Scottish Studies

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PART 1

PART 2

THE ISLAND OF ST. KILDA

A SURVEY OF ITS CHARACTER AND OCCUPANCE

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It is the personalities that we meet in our lives who make the most lasting impressions on us; the great men of our time are too big for us to comprehend. St. Kilda ranks in the geographical sense as a personality. Although tiny in dimension, it is unique; it assails the senses, captivates the mind, and leaves an impression that is deep and intimate. Grandeur and grace, brutality and beauty, isolation and homeliness—these are the elements that make St. Kilda acceptable and unforgettable.

That this rocky mass became since long past the home of human communities is probably the basis of its fascination. Numerous and varied accounts have been written relating to St. Kilda and the St. Kildans, but although many are interesting and some authoritative, they can in no wise be regarded as presenting a comprehensive and balanced account of the island and of the life of its inhabitants.[1] It is therefore the aim of this paper to place before the reader a general review of the island of St. Kilda: this is based upon a measure of geographical survey, a study of existing records, and some consideration of change through both geological and historical time.

Isolation was probably the most powerful factor governing the occupance of St. Kilda by man. The island lies 40 miles directly west of North Uist in latitude 57° 49' north, and is 75 miles from Barra Head which must be rounded when sailing from the inner shores of the Outer Hebrides. These distances are not great in themselves and do not compare with the distances to the Faeroe and Madeira Islands. Yet from October until the end of March it was customary for no contact to be made between the Hebrides and St. Kilda, a condition directly attributable to the fury of the Atlantic storms that lash the island throughout the winter.[2] During the summer months its isolation was due more to the tiny size of the community and the poverty of its resources, so that there was little incentive for

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vessels other than the factor's boat or the mail steamer to make any call.

St. Kilda itself covers 1,575 acres and is the largest remnant of a much bigger igneous mass probably of Tertiary age (Pl. I, fig. 1). Its coastal circumference totals 9 miles and less than 2 per cent of the island lies more than half a mile from the sea (Fig. 1). The lesser islands that lie about St. Kilda are
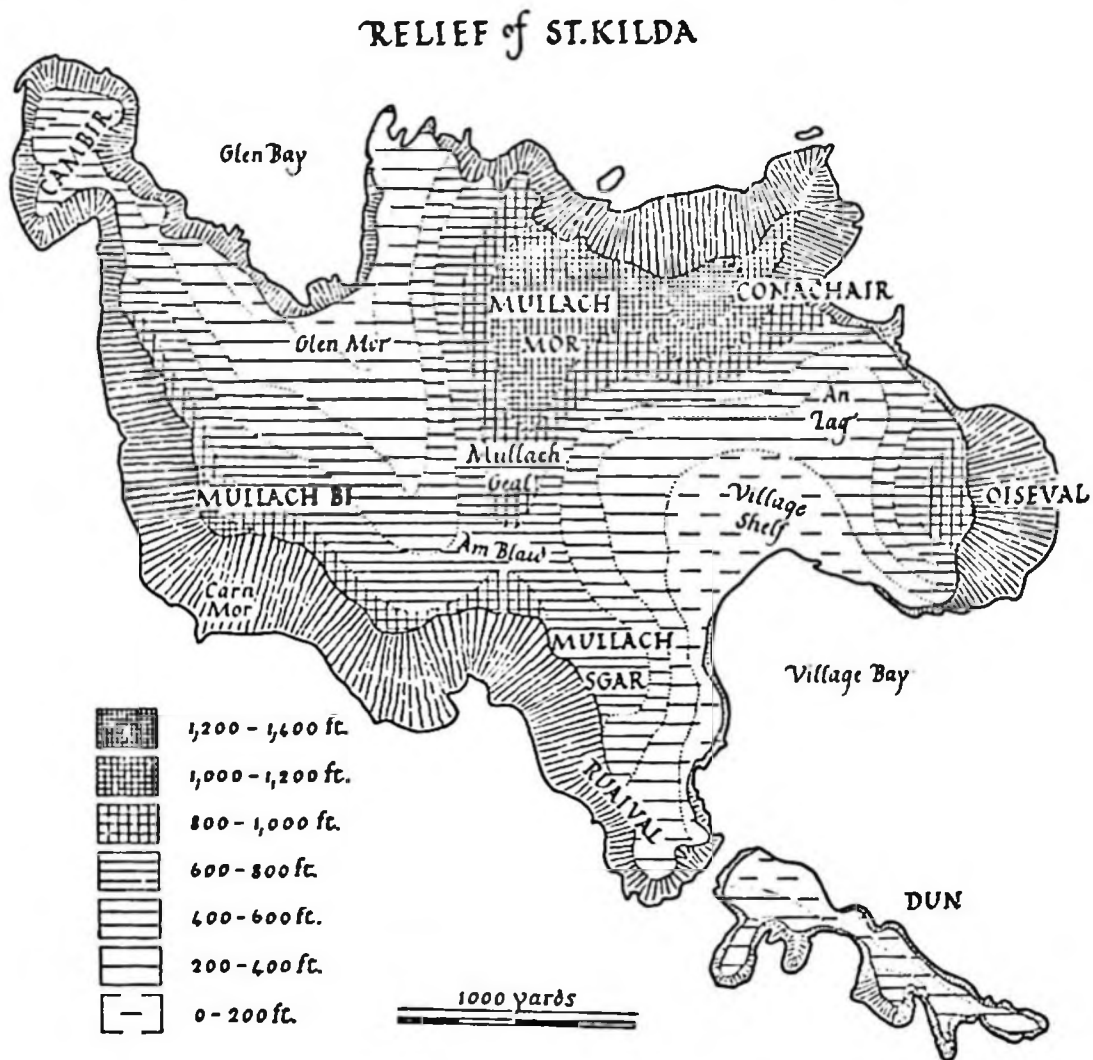
RELIEF of ST.KILDA

FIG. 1—Physical Relief and Place-Names of St. Kilda.

further remnants and are all much smaller. Soay, close to St. Kilda on the west, extends to 244 acres; the Dun, to the east, covers 70 acres and is isolated by some 20 yards of water; Boreray, lying 4 miles away to the north-east, runs to 190 acres: in addition there are numerous stacks some of which like Levenish, Lee and Armin are notably striking. In every case the great foam-girt cliffs of these islands and stacks, as well as their scattered distribution, bear witness to the ceaseless, devastating onslaught of the ocean.

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As the islands are reduced in size their form becomes simpler and access to them grows increasingly difficult. Stac Lee and Stac an Armin are simply precipitous rock pyramids rising to over 500 feet in height: Soay which is bigger and rises to 1,000 feet is essentially simple in outline and is bounded by cliffs in which no break is readily visible, but two small bays

GEOLOGY of ST.KILDA
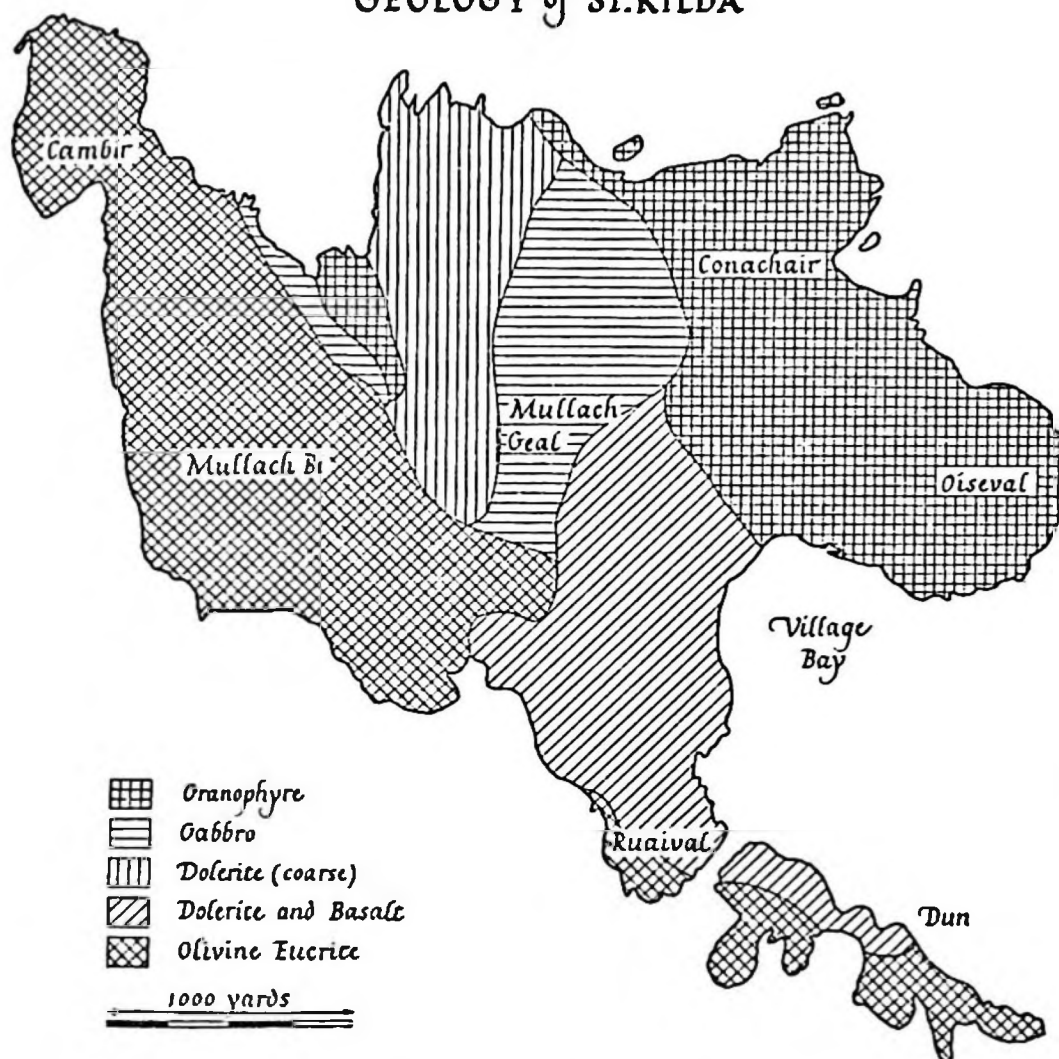
FIG. 2—Geology of St. Kilda after Cockburn (1935).

