the day on which it was discovered along with nearly forty other implements, such as axes, hammers and arrow-heads, and all these were of flint, as are most of the stone weapons that have been discovered in Denmark. It is finely polished on the two flattened sides, while the edges, which are half an inch in thickness, are merely roughly hewn. The cutting edge is an inch and a half in extent, and the weapon decreases in width from thence to an inch at the other extremity, where it is roughly squared off, as on the sides.

[After an examination of the "mode in which these weapons may be supposed to have been employed in war," the author proceeds]: The flattened form of stone-axe, of which I can exhibit but a single specimen, appears to be of rare occurrence in Denmark, though it is frequent in the Shetland islands.

No. VI. is a round stone, of about three inches in diameter, and flattened upon the sides to the diameter of an inch and a half. Some have suggested that it has been employed as a hammer, but others, with equal probability, think that it may have been employed in a sling as a weapon of offence. It is formed of an extremely compact dark green diallage or gabbro, and does not differ much from the hypersthene rock in the vicinity of Balta Sound in Shetland. Similar round stones have been discovered in ancient graves in Denmark. The revd. John Bryden,¹ minister of Sandsting, on the Mainland of Shetland (writing in 1841), mentions the following circumstances regarding the stone axes in his possession. [After quoting from Mr. Bryden's account,² the author gives a description of the stone-axes in the possession of the Society which seem to belong to a similar age to those described above. In the course of his remarks he writes]: There are, however, in the Museum [Newcastle] some arrow-heads of flint which are beautifully shaped. I believe that some have been found in the Shetland islands, but I have never seen any from there. . . . When in the Shet-

¹ John Bryden, native of Dumfries-shire, pres. to Sandsting 1813, died 1855, aged 67. He had two daughters, one md. the rev. Alex. Shand, Nesting, and the other the rev. J. T. Duncan. (From *Fasti*). Mr. Bryden bought part of the estate of the Scotts of Scalloway (Grant).

² See account of the united parishes of Sandsting and Aithsting, in N.S.A. Shetland, p. 114 foot-notes.

land islands, in 1832, I made an excavation in the summit of Stackaberg in Fetlar [see Vol. VII., 26], where we discovered several urns containing ashes and encased in a rude coffin formed by large flat stones. We likewise procured two or three cubical stones which, from their shape, had evidently been used as hammers, but the Society of Antiquaries [of Newcastle] possesses more perfect specimens in its own Museum.

These singular weapons, the remnants of an ancient and barbarous age, are very frequent in the Shetland islands, and several of them have often been discovered together in that country, especially in the parishes of Waes and Delting, on the Mainland, and also in the island of Unst. In Northmavine, says dr. Low of Orkney, seven were discovered underground, disposed in the form of a circle, with their points directed towards the centre,¹ and in another place not less than 24 were found. . . . These stone-axes abound in Denmark, and they are in that country discovered in cairns or tumuli, which are well ascertained to have been erected over the most celebrated vikings or piratical chiefs of ancient and pagan times. In the Shetland islands, which remained so long tributary to the Northmen, these mounds or tumuli are very numerous, and when opened, which has rarely been adventured by the superstitious inhabitants, their contents have been found identical with those of the cairns of Denmark. As we progress towards the south, the cairns and, with them, the stone-axes become less numerous, till, at length, in those lands rarely, if ever, visited by the Northmen, they almost entirely disappear. Is it not, therefore, fair to conclude that the stone-axes found in Northumberland are to be referred to the period when the pagan Danes commenced their ravages on our coast?

APPENDIX No II.

A RARE CASE OF SLANDER, DEFAMATION AND WITCHCRAFT.

Excerpt from Magnus Bigland's written complaint against Helen Johnson, in Mid Yell, 28th October, 1831. "To mr. Thomas Leisk, Law-giver. Sir, I have to inform you of a very inhuman discourse which proceeded from the mouth of Helen Johnson, one of our neighbour women. First, she told my wife, Margaret Pole, that she was a stark notorious trouken² thieff, and that she had been a thieff, since an ell could make her a coat, and a divels servant to the boot. Next, she told her that she might have had me for her husband if she (my wife) had not

¹ Low's *Tour*, Kirkwall, 1879, p. 140.