lend variety to its western side. St. Kilda also rises to over 1,000 feet, the highest summit, Conachair (Pl. II, fig. 1) falling just short of 1,400 feet, but the outline of the island is much more irregular than that of its neighbours (Figs. 1 and 3). Two well defined bays, Glen Bay in the north-western corner and Village Bay on the eastern side, make significant breaks in the cliff frontage; Glen Bay is essentially wedge shaped whereas Village Bay is attractively crescentic in form. The long coastal ridge through Mullach Bi which protects these two bays and

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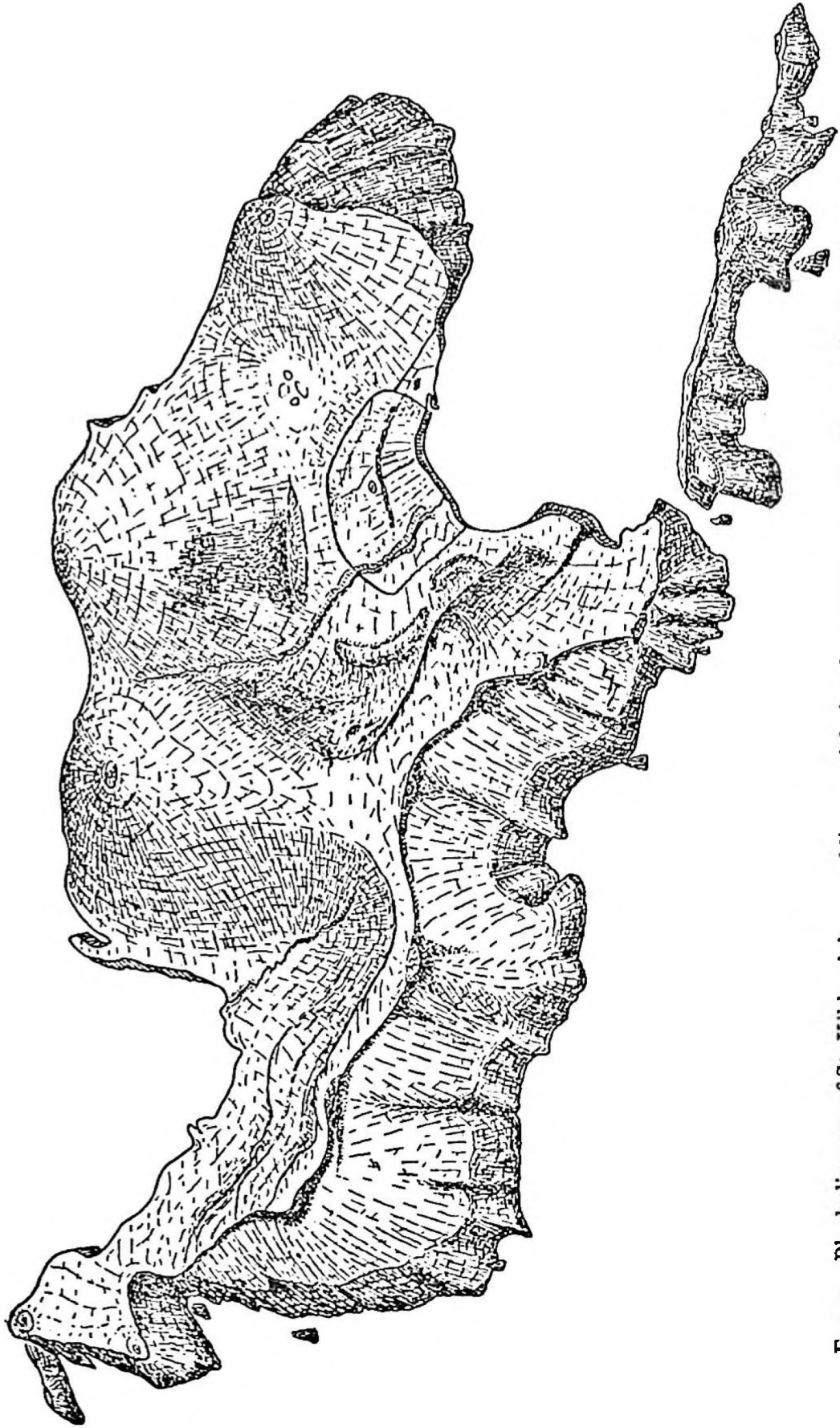
FIG. 3.—Black diagram of St. Kilda giving an oblique aerial view from the south. Features may be identified by comparing this drawing with Fig. 1.

which presents a massive cliff face to meet southerly and westerly gales, is surprisingly regular in outline; it has, however, been breached at its southern end where the Dun lies separate from Ruaival, and at its northern extremity the Cambir forms a small but distinctive peninsula. The north coast is one of towering, blunt headlands, of open bays and stacks; here too are the highest cliffs on the island. On the east the impressive mass of Oiseval (Pl. II, fig. 2) thrusts a great shoulder into the sea thus partially protecting Village Bay.

Five main rock types have been noted on St. Kilda (Fig. 2) and these have been examined and mapped in some detail by the late A. M. Cockburn (1935): these rocks have clear bearings upon the landforms, the vegetation, and the stone constructions on the island. Occupying the west and appearing on the south side of Ruaival and the Dun is a bluish coloured eucrite; this is a finely grained rock with a block-like structure and notably basic composition, and as may be seen from the figures below it is particularly rich in alumina and magnesium. Landforms of a distinctly rugged and knobbly character are fairly typical of the eucrite area (see the Dun, Pl. IV); rock bastions often stand out as weaker dykes are eroded away, and where exposed to fierce subaerial weathering (as on Ruaival) the rock breaks up initially into an impressive jumble of great blocks. In marked contrast the eastern part of St. Kilda consists mainly of an acid granophyre. This rock is of an attractive light buff colour, it weathers uniformly to produce smooth hill outlines, but where vulnerable to shattering (as on the face of Conachair) it disintegrates into slabs measuring up to 6 feet in width and 2 feet in thickness (Pl. III, fig. 1). The granophyre produces a residual mantle of a gritty character that is in keeping with its high silica content.

Lying between the eucrite and granophyre masses the central zone of the island is composed in the main of gabbro, dolerite and basalt. These rocks resemble each other more closely than they do either the eucrite or the granophyre. They are dark in colour, fairly basic in composition, and give rise to landforms that are neither so rugged as those of the eucrite to the west, nor so symmetrical as those of the granophyre to the east. They also differ in structure, breaking down into fragments of irregular, angular shape (Pl. III, fig. 2); this is particularly noticeable around the south side of Village Bay.

These igneous rocks offer considerable resistance to erosion, but they are well jointed structurally and contain many thin,

intrusive sheets, so that numerous cracks and tunnels are formed by marine attack. Thus it is that sections of the cliffed ramparts of St. Kilda are undermined by caves and passages of up to 40 feet in height.

Chemical Analysis of Rock Types
(After Cockburn)

Rock	Silica	Alumina	Calcium	Magnesia	
Eucrite . . .	45	22	11	13	per cent
Gabbro . . .	49	18	13	...	,, ,,
Dolerite . .	47	15	10	...	,, ,,
Granophyre . .	74	13	...	...	,, ,,

The climate of St. Kilda closely resembles that of the Outer Hebrides, although it may be rather more moist and a shade colder at all times of the year. The absence of continuous weather records is of course a handicap, and estimates of the climate must be based mainly upon reports from a variety of sources.

Wind is surely one of the most influential elements. Periods of calm are quite common but they are generally short-lived, and from September until the end of April winds of more than Force 5 are prevalent and gales are of frequent occurrence. In fact neither rainstorms nor the ocean assert themselves to quite the same extent as does the wind: on the higher parts of the island it strips away chunks of turf and kills grass and heather by laying bare the roots; at lower elevations it often damaged crops and buildings and its cooling influence inevitably retarded growth and ripening. Walls are of little protection to cultivation plots or gardens since, in accordance with the relief of the island, air currents generally sweep down from an oblique angle. Nothing bears more powerful testimony to the strength of a St. Kilda gale than the sight of sheets of spray being hurled 200 to 300 feet high, up and over the Dun, unless it be the sheer impact of the wind itself which seems to hammer the very ground into motion. Thus in ways direct and indirect the winds on St. Kilda are a force to be reckoned with, and it is small wonder that St. Kildan architecture incorporated devices to deal with it.

Cloud and shadow also play significant parts in lowering the temperature. A distinctive feature of the island is the cloud-cap which frequently lies over it and which is associated with moist, westerly weather (Pl. II, fig. 2). Shadow is effective as a result of the height and steepness of the hill-slopes; during the

winter months the sunshine potential of the village area is considerably reduced by the great shadow cast by Mullach Sgar, but the effect is even greater in Glen Mor which lies in the shadow of Mullach Bi for approximately five months of the year. Eliminating all unstable slopes and all areas above 300 feet, the part of St. Kilda with the best insolation lies undoubtedly in Village Bay between the graveyard and the factor's house (Fig. 4). Snow is probably quite a normal feature of the climate, and the frequency and intensity of frost is confirmed by the masses of rock-scree littering the foot of Conachair and Mullach Sgar.

St. Kilda's rainfall may total about 50 inches annually. The regime is probably similar to that of the Outer Hebrides, rain falling at all times of the year and building up from September onwards to reach a maximum in December and January. Evidence from various sources seems to confirm that precipitation occurs in characteristic insular fashion, rain falling throughout well defined periods and in considerable concentration. Rain and storm together make a notable impact upon the island. There are no trees to afford shelter, the vegetation is thin in many parts, and the soil mantle is shallow except in Village Bay and Glen Mor; and these factors together with the prevailing steepness of the hillsides produce a rapid and destructive run-off. After one night of rain the island is literally running with water; white cascades fleck the slopes, dully glistening sheets of water are reflected wherever the vegetation is sparse, and the flatter parts of Village Bay around the houses lie chill and sodden. On the whole the climate of St. Kilda is discouraging to settlement and in all respects adverse to cultivation.