² Trooker, a term of contempt applied to a woman in Shetland (E.D.D.) *cf.* ON. *truðr*, a juggler.

manufactured the liver of a lōān¹ bitch (a bitch at heat) into bread and given me *that* to eat, which drew my affections from her (Helen Johnson), with a very great deal of other abusive language." (From the original, *penes* Captn. Cameron, Belmont.)

APPENDIX No. III.

A RECIPE FOR THE TOOTHACHE.

A lad, near Strandiburgh [Fetlar], got the following recipe from an old Shetland woman: He was to go out till he found "ane horse heid," and having found it, all alone, he must go, all alone, to where three lairds' lands meet, and then, standing with one foot on either side of the burn, throw "da heid" over his shoulder, and he shall be no more troubled with tooth-ache. (From dr. Cowie, of Lerwick.)

APPENDIX No. IV.

SHETLAND SUPERSTITIONS.

A Shetlander, returning one night over the hills from Coningsburgh, found his feet, all on a sudden, surrounded by innumerable mice, so thickly crowded that he could not put down a "preen"² (pin) without injuring some of the "peerie" creatures. And this continued till the morning dawn when he arrived near a running stream and the mice all disappeared, while on the brig, before him, stood three gallant "knichts" on horseback with gaily fashioned bridles and fair trappings. The bold Shetlander spoke a word it is not safe to repeat to mortal ears, and the ghostly heroes vanished in a blue flame and with a noise that sounded, in the ears of the Coningsburgh, like a gun fired at his head, while a bright flash gleamed for an instant before him. (Report does not say whether the man was drunk or sober, but it is only the good that pass unscathed.)

The same man, when returning with a lad from a rant, or dance, at Lerwick, on coming down to a large green knoll at the head of Gulberwick, saw a door open in the said know, and people, gaily clad, were dancing therein to the sounds of fiddles. He watched for some time their proceedings till at length he whispered to his companion: Thomas du hast an jocteleg³; throw him in till da door, dan dey will not can shuit dat same.

¹ ON. *loða*, to cleave to, part. adj. *loðinn*; hence *lóða*, f. at heat, of a dog, from *loðu saman*. See also Jakobsen s.v. *lu*, *luin*.

² ON. *þrjónn*.

³ Sco., a clasp knife.]

N'jaw, sayed Thomas, I cannot spāir ma jocteleg, but tak your knife for de trows. Soa I tuik de knife an wis juist thrown him in til da door, whan it cam tae wid a flann,¹ like a Lerwick shop-keeper when he shuits his door in a hurry. (From dr. Cowie, of Lerwick.)

A Shetland fisherman's estimate of the strength and power of wind and water:

Oh lamm, in sāilin fra da haaf, de win wis so strong, and da sey lifted so hie dat I could na holdt da snuif tae ma nōāse.

A Shetland sailor, on board of the "Magnus Troil," referred me to the history of Scotland for the origin of the name of that vessel ! !

FINIS, 1843.

April 10th.

[To be followed by the author's journal of a visit to Shetland in 1834.]

RENTAL OF BRABSTER, CAITHNESS, 1697.

(Continued from p. 77 *ante*).

* Denotes later entries in another hand.

Brabster.

ANDREW JACK, ther laboures a pennyland and payes
therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow

silver - - - - - (07 : 03 : 4²

Mair, he rests of old mony rest. *This

old mony rest payed - - - (02 : 13 : 4²

*Receaved of his Mertimes debt 11lb. 5s. *Mair,
receaved in March, 5lb. 18s. 4d.

Item, he rests for this yeir's poultry, 13.

Mair, he rests a woodder and his fleece att Beltane
comeing, with a meatt lamb att Lambes nixt, if he
have it.

Mair, he rests of bought victual - - - 0 : 0 : 2 : 0

¹ ON. *flan*, a rushing.

² Deleted.

*Agust this 22th, 1698, receaved till compt of his heill rests of money, victual and customes preceeding this deat (excepting the victual and seed given him of this last year's crop 8lb. 18s. 4d.)

Mair, formerly for a cow 8lb. and for a staige 9lbs.

DONALD LAIRD, ther, laboures a pennyland and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow

silver - - - - - (07 : 03 : 4¹

*This payed in mony.

Mair, he rests for carriadge and arriadge (02 : 00 : 0¹

*This carriadge mony payed.

Mair, he rests of fearme, mill multer and

bannack - - - - - 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 1 : 2 : 0

Mair, he rests of bear meall - - - 0 : 1 : 1 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, he rests of dry bear - - - 0 : 1 : 0 : 2

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 1 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 0 : 1 : 0

Inde is - 4 : 0 : 0 : 2

Summa is - 5 : 1 : 1 : 2

*Reseaved of this left from his good father and put into the Mains meill girnell i boll meill and that besides the oats and bear he left estemeing to 10 bolls 1 firLOT oats and 1 boll 2 firLOTS bear which gave in meill 1 boll and the oats according to the esteme to 3 bolls i f.: Inde is 5 : 1 : 0 : 0.

[p. 10] Mair, he rests for this yeir's poultrie, 13.

Mair, he rests a wodder and a fleece att Beltaine nixt with a meatt lambe att Lambes nixt, if he have it.

¹ Deleted.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custody a read ox calf,
a yeir old come Beltaine, with a black cowe calf
a yeir old come Beltaine.

JOHN MILLER, Above-the-Toun, laboures thrie fardeing
land and payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (5 : 07 : 6.¹

*In payment wherof receaved in a black humbled cow
att ten pound, thretten shilling, four pennies, the
ballance to be allowed in his bond.

Mair, he payes of fearme, mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 3 : 3 : 3

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, to him of oats, 3 firlots and of victual 0 : 1 : 2 : 0

Mair, to him of bear meall and dry bear - 1 : 0 : 1 : 1

Mair, to him of oatt meall - - - 0 : 3 : 3 : 0

Inde is - 4 : 2 : 0 : 1

Summa is - 5 : 2 : 0 : 0

*peyed - 0 : 3 : 3 : 3

*rests yet - 4 : 2 : 0 : 1

Mair, he payes for this yeir's poultrie ij.

Mair, he rests a wodder and a fleice at Beltaine comeing,
with a meatt lamb att Lambes nixt, if he have itt.

Item, he hes of my beasts in his custody, a reach
humbled cowe 5 yeir old come Beltaine, with a
broun horned steir 6 yeir old come Beltaine, with
a broun humbled cowe steirk a yeir old come
Beltaine.

ANDREW MILLER, ther laboures a fardeing land and
payes therfor of Mertimes debt and tallow
silver - - - - - (01 : 15 : 10.¹

¹ Deleted.

In payment wherof receaved in a whyt flecked humbled
cow that came from him iolb. i3s. 4d., the ballance
wherof to be allowed in his bond debt.

Mair, he rests of fearme, mill multer and
bannack - - - - - 0 : 1 : 1 : 1

Mair, he rests of seid bear - - - 1 : 0 : 2 : 0

Mair, to him of dry bear and bear meall 1 : 1 : 1 : 0

Mair, to him of oatt meall - - - 1 : 0 : 1 : 0

Mair, to him of oats 2bolls, 2 pecks, and
of victual - - - - - 1 : 0 : 1 : 0

Inde is - 4 : 2 : 1 : 0

Summa is - 4 : 3 : 2 : 1

*Payed hierof 1 f. : 1 p. : 1 lep. and rests yet 4 bolls,
2 firlets, 1 pecke.

[p. 11] Mair, he rests for this yeirs poultrie, 9.

Mair, he rests at (Beltaine comeing¹ Lambes, a meatt
lambe and his fleice, if he have it.

ISSOBELL WAITTER, relict of umquhill William Baine,
rests of bond debt after alloweing 3lbs. 6s. 8d. for
2 firlots meall - - - - [sic] 35 : 13 : 4

Item, for 20 poultrie 2lb. 10s., mair for his
part of a wodder i5s., mair for thrie
geiss i8s., inde is - - - - 04 : 03 : 0

39 : 16 : 8

Receaved in payment heirof ane ox for
i2lb., and 3 young beasts for iolb.

Inde is - - - - - 22 : 00 : 0

Rests - 17 : 16 : 8

[Marginal note under "Rests - 17 : 16 : 8"]

¹ Deleted.