One of the fascinations of the island is, however, connected with the climate—it is in fact the rapidity with which the weather changes. Within a period of 24 hours a south-westerly gale may give way to sunshine with warmth and a blue calm on the bay, and this in turn may vanish as a cold front sweeps in across the ocean and north-westerly winds assail the island. Rapid changes such as these are fraught with peril for man, and particularly so where sailing, fishing and climbing were all part of the daily routine.

St. Kilda is strikingly impressive on account of the height of its hills and the steepness of its slopes. Viewed from a distance of several miles, the isolated aspect of the island is rivalled by its bold outline, and at close range the settlement in Village

ST. KILDA VILLAGE

Storm Beach
Stream Flow
Embankment
Main Wall
Dyke or Trace
Edge of Path
Mound of Stones
Enclosure
Cultivation Plot
Pre-1834 Building or Vestige
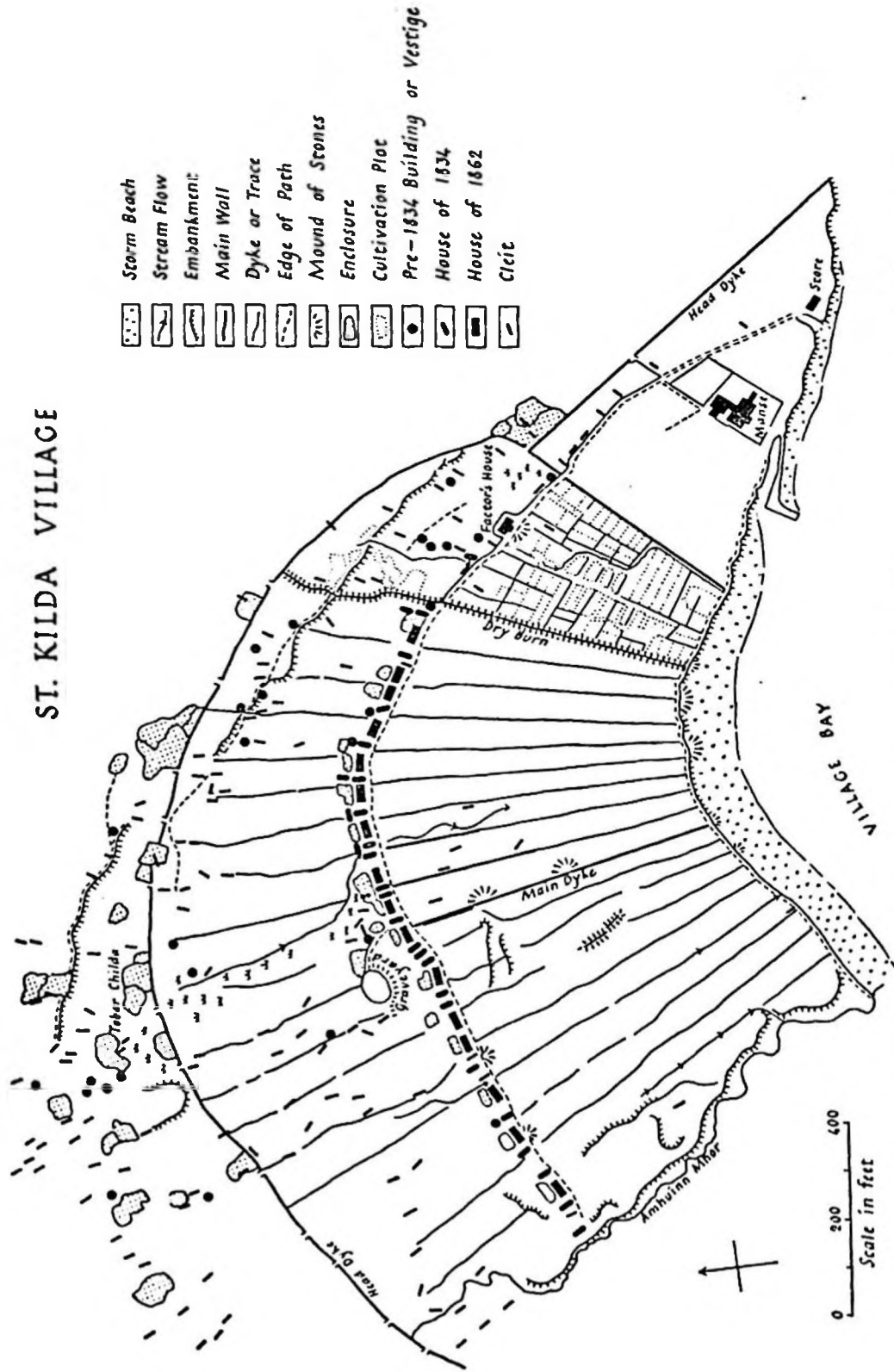House of 1834
House of 1862
Cleit

Fig. 4—Map of St. Kilda Village showing distribution of buildings, vestiges, walls, and cultivation plots.

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Bay is dwarfed by the imposing hill-sides that rise around it (Pl. IV). Experience of the heights on the island induces at first in many a recurring sensation of dizziness, but as mind and eye become attuned to the unusual physical conditions, confidence grows and apprehension tends to be replaced by exhilaration.[3]

Three summits stand higher than 1,000 feet above sea level and five others fall just short of this height, which is quite remarkable on an island where the direct distance from the interior to the shore-line or cliff-top seldom exceeds 1,200 yards. Thus it is that steep slopes prevail throughout the island, and that around Village Bay and along either flank of Glen Mor gradients of 1 in 2 and 1 in 3 are the rule. Slopes of this nature commence generally at about 300 feet, and since 80 per cent of St. Kilda lies above this level only a small proportion of land is available for human occupation.

Symmetry is one of the island's most attractive character-istics and particularly since it takes various forms. That it exists is a consequence of several factors—the structure and strength of the igneous rocks, the homogeneity of the grano-phyre, the absence of severe glaciation, and the uniform action over the island as a whole of chemical weathering and vigorous rain-wash. Conachair and Oiseval on the granophyre side are conical peaks of rare attraction (Pl. II), although neither is complete since their seaward slopes have been truncated by marine action. The central ridge of Mullach Geal shows a distinct uniformity, and farther south the steep, easterly slopes of Mullach Sgar are counterbalanced by the tabular character of the summit area. For an island that is being attacked relent-lessly by wind, weather and ocean, St. Kilda possesses an astonishing sense of climax. The conical summit of Conachair provides the perfect sequel to the great, upward sweep of its slopes; the tabular peninsula of the Cambir is a unique con-clusion to the long, declining ridge of Mullach Bi; and what better finish to the amphitheatre of Village Bay than the shelving rampart of the Dun, its leeward slope flowing symmet-rically into the hollow of the bay?

Variety is not an obvious feature of the St. Kildan land-scape in which cliffs, hills and steep slopes are the dominant elements. Major distinctions may readily be made between the bays and the hills, between the granophyre summits and the ridges of eucrite and dolerite: but there are also minor varia-tions in form that are not so obvious and yet are of significance,

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and these are found mainly around the coasts and in the area of Village Bay.

The cliffs of St. Kilda differ considerably according to the interaction of rock-type, structure, marine and sub-aerial erosion, but irrespective of geology a basic distinction must be established between the cliffs as such, and the very steep slopes that surmount them. Cliffs in the sense of a wall of rock, variously broken in character but sheer (or nearly so) in profile, extend around 95 per cent of the circumference of the island and rise to heights of between 100 and 500 feet. The highest unbroken cliff seems to lie on the north side of Mullach Mor with a rise of about 600 feet. The slopes that frequently surmount the cliffs lie at angles of between 40 and 80 degrees, and may range up to 700 feet in height as on Carn Mor: the surface of these slopes is unstable and in wet weather is quite treacherous, and in some places (e.g. west of Mullach Sgar) they present a fascinating resemblance to gigantic chutes (Fig. 3). The profile of the granophyre cliffs is rather broken and complex, for here the slabs of rock form buttresses for many small ledges, by reason of which these cliffs are greatly frequented by sea-birds and in particular the fulmar.

The cliffs of St. Kilda are also impressive in that one may come upon them so suddenly. The climb up out of Village Bay or Glen Mor gives no forewarning of the surprise that is to come; the bay and the glen are enclosed in character, and attention is furthermore focused upon the steep ascent which is exacting on human energy. Then all of a sudden there is no more land, only a vast, empty expanse, a void of air scattered with swirling, soaring sea-birds and far below the sea boiling and seething against the base of the cliffs. The contrast is striking and makes an impact on the senses that is unforgettable.

The variety of landforms occurring within Village Bay[4] is full of meaning and merits careful examination. The village enclosure lies on a gently sloping shelf which extends inland up to 400 yards and covers about 50 acres. To the north and west this shelf is backed by distinctive ridges and scree accumulations, lying below the steep slopes of Conachair and Mullach Sgar; north-eastward lies the intriguing hollow of An Lag Bho'n Tuath, and eastward the shelf dies out between the sea and the steep slopes of Oiseval (Fig. 1). On the seaward side a low, earth cliff is fronted by a formidable storm-beach, and below this extends a delightful sandy beach which is exposed only at low tide.

Enclosed by the main village wall (the head-dyke) and previously utilised intensively by the St. Kildans, the village shelf (Fig. 4) may be thought of as a single homogeneous area, but in reality it contains several significant parts. The southern half which lies below the line of cottages is gently sloping and broken only occasionally by minor irregularities; the north-west quarter is generally smooth with a moderate gradient of about 1 in 8; to the north-east the ground is much more broken, and also much steeper with gradients averaging about 1 in 5, a small but distinctive feature of some importance being a bluff that runs fairly regularly just below the head-dyke and roughly parallel to it.

These moderate slopes and the thickly turfed surfaces are deceptive in that they do not reveal the virgin character of the village shelf before man began to modify it, for the area was clearly littered with rock debris derived from the surrounding heights. Big blocks of rock still lie scattered over the north-east quarter, a notably rough zone extends as a narrowing tongue from Tobar Childa to the bay, and great quantities of stone have been gathered to build houses, cleits and dykes, while at least five dumps of stone are discernible on the shore. Exposures of the soil profile along the Amhuinn Mhor and the Dry Burn show accumulations of gravel, stones and boulders that are distinctly angular in form, and it is only below the village and east of the main consumption dyke that free soil occurs with a depth of 12 to 18 inches. The crescent-shaped village shelf thus consists of unconsolidated rock material derived from the surrounding slopes; in its downward movement this material has been roughly sorted, so that while the bigger blocks have accumulated at the back of the crescent to give rough and rather steep slopes, the finer material below the village coincides with smoother, gentler slopes. In parts, however, the pattern is not as simple as this, and there is evidence to suggest that ice, as well as gravity and rain-wash, has played a part in the work of transportation. The tongue-shaped drift zone extending seaward from Tobar Childa contains granophyre boulders that must certainly have been moved into position by ice.