*To be allowed her for 2 bolls, 2 firlets, 1 p., 2 leps., which she hes advanced of bear meall over and above hir rest of victual, at 5lbs. per boll, is 12lb. 19s. 6d., rests 4lb. 17s. 2d.

Mair, for this yeirs fearme	-	-	-	-	0 : 2 : 1 : 3
-----------------------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

Mair, shoe rests of seid bear	-	-	-	-	2 : 2 : 0 : 0
-------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

Mair, shoe rests of dry bear and bear meall	-	-	-	-	0 : 2 : 3 : 1
---	---	---	---	---	---------------

Mair, shoe rests of oatt meall	-	-	-	-	0 : 3 : 1 : 0
--------------------------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

Inde is	-	4 : 0 : 0 : 1
---------	---	---------------

Summa is	-	4 : 2 : 2 : 0
----------	---	---------------

Mair, for ane ox hyre	-	-	-	-	0 : 2 : 0 : 0
-----------------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

Totall	-	5 : 0 : 2 : 0
--------	---	---------------

*Feb. the 5th, 1698, receaved of meall put into the mealle girnell with the Mains meall and made of hir oat crope, 4 bolls, 2 f. : 1 p. : - - - - 4 : 2 : 1 : 0

Rests yet of victual	-	-	-	-	0 : 2 : 1 : 0
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---------------

*Mair, payed to the tennents in the compt booke of hir bear at 2 prt. meall, 3 firlets is 2 f. victual.

*Mair, receaved in bear meall and given to the servants coasts 2 bolls, 2 f. : 2 p. : 2 leps., rests to be allowed from the rest for this super victual, at . . . per boll. [This appears to be the same *item* referred to in the marginal note *supra*.]

JENNET SHERER, relict of umquhill Donald Miller, rests of bond debt	-	-	-	-	65 : 16 : 8
---	---	---	---	---	-------------

Item for 22 poultrie 55 shilling, mair shoe
 rests a wodder and two fleices at 52s.,
 mair for hir part of the last yeirs
 wodder, 15 shilling, mair for a geiss,
 6s. Inde is - - - - - 06 : 08 : 0

Summa is - 72 : 04 : 8

*Comprysed for payments hierof two ky
 at 8lbs. per peice, a young cove att
 7lbs., a stire att 4lb. and a quoyacke
 att 2lb. 13s. 4d. Inde is - - - 29 : 13 : 4

*Mair for a year-old stage is - - - : :

*This stire delyvered backe to hir with 3 firlets malt.

*Item, the heall goods above wrytten are given back
 to hir in custodie for my partt, Feb. 5th, 1698.

Mair, shoe rests of fearme, mill multer
 and bannack - - - - - 0 : 2 : 1 : 3

Mair, shoe rests of seid bear - - - 2 : 1 : 2 : 0

Mair, shoe rests of seid oats 5 bolls and
 is of victual - - - - - 2 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, shoe rests of dry bear and bear
 meal - - - - - 0 : 3 : 1 : 3

Mair, shoe rests of oatt meall - - - 1 : 0 : 1 : 0

Inde is - 6 : 3 : 0 : 3

Summa is - 7 : 1 : 2 : 2

Mair, for ane ox hyre - - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Totall is - 7 : 3 : 2 : 2

*Receaved of meall made of hir oat crope
 and put into the girnell with the
 Mains meall, 4 bolls, 3 ps. - - - 4 : 0 : 3 : 0
 Rests yett - 3 : 2 : 3 : 2

*Reseaved in bear meall made of hir bear
crop - - - - - 1 : 3 : 2 : 2

*This bear meall given to the coast meall,
(Inde rests ¹ - - - - - *1 : 3 : 1 : 0²

*Mair, 3 firlots meal and 2 ps. (rests ¹ 2 : 2 : 3 : 0

[p. 12] WILLIAM ROSSIE, has a coatter house and payes therfor
a dayly servant, ane halk hen and a doozen of eges,
for which he hes to have his house mealls frie and
a firlet of victuall quarterly. (Inde he rests of
oatt, seven firlots).¹

Item, he rests of bear and bear meall - 1 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 1 : 0 : 0

1 : 3 : 0 : 0

Wherof allowed for the last yeirs coatter service ane
boll, so rests thrie firlets.