The geological divide between dolerite and granophyre lies just east of the Amhuinn Mhor, and accounts for certain distinct differences in the rock drift within the village enclosure. Along the Amhuinn Mhor and west of it rocks and soil are derived from dolerite, basalt and gabbro; the material is much fragmented, blocks seldom exceed two cubic feet in

size, and shapes are distinctly angular. Eastward the grano-
phyre yields rocks of quite a different character in that they
are much larger, occurring as slabs and blocks, and are sub-
angular; the bigger blocks may range up to 20 cubic feet in
size, and after creeping and slipping down the slopes of Oiseval
and An Lag, they have accumulated in a zone that lies just
below the lip of An Lag and along the break of slope near the
foot of Oiseval (Pl. V, fig. 1). This jumble of rocks was obviously
exploited to assist in the building of the head-dyke, and it has
also acted as a gigantic sieve permitting only small rocks and
gravel to pass down to the levels below the factor's house and
around the manse. Thus although the village enclosure appears
as a single unit surrounded by one head-dyke, it does in fact
contain four divisions that are likely to have had bearings upon
man's occupance and activity; to the west lies the doleritic zone
of mixed rock debris, into the centre extends the drift tongue,
and the east falls into an upper rough and rocky slope, and a
lower, fairly level shelf of relatively fine material.

The distinctive ridges and accumulations of rock-scree that
flank the northern and western sides of Village Bay constitute
some of St. Kilda's most interesting forms. These ridges lie in
two formations, one at the foot of Conachair well defined and
about 200 yards long, and the other broader, less ridge-like,
extending for about 500 yards along the south-western flank
of Village Bay. Their rounded tops and steep sides give these
ridges a humped appearance, and while they measure from
50 to 80 yards (estimated) across their base, their height is of
the order of 80 feet. They appear to consist primarily of coarse
rock debris, although the rock interstices are solidly filled with
residual matter and soil, their rather dry nature being con-
firmed by a distinctive cover of heather. The peculiarity of
these ridges is that they stand out from the general hill-slope—
they do not lie flush with it, as for example does a rock-scree.

The feature below Conachair is clearly a pro-talus ridge of
excellent formation (Pl. II, fig. 1), and not a moraine as
suggested by Wager (1953:178). This ridge developed under
climatic conditions which permitted the existence of a bed of
ice in the partially shadowed, hillfoot hollow below Conachair,
and which simultaneously allowed frost splitting to persist in
open situations on the rock faces higher up; fractured rock
debris would overshoot the hillfoot bed of ice or be carried
across it in the surface layers, and so go to build up the pro-
talus ridge which to-day lies apparently in odd isolation. The

ridges along the south-western flank below Mullach Sgar are not so obviously pro-talus in character, although they are partially so, for here the terrain is conducive to instability and the pattern of ground forms has become complicated by slumping and solifluction. In addition to the interest that these ridges offer in themselves, they are important in that they suggest that periglacial, rather than glacial conditions, prevailed upon St. Kilda during the Quaternary Ice Age; this does not, however, preclude the possibility of the relatively short-lived existence of shallow ice-sheets and small ice-flows.

The hollow of An Lag Bho'n Tuath, lying to the north-east of Village Bay, is another distinctive feature lending variety to the landscape. It is in some respects suggestive of a corrie, but there is actually no evidence to show that it originated from ice action, although it was probably modified by this. The floor is roughly oval in shape, covers in all about 7 acres, and consists of a sedimentary infilling of stones, gravel and soil derived from the adjacent hill-sides. It would appear that this material lies in a rock hollow, since the vegetation on the floor of An Lag is notably green and lush, and since in wet weather the whole floor becomes quite waterlogged; nor does the Dry Burn flow with water until An Lag has become saturated right to the surface, thus suggesting that the hollow operates as a natural sub-surface reservoir. Across the mouth of An Lag lies a low and rather wide barrier of rock debris and gravel, which may reasonably be regarded as a terminal moraine, so that in conclusion An Lag may be described as an ice-deepened hollow, terminated by a moraine, and infilled by the downward creep of gravel and soil, and by the decay and accumulation of moss vegetation.

The only other piece of evidence that seems to bear conclusively upon the glaciation of St. Kilda is the drift tongue extending to the shore from the foot of Conachair. Wager (1953:179) seems to have suggested that this may be lateral moraine deposited by ice flowing from Creagan Breac, but the dominance of granophyre rock and the scarcity of gabbro and dolerite would seem to invalidate this view. Giving due consideration to topography and rock material, it seems probable that this drift tongue was deposited by ice flowing down from the slopes of Conachair: rocky drift was in fact scattered all across the village shelf as has been pointed out, but here in this central zone there must have been a greater concentration and faster flow of ice than elsewhere.

There is no evidence to suggest that St. Kilda was glaciated by the continental ice-sheet during the Quaternary Glaciation, and the few foreign rock elements identified on the shore by Cockburn (1935:544) were probably transported there from the Hebrides by floe-ice or as ship-ballast. During the Ice Age it does seem likely, however, that St. Kilda was completely shrouded in snow and ice, and that small local glaciers developed of which the fastest and most active was that flowing from the steep southern face of Conachair; then at a later stage the pro-talus ridges were formed with ice lying in shadowed hollows, and shattering, sapping and slumping proceeding vigorously elsewhere; the latter processes seem to have worked effectively on the north-facing slopes of Glen Mor and Mullach Sgar. At the present day the landward slopes of the island are everywhere receding on account of weathering, soil-creep and slumping; wherever rock-faces exist, they are subject to rapid shattering as the scree below Conachair clearly shows. A fascinating and puzzling feature occurring on the rock scree below Mullach Sgar, consists of a series of parallel, horizontal terraces. These are notably regular in their alignment, and existing on a slope of about 33° that consists of angular blocks of dolerite, they measure about 2 feet in width and have a vertical interval of 4 to 5 feet. The fresh nature of the scree suggests that these terraces are of contemporary formation, but careful study will be necessary to determine the manner of their formation. No such terraces appear on the granophyre scree which has a steeper slope, is less mature, and which consists of blocks of rock that are considerably larger than in the case of the dolerite.

The storm-beach of St. Kilda is both impressive and intriguing. It consists of a great jumble of boulders stretching for 500 yards along the centre of Village Bay; its width is about 30 to 40 yards, and at low tide it stands some 16 feet above the level of the sandy foreshore. The eastern half of the beach is composed of granophyre boulders that are massive in size and attractively buff-coloured; the western half presents a clear contrast since the doleritic boulders are distinctly blue in colour and rather smaller in size. The boulders that form the storm-beach are derived from either side of the bay in its inner reaches, and having been transported laterally toward the centre, they are there pounded together and built into a rampart that protects the loosely accumulated rock debris and gravel of the village shelf. It is noteworthy that only upon

the beach of St. Kilda (as a result of marine action) are rounded stones to be found; nowhere else is there any evidence of rocks being moulded and smoothed by the influence of water or ice. The storm-beach has evidently been growing seaward for some time and is continuing to do so, but at a very slow rate. The advance depends upon the speed with which fresh material is supplied from the sides of the bay, and the power of the winter storms to push this fresh material up on to and over the existing beach: the existence of patches of "dead" beach, containing vegetation, indicates that at points the beach has attained a maximum height, and must henceforth grow seaward—a remarkable situation on an island such as this! The strength of the barrier depends, however, upon the mass and compactness of the boulders of which it is made, so that interesting changes may well occur in consequence of the breach made by the Royal Air Force when establishing a beach-head in 1957. Glen Mor contrasts markedly with Village Bay for here there is no beach; the valley ends abruptly where a rocky bluff plunges into fairly deep water, and in further contrast to the sandy shelf that underlies the shallows of Village Bay, the waters of Glen Bay are rendered hazardous by the presence of partially submerged reefs.

In consequence of the nature of the island, the drainage of St. Kilda is simple and immature. Much of the rainfall percolates downhill through the surface layer of gravel or trickles along innumerable streamlets, most of which have no established course. The main streams lie in the only two catchment areas of any consequence, in Village Bay and Glen Mor. None of the streams ranks as more than a burn, the Amhuinn Mhor and the Amhuinn Ghlinne Mhoir being each just over 1,000 yards in length and easily crossed by jumping at any point. In addition there are perhaps six or seven lesser burns of several hundred yards in length. The streams of Glen Mor are direct and fast-flowing, their pattern disintegrated, and their channels quite minor; conditions are similar on the east of the island except that the Amhuinn Mhor shows some tendency to meander, in consequence of which its lower course lies in a small gully, which cuts some 10 to 15 feet into the drift of the village shelf. The only other streams to have made any comparable incision, are the steeply graded Amhuinn Ruaival, and the Dry Burn where it falls over the lip of An Lag. The salient conclusion is that the present stream courses are all post-glacial in age; their direct alignment, their narrow,

trenched, transverse profiles, and the minutely etched form of their channels, all testify to a condition of youth. It may indeed be conceived from the evidence available, that normal erosion was completely halted on St. Kilda during the Quaternary Glaciation.

The sub-soil of varying thickness that overlies St. Kilda is of great importance in relation to water-supply, for this layer acts in places as a natural reservoir on an island that possesses no extensive catchment area. The Amhuinn Mhor flows from the saddle between Mullach Mor and Conachair which is the location of St. Kilda's peat-bog, and in consequence it seldom dries up altogether although its flow varies considerably throughout the year. By contrast the Dry Burn issuing from An Lag is notably intermittent; the walled channel constructed by the St. Kildans was obviously designed to contain the force and volume of the Dry Burn when An Lag overflows, and yet for days on end in summer this same channel does in fact lie quite dry. But this in nowise means that the water-supply of St. Kilda Village was intermittent, for a whole series of springs issues from the foot of the pro-talus ridges and morainic debris that lie about the village enclosure; of these, the two most important with a constant flow, are Tobar Childa which issues near the foot of Conachair, and the Minister's Well which lies close to the church; the latter probably derives its water from An Lag by seepage between the base of the moraine and the solid granophyre. Other lesser springs of an intermittent character occur at scattered points around Glen Mor and Village Bay, but an interesting detail is associated in particular with those that issue from the pro-talus deposits below Mullach Sgar. Here the flow of water is insufficient to cut out a stream channel, and instead a series of hollows and humps develops as a result of the slumping of the sodden subsoil: these spring hollows cover approximately 50 square yards in area, are oval in shape and are distinctive by their greenness.