WILLIAM CHAMBERS hes a coatter house and payes
therfor a dayly servant, ane halk hen and a doozen
of eges, for which he is to have his house mealls
frie and a firlet of victuall quarterly.

Item, he rests of bear and bear meall - 1 : 0 : 0 : 0

Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Mair, of bear meall - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Inde - 2 : 0 : 0 : 0

Wherof allowed for his yeirs coatter
service - - - - - 1 : 0 : 0 : 0

Mair, allowed to him for grinding of my
victuall - - - - - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

Payed - 1 : 2 : 0 : 0

Rest - 0 : 2 : 0 : 0

¹ Deleted.

² Corrected from 5 : 2 : 2 : 0.

This rest upon the coatters is dewly oweing be them
and they are aither to pay for the samen or elss to
have allowance therof out this yeirs coast begin-
ning at Mertimes last.

JAMES JACK rests of seid bear and bear	
meall - - - - -	0 : 3 : 0 : 0
Mair, he rests of oatt meall - - -	0 : 0 : 3 : 0
	<hr/>
Inde is -	0 : 3 : 3 : 0
	<hr/>

Notta, this rest of victtuall upon James Jack wes only
stated in the book for keiping compt with George
Mckbeath.

DONALD MCKBEATH rests, be bond, alloweing two	
two firlots of meall att 3lb. 6s. 8d. -	46 : 0 : 0
Item, he rests i6 poultrie, is 2lbs., for his	
part of woddors and fleices 1 lb., 10	
shilling. Inde is - - - - -	03 : 10 : 0
	<hr/>
	49 : 10 : 0
	<hr/>

In payment wherof receaved a horse for a ijlb. *and
for ane halfe yeirs fies 5lb., inde is 16lb., rests yet
33 : 10 : 0

Mair, he rests of fearme, mill multer and	
bannack - - - - -	0 : 1 : 2 : 2
	<hr/>
Mair, he rests of bear seid - - -	1 : 1 : 0 : 0
Mair, he rests of bear meall - - -	0 : 2 : 0 : 0
	<hr/>
Inde	1 : 3 : 0 : 0
	<hr/>
Summa	2 : 0 : 2 : 2
	<hr/>
*Receaved of bear meall made of his bear	
crop and given in to the coast -	2 : 0 : 0 : 0
	<hr/>

*Mair put into the girnell of oat meall made of his crope - - - -	2 : 2 : 2 : 0
Inde payed -	4 : 2 : 2 : 0
Over payed this victtuall be -	2 : 1 : 3 : 2

[Marginal note.] *Of this 9 firlots, 3 p. : 2 leps. which he hes payed he owes 1 p., rests to be allowed in his money rests at 10 m. per boll, 9 f., 2 p : 2 leps., is—23m : 4s. 2d.,¹ rests yet

[Marginal note.] *Donald Mcbeath will be resting to me att compt, this 29th Apryll, 1698, after alloweing ijlbs. for his horse, 5lbs. for his fie, 15lbs. 10s. 10d. for his victtuall over payed. Inde is 31lb. 10s. 10d. and rests yet from 49lbs., 10s., 18lb. wanting 10d. On this I have allowed 10m : for the boll of oat and bear meall.

[Dungesbey.]

[p. 13] Der. the 6th 1^m. vi^c. and nyntie seven years, compted with my tennents in Dungesbey, and finds resting he them for ther respective labourings as followes :

WM. HENDERSON ther, payes yearley for his labouring, 10lbs., of Mertimes debt 5 bolls fearme, 20d. scat silver and 2 firlots scat victtual and a teind sheafe quherof peyed att preceeding compts the Mertimes debt and 7 firlots malt.

His geese and foulls peyed except this years Mertimes foulls.

He hes of my beasts a stire 4 year old come Beltaine and ane that deid with him.

Der. the 29th, receeved 5 firlots, 1 pecke malt, rests yet of the last years fearme and scat malt, 2 bolls, 3 peckes, *this years heall fearme and scat peyed for 1697.

(To be concluded).

¹ should be 24m., 10d.

NEWS NOTES.