In view of the smallness of the island's streams it is not surprising that marine erosion is proceeding faster than normal erosion. Only in Village Bay behind the protection of the storm-beach does the Amhuinn Mhor flow down normally to sea-level; everywhere else the streams end abruptly where they disappear over the edge of cliffs and bluffs.

St. Kilda is a grassy island entirely void of trees or bushes. In summer the prevailing colour is green into which is mingled

PLATE I

Fig. 1—St. Kilda viewed from the sea.

Fig. 2—Typical specimen of a cleit.

PLATE II
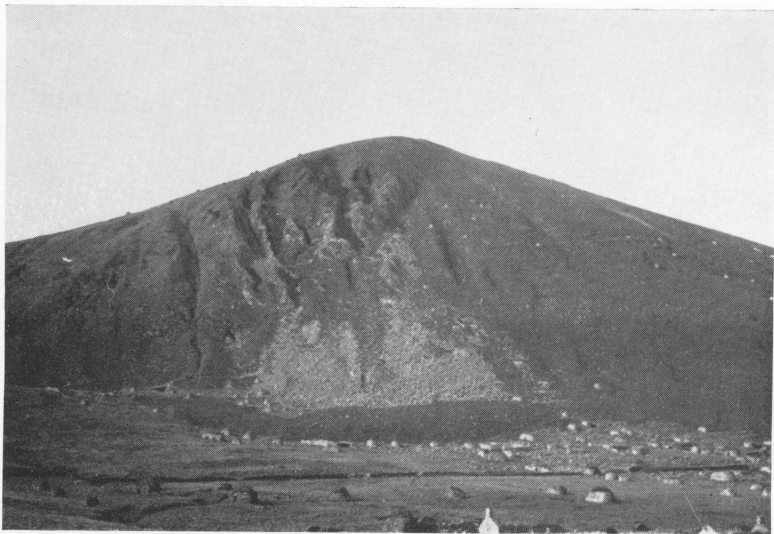
Fig. 1—Conachair showing scree and pro-talus ridge.

Fig. 2—Oiseval and Village Bay with Conachair capped by cloud.

PLATE III

Fig. 1—Granophyre slope on Oiseval.

Fig. 2—Dolerite scree below Mullach Sgar.

PLATE IV
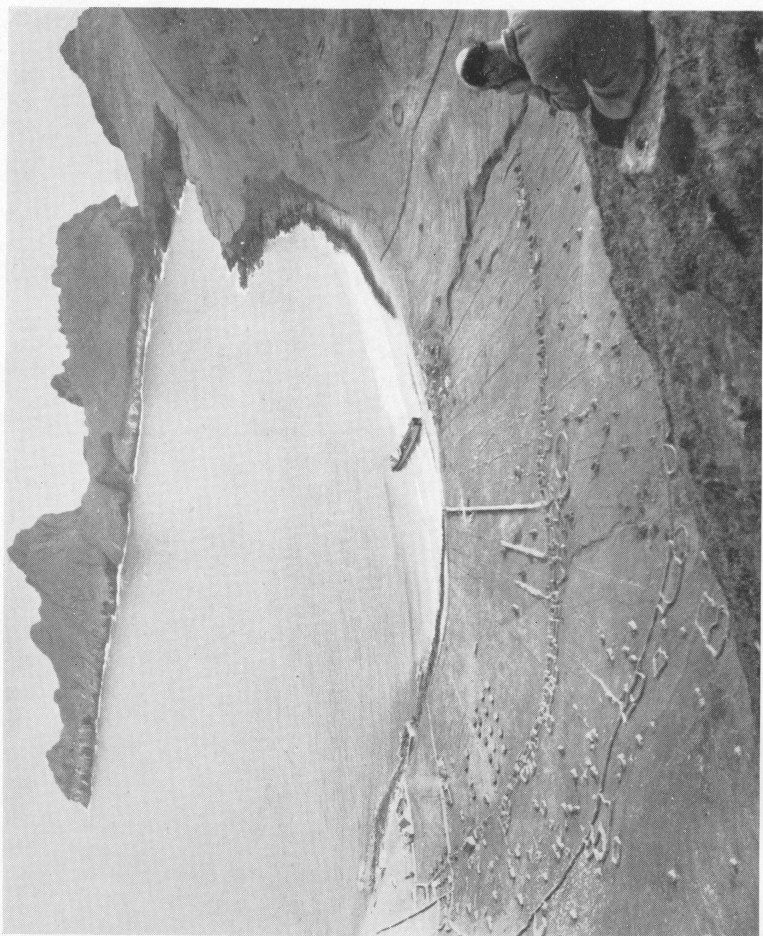
View of the village enclosure, Village Bay and the Dun. Compare with Fig. 4, observing village, head dyke, consumption dykes, Amhuinn Mhor to the right, and manse to the left.

PLATE V

FIG. 1—Glebe enclosure wall with surveying pole for comparison.
Note cleits and rocks beyond.
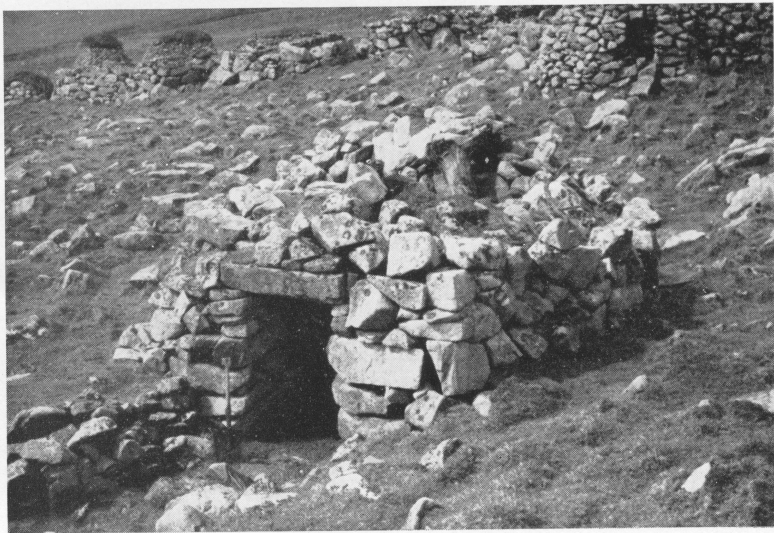
FIG. 2—Remains of pre-1834 house in locality of Tobar Childa.
Cleits and enclosures beyond.

the purple hue of heather, but from October until April the island is markedly brown. There is a rich variety of grasses but the two most prominent are tussocky matgrass and tufted sheep's fescue; heather is the third major element in the botanical complex. The distribution of the vegetation shows a clear response to geology in that sheep's fescue and heather occur in some concentration upon the granophyre hill-sides of Conachair and Oiseval, whereas elsewhere on the basic rocks matgrass prevails. The vegetation cover is on the whole dense and strong where it has not been interfered with by man, but the St Kildans cut heather and turf for fuel over a long period (some hundreds of years), and the patchiness of the vegetation on the slopes around An Lag bears witness to this form of exploitation. On the higher and more exposed situations, it is interesting that it is the heather that gives way first in face of the onslaught of wind. In such situations and particularly on the basic rocks the heather plants attain only a few inches in height; as the plant matures and expands it leaves exposed a thin, decaying, central core, and this point of weakness is attacked by wind and rain; the roots at the centre are thus laid bare, and thereafter it is only a matter of time until the whole plant is destroyed. This process is concomitant with deflation, and considerable patches can be seen on the summit platform of Mullach Sgar that are bare of both vegetation and soil; only a pavement of shattered rock fragments remains.

A distinctive type of vegetation appearing only on the western and southern promontories of St. Kilda is plantago sward. It is found notably on the Cambir and on the lower slopes of Ruaival, and a limited stretch also exists toward the eastern point of Glen Bay: thus the plantago distribution lies below 600 feet on slopes that are gentle to moderate, and in positions accessible to air heavily impregnated with salt (Petch 1933:100). The plantago sward is much grazed by the Soay sheep and is thus very short, and in appearance is pleasingly smooth and green.

Probably the most interesting ecological change that has occurred since the island was evacuated, is the way in which heather has come to dominate the vegetation on the granophyre areas. In 1931 Petch (1933:92-4) observed that the growth of heather was markedly suppressed, and that it rose above turf level only where it was inaccessible to sheep: Petch anticipated an increase in heather at the expense of the various moorland grasses, consequent both upon the withdrawal of

the island's Blackface sheep and the cessation of turf-cutting, and in this it appears that he was right. Heather now dominates one fifth of the area of St. Kilda. This change also suggests that the grazing habits of the Soay sheep differ from those of the Blackface, and observations made in 1957 certainly indicated that the former breed were little attracted to the heather areas.

Another feature of interest concerns the contrast in vegetation existing between the slopes of Ruaival and the northern face of the Dun, areas which are separated only by the narrow sea channel of Caolas an Duin. In 1931 Petch (1933:96-7) noted that the slopes of the Dun were dominated by creeping soft-grass (*holcus mollis*), which thrived along with chickweed and annual meadow-grass because of the concentrated occurrence of puffin droppings. To-day, presenting a contrast to the smooth plantago sward of Ruaival, the Dun bears what appears to be a dense, tangled mass of greenery, which is probably the accumulated growth over three decades of long, rank, creeping soft-grass. The absence of sheep on the Dun accounts for the height of the contrast.

Finally one must surely remark on the scarcity of bracken on St. Kilda! It was noted as being present in 1931 (Petch 1933:98) but only in small patches beside walls, and it has made little or no headway in the intervening years. Low temperatures and lack of shelter may be the crucial factors restricting the growth of this plant, but this is uncertain: expert investigation might throw useful light on the factors influencing the growth of bracken and thus assist mainland farmers in their fight against this blight.

The most interesting feature of the island as revealed by pollen analysis is that trees did certainly exist at one time. There is clear evidence of occupance by alder, birch and Scots pine with the alder generally dominant, and there is also fragmentary evidence of the one-time existence of elm and oak. Insufficient soil samples have been taken to allow for any conjecture as to tree distribution, but it is remarkable that the highest count of tree pollen (18 per cent) was recorded near Mullach Mor at a height of 1,000 feet; in this case alder and birch were dominant. Macaulay (1764:26) recorded the fact that tree trunks were frequently found buried in the ground on the lower parts of St. Kilda, but the author has as yet found no material or documentary evidence to confirm this claim. There is thus no good reason to suppose that trees have grown on St.

Kilda within the last 2,000 years, nor to suggest that the island could carry tree cover under present climatic conditions; wind, low temperatures and salt impregnated air are all powerful deterrents, and only in the sheltered hollow of An Lag Bho'n Tuath might it be possible for rowan, birch or spruce to gain a grip.

Pollen analysis is also very helpful in the identification of areas of previous cultivation, and it reveals too the condition of the village enclosure before it was occupied by man. To-day it is smothered in coarse bent-grass, but originally it was an area dominated by heather which to-day remains in exclusion beyond the head-dyke. This in fact is altogether expressive of the atmosphere of St. Kilda which is essentially one of contest—contest between the elements, the island, the plants and man.

OCCUPANCE AND UTILISATION

To any community in any age St. Kilda offered restricted opportunities. It is isolated, small, notably hilly, and deficient in fuel and shelter, but on the other hand its isolation and nature offer a measure of security, its territory forms a natural grazing ground for sheep, there is an abundance of building stone, a constantly assured water supply, and fish are to be had in plenty in the sea around the cliffs. To these attributes is added a multitude of sea-birds, but the effective use that the St. Kildans made of these creatures simply confirms the meanness of their resource base as a whole.

The settlement and field pattern established by man about 1830 and existing thereafter in occupation for a century is deceptive in appearance. Since the evacuation of the island in 1930 the village enclosure has inevitably suffered damage and decay, the houses being mostly roofless and the infield overgrown with rank grass: yet the neat alignment of the cottages, the systematically constructed consumption dykes, and the orderly arrangement of the field enclosures are all features that catch the eye; the peculiar buildings called cleits are in remarkably good condition; and the man-made channel containing the Dry Burn shows neither disintegration nor blockage. In consequence it might well be assumed that the St. Kildan community had been fairly prosperous, and that it had established itself securely with a strong measure of control over its environment. Only a careful examination of the economic

and social organisation of St. Kilda can provide a reliable assessmen'.

The history of the settlement of the island can be written properly only after some archæological evidence has been obtained. Nevertheless there is a fair amount of fragmentary evidence confirming that St. Kilda was occupied by man long before the construction of the "modern village", and indeed long before the first detailed account was written by Martin Martin in 1698. What is unfortunate is that the many travellers' reports are generally of an imprecise and romantic nature, and that in successive stages of culture the St. Kildans inevitably destroyed or modified earlier buildings in order to accommodate contemporary needs. Lacking archæological evidence, it would be rash and untimely to attempt to present the story of the peopling of St. Kilda, but it may be interesting and useful to discuss such evidence of habitation as has been noted to date.

In all, six different types of house architecture may be distinguished on the island with a varying measure of assurance in each case. In possible time sequence, they are as follows:— underground dwelling, Norse house, corbelled house with beehive and cleit variations, small black-house, improved black-house, and traditional Scottish cottage.

There are only two known examples of underground dwellings. One is situated in the small central enclosure behind the glebe and has been walled up by a slab of granophyre since about 1830; it was discovered in the time of the Rev. Neil MacKenzie when improvements were being made to the infield area. The other remains open and distinct; it lies 50 yards N.N.W. of the graveyard and is elongated and tunnel-like in shape with stone-lined sides and a roof of rock slabs. It is noteworthy that the shelving nature of the Village Bay area and the abundance of granophyre slabs would together facilitate the construction of primitive tunnel dwellings, and in this connection it should be observed that there are also a number of indeterminate mounds scattered about the stony ground on either side of the main consumption dyke; these may simply be consumption piles, but in alignment and form some of them are oddly uncharacteristic, and their investigation might possibly prove interesting. The tunnel dwellings may well have been constructed by the original inhabitants of St. Kilda, who were probably Neolithic colonists who branched away from the main stream that moved along the Scottish west coast:

a small number of finds apparently of Neolithic age have in fact been made on the island.

That the Norsemen visited St. Kilda is sure from the evidence of Norse elements in place-names, as in Oiseval, Ruaival, Geo, Soay, and Bradastac. The mixture of Norse and Gaelic names also indicates that there must at some time have been a measure of co-existence between the two races, resulting possibly from shipwreck. The only material evidence as yet discovered that suggests Norse settlement are house foundations, two probable vestiges being located to the north and within 50 yards of the factor's house. Buildings of a later period have been placed on these foundations but the latter have not been obliterated.

The building that is most characteristic of St. Kilda is the stone cleit (Pl. I, fig. 2). There are at least several hundred of these constructions scattered over the island and on the whole they all look very much alike. The essential features are that they are rather small, are constructed entirely of stone and turf, and that they fully exploit the advantages of the granophyre slabs that litter the eastern part of the island. These slabs provided natural building stones which were easily fitted into a corbelled or overlapping structure, either domed or arch-like in shape, and capped by flat slabs topped with turf. Such structures require no timber, and if need be the walls can be packed with earth to keep out the ever present wind; nor do they use thatch which requires the existence of an agricultural economy. In accordance then with the conditions and resources of the environment, the cleit style of architecture may well have developed when man sought out drier sites and began to raise his dwellings above ground level. It may easily date back to the Dark Ages (and earlier), and the present cleits are perhaps simplified versions of a style of house that prevailed upon St. Kilda until medieval times.

Examination of the cleits and cleit-like structures reveals that certain of these are quite distinct in character from all others; two notable cases are located close to Tobar Childa, with a possible third lying approximately half-way between these and the factor's house. These are strongly built structures, roughly oval in shape, and measuring perhaps 20 feet in length with a height approaching standing room. The walls are thick and solidly packed with dirt, and the doorway low as in cleits proper. Their most interesting feature is, however, the arrangement of small, low, circular chambers, that have been thrown

out from the main walls. These have been referred to by Williamson as beehive chambers (1958:46-9). They are reached by passing through the main dwelling, and it is reasonable in view of their small and snug character to suppose that they served as sleeping quarters; they may also have had some storage function. The people who built these corbelled structures certainly carried out the work with skill and care, and designed them fittingly to withstand the wind and rain of St. Kilda: their selection of the Tobar Childa site is also interesting and significant.

Buildings of a roughly similar type are found too in Glen Mor, where there appear to be about twenty distinctly separate structures: being relatively isolated they have not suffered the same modification and destruction as those of Village Bay, but they are nevertheless in very disordered condition and seem to be smaller than the Tobar Childa specimens. Size and condition have probably been influenced in part by the available building stone, building being more difficult in Glen Mor where there is not the same abundance of flat slabs as in Village Bay. Williamson has examined these remains with some care and his description of them is as follows (1958: 48):—

Each is approached between curved 'horns' of dry-stone walling which converge on the narrow gateway of a small, open 'court', again of dry-stone walling and in some cases still 5 feet high. Around this court, clover-leaf fashion, are usually three beehive-shaped chambers, skilfully corbelled towards the top and finished off with a few broad lintels, the whole being originally roofed with turf. Access to these is gained from the court by squirming through an aperture seldom more than 1 foot 6 inches square, and rather less than 3 feet above the ground. The courts are roughly circular, appear to have been paved, and have a drainage channel piercing the wall at its lowest point. A number also have one or two recesses in the wall, each with a sill and lintel like the beehive entrances, and similar in size.

These structures were certainly used by the St. Kildans after 1700 as summer shielings, when the cattle were moved to the pastures of Glen Mor and the opportunity taken to obtain milk from the sheep. The question that arises is whether these court and beehive structures were fashioned as permanent dwellings by a medieval (or earlier) community, or whether they were always just summer shielings: Williamson tends to

hold the former view but admits that more evidence must be obtained to support his case.

Glen Mor is not in fact an "obvious home" (Williamson 1958:49) for any St. Kildan community even should it be of a pastoral character. The exposure of the glen is north-westerly which lays it open to the coldest winds in this part at any time of the year, and it receives scant protection from the small Cambir peninsula against westerly gales. It possesses no beach, and if boat management was difficult in Village Bay (as indeed it is), it would be doubly so in Glen Bay; in view of this one cannot consider the pasture of Soay to be an asset since it would be practically inaccessible. The geological and physical nature of Glen Mor also causes water to accumulate on the valley floor, which is a distinct disadvantage in view of the amount of shadow that lies over the glen in winter; whatever the weather conditions may be, a full two-thirds of the valley floor receives no sunshine at all from mid-November until mid-February. The inferior supply of building stone (already referred to) would constitute another disadvantage. In aggregate these are factors that would certainly discourage the establishment of permanent settlement in Glen Mor.

Examination of the beehive structures themselves does not conclusively support the theory of permanent occupance. It is difficult to accept the absence of a stout, central chamber in that part of St. Kilda where it would be much needed. One feels that Williamson may have misinterpreted the function of the court and beehive structures with their characteristic horns, for it is difficult to conceive of the sheep being driven into the horned enclosures, since the enclosures never appear to have been high enough to have retained the agile St. Kildan breed. It is perhaps likely that these enclosures were designed simply for penning calves and lambs, so combining the functions of the calf-pen (cro nan laogh) and the lamb-pen (cro nan uain), both of which were features of the shielings in the Hebrides. Thus by penning lambs and calves, the St. Kildans would be certain of keeping the ewes and milking cows within easy reach, milking itself taking place either close to or within the enclosure. Milk was taken from cows and ewes and used for making cheese, the whey being retained for drinking, and it is highly probable that the beehive chambers were used as store-places as well as sleeping-quarters.