John O'Groat Journal. A Golspie Holiday (June 25). A day on Broken-Arkie (July 2). Girnigoe re-visited (Aug. 13). Days of the old militia laws in Caithness, list of Latheron men balloted for in 1797 (Aug. 27). Methods of the old Press-Gang, by J. Tait (Aug. 27). Incidents of the Press-Gang in Caithness, by John Mowat (Sept. 3). Another Press-Gang reminiscence, by A. N. (Sept. 17). Old Caithness letters—John Sinclair and Catherine Sinclair—by John Mowat (Aug. 6). Review of *Old-love Miscellany* (Aug. 6). Reflections and remembrances of Caithness—Berriedale and Dunbeath (July 23, Aug. 13, 27). Reminiscences of an old Wick School (Aug. 13, 20, 27, Sept. 3, 10, 17). Reminiscences of a northern parish (July 2, 9, 16, Aug. 6, 13). Fifty years ago (continued).

Northern Chronicle.—The Frasers of Belladrum—Fanblair, Culburnie, Main—(Aug. 11). Review of *Old-love Miscellany* (Aug. 18), in which it is suggested that 'lyken cow' may be a form of Gaelic *laoghean*, a little or very young calf.

Orcadian. The Fulmar at Noss Head (Aug. 28). The Fulmar Petrel and its breeding haunts (June 26). See also "Notes" *ante*.

Orkney Herald. The Goudie-Gawdy family in Orkney, by Mahlon M. Gowdy, U.S.A., in which we are told that "persons of the name went with Rollo the Ganger to France" (July 14). The Rev. Jas. Paterson, minister of Rousay and Egilsay, 1798-1837 (Sept. 15). Nesting of gannet in Shetland (Sept. 1). Review of *Records of the Earldom of Orkney* (Sept. 8). Absence of young eider drakes in Orkney in winter (Aug. 18).

Shetland News. Review, *Shetland Pony Stud Book* (July 24). *Mansie's Röd* (continued weekly).



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Abbreviations:—O, Orkney; S, Shetland; C, Caithness; Sd., Sutherland.

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ERRATA AND ADDENDA.

p. 48, l. 4, *Hálfdan*.

p. 49, l. 3 from foot, omit "As *plógsland* . . . unknown," p. 50, l. 3 from top, and substitute "The old *plógsland* thus became the later and modern *mark of land*, the normal area of which was 1-72nd part of an eyrisland of 120 acres, or $1\frac{2}{3}$ acres, described in *Snorra Edda* as what 4 oxen could plough in a day and night. It was $\frac{1}{9}$ th of a Scottish Ofgang of 15 acres which was a season's ploughing of one ox.

- p. 55, l. 10 read : The rent paid in gold . . . in 7th or 8th centuries.
- ib. l. 16 from foot, read " marks of 240d. Norse each = 215·8 grammes = 138·76 troy dwts. = 11s. 6d. stg. = 34s. 6d. modern stg."
- p. 56. l. 11, for *evidently of sterling value* read *valued in Norse pennies of 240 to the mark*.
- p. 56, l. 15, for *1s. 4d. Scots* read *7s. Scots*.
- ib. l. 16, for *6s. 8d. Scots* read *80d. Norse*.
- ib. ll. 16 and 17, read : so that $3\frac{1}{2}$ spans = 20 lispund = 1 barrel butter in old Norse value — about the same in depreciated stg. pence in 1500 and 4 times as many Scots pence. The errors in these calculations arose through following Thomas's *Pennyland*, which has turned out to be a misunderstanding of the whole subject.
- p. 58, l. 3 of *Note*, for *by* read *of*.
- p. 61 l. 19 for *sää* read *sā*
- p. 62 add to gloss., *doy'r, they were*.
- p. 116, l. 13 from foot, for *answers to* read *answers by*.
- p. 148, read *Ossian*.

ADDITIONAL ERRATA TO VOL. VII.

- p. 40, l. 4 from foot, for *John* read *Hugh Munro*.
- p. 44, l. 5, "James" deleted and "John" substituted on margin.
- p. 109 l. 16, insert semi-colon between "influence" and "they." *Their influence, i.e., the Presbytery's influence.*
- p. 169, l. 15, for *father* read *factor*.