The fact that Glen Mor seems to contain about twenty of these structures may also be significant. It might reasonably be

assumed that if these belonged to a community independent of that inhabiting Village Bay, then in early medieval times St. Kilda maintained a population twice as large as that of later centuries, and with a less well-developed resource base to support it; this in fact is unlikely. An alternative point of view notes that the Glen Mor structures are very similar in number to the improved black-houses of the 1830-40 decade, and to the number of cottages that succeeded them: in consequence they may always have existed as summer quarters or shielings for the Village Bay folk. If there is anything in the supposed matriarchal tradition that might be associated with Glen Mor on account of the name "Amazon's House", it could well have come about simply because the shieling work was primarily women's work. In any case, a name of true matriarchal significance would surely be recorded in Norse or Gaelic.

Returning to Village Bay it is useful to examine the ground pattern of buildings and vestiges that may date back to medieval times. These appear to lie mainly along a zone extending from Tobar Childa to the factor's house (Fig. 4); they are thus situated on rising, relatively dry ground, with a good, sunny exposure, and those near Tobar Childa have the advantage of an assured and readily accessible water supply. The best preserved buildings and vestiges do in fact lie about the spring area, but this may only be due to their position outside the village enclosure, where they were protected from modification in the nineteenth century. There are also stone formations around Tobar Childa that appear neither to be natural nor to form part of the later stone enclosures, and in the centre of this locality lies a grassy platform in the shape of a tongue, and covering about 1,000 square yards, which also appears (at least in part) to be of human construction. There is much here to be subjected to archæological inspection. Tobar Childa may well mark the site of the first nucleated settlement on St. Kilda, and from here settlement may have migrated south-eastward to give the village the rough street pattern of which Macaulay wrote in 1764 (Macaulay 1764:42): a move toward cultivable ground could reasonably account for a migration from the rocky locality at Tobar Childa, but it is hard to affirm (without further evidence) that such a move ever did take place; nevertheless the ground evidence of beehive dwellings around Tobar Childa, and the ground and documentary evidence of an "old village" removed from Tobar

Childa, are certainly suggestive of a pronounced geographical change.

Unfortunately the eighteenth century writings and maps are vague concerning the position and lay-out of the "old village". Martin (1698) says little as to the precise location of the village at that time, stating only that it was small and poor, lay a little way from the landing rock (this lay close to the store shown on Fig. 4), and that it was near Tobar Childa; but he does indicate in his map (Martin 1698) that the village ran obliquely uphill somewhere on the northern side of Village Bay. Macaulay (1765:42) describes the village as lying in a regular form with two rows of houses situated a quarter of a mile from the bay; measured from the bay this would place the village at Tobar Childa, but if taken from the landing rock the site would appear to lie in the vicinity of the Dry Burn between the village street (nineteenth century) and the head-dyke (Fig. 4): of the two possibilities the latter is the one which is in keeping with Macaulay's map (1764), although the map itself is inaccurate in many respects. Finally Macculloch presents a map (Seton 1878:70) in which the village clearly seems to lie on the north side of Village Bay just below the broad lip of An Lag Bho'n Tuath. There is thus some measure of agreement between these various accounts and maps as to the site of the "old village" (1400?—1830), but further light can be thrown on the problem by the consideration of field evidence and the adoption of a geographical approach.

Firstly, one may consider the type of building belonging to this period, two examples of which can still be seen on the ground to-day; one stands 30 yards from Tobar Childa, and the other 40 yards N.N.W. of the factor's house, the latter apparently occupying the site of a possible Norse house. These are small and solid, measuring some 10 feet by 7 feet, and having thick walls, a low doorway facing east, and no window (Pl. V, fig. 2); the roof was probably of thatch and beam supports appear to have been collected from the shore or obtained from unseaworthy boats. Between these two houses and lying along a line that runs obliquely and gently uphill from the factor's house to Tobar Childa, there is a significant number of vestiges of circular middens and ash pits; these lie along the edge of a natural embankment which seems to have been followed as a line of movement, and this therefore may be the location of the old village causeway or street (Fig. 4). One further building that may belong to this period lies 40 yards

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south-east of the factor's house; it is larger than the other two buildings referred to above and was probably the early wool and feather store.

Secondly, the pattern of cultivation plots and walled enclosures merits examination (Fig. 4). Mapping has revealed a notable concentration of cultivation plots of the lazy-bed type on the strip of land that lies between the factor's house and the beach, and these small plots contrast markedly with the extensive nineteenth century field-strips to the west. Above the factor's house, and again running obliquely uphill toward Tobar Childa, is a scattered but distinctive collection of further small plots of varying size and shape, and it was probably these that Macaulay referred to in 1764, when describing plots ringed with stone and lying "compactly within the precincts of the village" (1764:27 and 30). The distribution of plots thus appears to support the conception of a pre-nineteenth century village straggling obliquely uphill north-westward of the factor's house. The houses were probably concentrated somewhat more to the east where the plots are more numerous, and where they would be nearer to the compactly arranged lazy-beds on the lower infield. The cluster of large, high walled enclosures north of the head-dyke must also be examined in this context (Pl. IV); the existing walls are clearly in the nineteenth century style of building, but the enclosures are probably of earlier date since in several cases they are transected by the regularly aligned head-dyke which was built in the 1830's. Rig patterns and pollen analysis confirm that in some cases at least these enclosures were at one time cultivated, and they may well be pre-nineteenth century cultivation plots that were later walled and used both for growing hay and retaining stock.

Thirdly, if it is supposed that the pre-1830 village lay scattered along a zone between the factor's house and Tobar Childa, what would be the attractions of such a site? It may at once be affirmed that probably the most habitable stretch of land on St. Kilda lies around the factor's house, and from there north-westward for about 300 yards. The chief attraction of this locality is its sunny exposure, whereby it receives more sunshine than any other part of St. Kilda of similar elevation; it is also the most sheltered part of the Village Bay area excepting only the floor of An Lag, for the surrounding hills break the main force of northerly and westerly gales, and the southern shoulder of Oiseval deflects the force of the easterly winds. It

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is a relatively dry, well drained area, the flow of water from the hills behind being largely concentrated into the hollow of An Lag, from whence it escapes either underground or along the course of the Dry Burn; waterlogging of the surface soil occurs below this area along and below the line of the "modern village".

There are thus powerful reasons for believing that the "old village" lay somewhat scattered above the line of the later nineteenth century one. There is no reason to suppose that it was in any way enclosed, and with its tiny houses numbering not more than about twenty-five, it must have looked very small and mean (Martin 1698:13). Yet it was this very village that housed the population of St. Kilda when it was at its peak, for Martin believed the total number of persons to be about 180 at the close of the seventeenth century (Martin 1698:99). Man had established himself firmly on the island; his dwellings, although small, were possibly stouter and better finished than those in the Hebrides; and the cultivation of many small plots was an established feature of the economy. Both in the siting of the village and in the orientation of the houses, man showed a sound appreciation of the environmental conditions. Nevertheless it is also clear from the records of the eighteenth century, that life on the island was precarious and very mean. Wintering in the tiny, dark houses where space was shared with the cow, and where rubbish and dung and ash were allowed to accumulate from October until March (Macaulay 1764:42-7), imposed a critical strain on physical health: thus following on the social and agrarian improvements being effected generally in Scotland after 1750, it is not surprising to find St. Kilda the scene of similar improvements during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Some of these improvements were revolutionary in character, and certainly the most imposing was the reconstruction of the village in the 1830's. This work was carried out under the stimulating influence and direction of the Reverend Neil MacKenzie who was minister on the island from 1829 until 1843 (MacKenzie 1911:21-3), and it resulted in the appearance of an entirely new, planned settlement. A remarkable measure of order was introduced into the cultural scene, and still to-day the symmetrical pattern of buildings and field-strips stands out in contrast to the natural litter of rock lying outside the head-dyke.

The village shelf was enclosed for the first time as one unit and established as the infield. The head-dyke which was built

extends for just under one mile, and encloses an area of about 50 acres; it is of dry-stone construction, substantial, and averages 5 to 6 feet in height with considerable stretches still standing intact (Pl. V, fig. 1). Within the enclosure much effort was obviously devoted to the clearing of stones; many of these went to the building of houses, walls and cleits, a huge surplus was disposed of in three large consumption dykes that occupy the centre of the lower infield (Pl. IV), and others still were tipped in heaps on to the beach. The area was organised for settlement on a tripartite basis. A triangle of ground on the east was set apart as the glebe enclosure, in the centre of which the manse, church and school, had previously been erected, 1825-7; it is probable that the excellent dry-stone walls of the glebe enclosures were meant as model examples for the St. Kildan folk. Between the glebe and the Dry Burn little modification took place, for the higher part of this area probably contained the eastern end of the "old village", and the lower part was occupied by cultivation rigs: the dominating feature to-day is the factor's house built in the mid-nineteenth century. Between the Dry Burn and the Amhuinn Mhor the new village was laid out, the houses lying in an open crescent roughly half-way between the head-dyke and the beach (Pl. IV), and being linked by a stone pathway some 6 feet wide that led down to the factor's store east of the manse. The new village alignment constituted a complete break with the past, for the houses now stood regularly spaced and at an elevation of about 90 feet above sea-level; those to the east were the sunniest and most sheltered, those to the west lay most in shadow and were also liable to waterlogging, and those in the centre stood on very stony ground. Possibly for the first time since St. Kilda's pre-history, excavation of earth again became necessary as a preliminary to house construction.

The houses in the new village totalled about thirty in number, and map and ground evidence suggest that none has disappeared since the time of building (1834-6). The houses were of stout, dry-stone construction, their thick walls being infilled with gravel and soil to render them wind-proof; the roofs were composed of turf or thatch laid on wooden beams, and were so finished by bedding them into the house walls as to eliminate eaves and achieve a streamlined form. As a further protection against the wind, the houses lay with their somewhat rounded gable-ends toward the bay and their low doorways facing east. Three types of house are distinguishable as probably

belonging to this particular phase of building. First of all there are eighteen large houses measuring generally about 22 feet by 10 feet; all but one of these had a single, low doorway and a small window set in the eastern wall, and all appear to have contained a cattle-stall at the southern or doorway end of the house; no chimney was provided and the fire seems to have burned in an open hearth against the northern wall. Such houses were essentially slightly improved black-houses. Secondly there are seven houses of a similar type but much smaller, generally about 16 feet by 7 feet, and these lie in close proximity to the larger houses either facing them or set end to end on the landward side. Although they were subsequently used as byres and tool-sheds, their primary purpose was doubtless the housing of single persons and elderly couples. Finally there are five houses, also of a small size, built on to the landward end of large houses; but they are a little puzzling in that while all are oriented eastward, two are in the style of the new houses and three in the pre-1830 style without windows: these latter ones may simply represent a carry-over of the old style of architecture and therefore probably do not rank as genuine pre-1830 building.

In the majority of cases the "1834 houses" thus stood in pairs, but it is interesting that the positioning of the pairs changes along the length of the village street; in the first seven pairs the little house lies to the landward end of the big house, then on to number thirteen the rule is face to face, and thereafter to the western end of the village there is no single rule. These differences cannot with confidence be attributed to the nature of the topography, and it seems possible that they may represent changes in fashion at different stages in the construction of the new village. Associated closely with the houses, sometimes behind them and in other cases alongside, lay small, walled, cabbage gardens, tiny fuel huts, and pit middens of circular shape: clustered in concentration around the houses, these features emphasised the regular, crescentic form of the new village. Further order was added to the scene by the division of the infield into field-strips; averaging about 25 yards in width these ran up from the beach to the head-dyke, were demarcated by low walls of stone and turf, and totalled about eighteen in number (Fig. 4). Houses and holdings thus seem to confirm that at this time there were eighteen households upon the island, with perhaps about twenty single or old folk in addition.

There are just over one hundred cleits within the village enclosure, and their condition suggests that they too were built or rebuilt about this time. Their distribution seems to be clearly related to the availability of stone, although other factors such as the value of land and the movement of daily traffic would also be of some account. A concentration of about forty cleits in the steep north-eastern part of the infield occurs where stone is abundant, and following the line of the "old village" both within and without the head-dyke, it is likely that many of these cleits are occupying the sites of earlier cleits and houses. A further thirty-five cleits are clustered within the morainic tongue in the centre of the village where stone was again readily available, and it is only in this locality that a group of cleits is found below the line of the village; here they lie in close proximity to the three consumption dykes previously mentioned.

Perhaps the final part in the reconstruction of the village was the walling of the enclosures that lie beyond the head-dyke. It has already been suggested that these might have been tillage plots belonging to the "old village", and at least half of them appear to antedate the head-dyke itself. Their size varies between one quarter and one sixteenth of an acre, but in all cases the walls are substantial and high, and are constructed with a sheer inner face with the presumable intent of effectively retaining livestock; this would imply that about this time their function became pastoral instead of agricultural. Walls, houses, cleits and field-strips, all are representative of a period of reorganisation and unusual activity, the improvements thus made and the pattern established being due very largely to the vision and the drive of the Rev. Neil MacKenzie. In the space available and in the conditions then prevailing, it is difficult to conceive a better or more artistic village plan.

From 1830 onwards increasing attention was focused on St. Kilda, and throughout the Victorian period measures were taken repeatedly to improve the lot of the tiny community. Thus the improved houses of MacKenzie's village had stood for only twenty-seven years, when they were replaced (1861-2) by sixteen new cottages of the traditional Scottish "but and ben" type (Seton 1878:107-14); these were sited along the main street, but in every other respect they departed from St. Kildan custom. Stone-built and cemented, they were rectangular in shape, sharply angled, had ridged roofs of zinc later to be covered with felt and tar, and faced directly

out toward the bay; orientation and style accordingly combined to make them very vulnerable to easterly and southerly gales, and the roofs subsequently had to be lashed to the masonry with wires and iron staples. The central doorway channelled draughts into both rooms of the house, these being already aired by the two gable-end chimneys for which little fuel was ever available. In every case a considerable amount of excavation was necessary to level sites for these houses, and in fourteen cases the walled cabbage garden was reduced in size to make way for the new house. Measuring 33 feet by 15 feet, these "1862 cottages" gave the St. Kildans roomier and more hygienic houses than they had ever previously known, but it is doubtful whether they were in every respect more comfortable than the improved black-houses. The new cottages could only be built and maintained with outside aid, and their appearance marked the beginning of a distinct and ever increasing tendency on the part of the St. Kildans to rely upon outside help. In this connection it will be noted that sixteen houses were a considerable decrease from the total of thirty in Neil MacKenzie's time, and between 1841 and 1861 the population did in fact fall from about 105 to 78 (Seton 1878:143).

The resource base of the St. Kildans was at all times meagre and limited, and the effective use of it varied from generation to generation depending upon the moral and numerical strength of the community. Land use and work activity probably reached a peak in the decade 1840-50 when the population just exceeded 100, and the community also seems to have thriven in Martin's time when it numbered about 180: depressions occurred when the island was ravaged by smallpox in 1724 (Seton 1878:48) and when thirty-six people emigrated in 1856 (Seton 1878:144). To face the truth, however, whatever the strength of the community, the wonder is that it continued to survive for centuries on an island so small and weather-beaten; that it did so was due in part to periodic immigration from Lewis, and also to the unique economy developed by the St. Kildans in which the trapping of sea-birds played a major part.[5]

Farming seems to have been an important aspect of St. Kildan life throughout historic time, the emphasis as a whole being upon pastoral activity. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries St. Kilda carried a flock of some 700 to 800 sheep, and Soay and Boreray several hundred more (St. Kildans concealed the precise numbers in order to reduce their dues

to the proprietor), and these animals provided the community with mutton, milk, pelts and wool: the number of cattle (mainly cows) fell from 90 in 1697, to about 40 in Macaulay's time, and remained at that number until the middle of the nineteenth century; cows were the most prized of all animals on account of their production of calves, milk, meat and hides. Ponies, of which there were 18 in 1697, were employed to carry fuel and hay, but they were scarcely used by 1841 (Seton 1878:128) when there were only 3 on the island. Stock management was ever a primitive business, and the sheep were virtually left to run wild except at lambing and shearing time in the spring, and at killing time in the autumn. The cows were much more carefully tended, being kept indoors in the winter, herded in Glen Mor in the summer, and permitted to graze the infield area in autumn after harvest; in fact, remembering that the St. Kildans were as much hunters as farmers, the cow held quite a privileged position, and not the least reason for this was the supreme value of cow-hide for making climbing ropes (Martin 1698:105). The scarcity of winter feed was of course a critical handicap which made the rearing of beef cattle (in addition to cows) impossible, but while the cows grew very lean and weak in the winter (Martin 1698:112) they thrived quickly during the summer, achieving standards above the Hebridean average (Macaulay 1764:29). The maximum livestock that could be maintained on St. Kilda by St. Kildan standards probably totalled about 50 cows and 1,000 sheep, or some equivalent combination of these; and Seton (1878:129) does in fact indicate that the entitlement granted by the proprietors of the island was 1,200 sheep and 50 head of cattle.

The growing of crops was a hazardous business yielding little profit: the weather was all against it, the amount of space available was very limited, and the people had scant knowledge of land management. The importance of manuring the ground was understood, however, and each winter's accumulation of dirt, rubbish, ash and dung, was cleared out of the houses and midden pits in spring and spread on the land (Macaulay 1764: 34). But there is no evidence of sheep being folded on the land, nor was seaweed available as a fertiliser on account of the lack of shallow water around the shores of the island. Estimates of the extent of cultivated land vary widely from time to time, and in the main seem to be too large. Until about 1835 cultivation was carried on in small plots lying about the village, on the rigs below the village where run-rig prevailed, and on

various favourable patches of enclosed land around the perimeter of the village shelf. Organised thus, it is very unlikely that the cultivated area exceeded 20 acres, although 80 is the figure quoted by Macaulay in 1764. After the construction of the head-dyke, all the infield east of the Amhuinn Mhor might be regarded as having been arable, but since the steeper, upper half of the infield (15 acres) was probably used mainly for hay growing, the maximum crop acreage could not have exceeded 30 acres; in this respect it is interesting to note that Seton gives a total arable figure of 40 acres in 1877, i.e. about forty-five years later when the community was in decline. Barley and oats were the only crops ever to be grown in quantity, and of these two, barley was the more favoured, probably on account of its ability to grow and ripen fast in the months of May, June and July: according to Martin (1698:28) and Macaulay (1764:38) the barley was much better than any in the Hebrides, a condition that might be attributed primarily to the availability of soil on St. Kilda. Nevertheless the St. Kildans seem to have been disinclined to place any reliance upon crop cultivation (and understandably so); they did bake and consume barley-cake and oat-bread, but neither featured in their diet to the same extent as mutton, eggs and sea-birds, and whereas in Macaulay's time (1764:38) they might export some 5 tons of barley to Lewis annually, by the mid-nineteenth century it appears that the amount of corn being grown was quite inadequate for the needs of the community (Seton 1878:99-100). The other crops grown were cabbages and potatoes, the former in very small quantity and the latter not with success, and these were produced within walled plots close to the houses, and in the case of potatoes also farther afield in isolated enclosures. The inadequacy of St. Kildan agricultural produce made itself evident in several ways; unbalanced feeding undoubtedly contributed to the terribly high rate of infant mortality (Seton 1878:216), several records speak of dire shortage of food in the months of February and March, and after 1850 the chief imports of the island were oatmeal, salt and potatoes.

The other forms of food on which the St. Kildans relied were of course mainly the flesh and eggs of sea-birds, the thorough way in which they exploited this source of provender contrasting markedly with their rather ineffective farming. The sea-bird of greatest importance was the fulmar, which supplied the St. Kildans with meat, feathers and oil, but

gannets and puffins were also taken, the former from the neighbouring stacks and the latter in huge numbers from the cliffs of St. Kilda. In 1697 Martin estimated that 100,000 puffins and 25,000 gannets were taken annually (Martin 1698:106 and 115), and one may deduce from the St. Kildan diet that at least 30,000 fulmars were caught each year: puffin and gannet eggs too were collected in huge numbers, and the fact that the community could so prey on the island's bird life year after year is indicative of several important conditions. The St. Kildan group of islands houses an enormous bird population which the St. Kildans hunted with great skill and daring, and although the vast number of birds present rendered any system of conservation unnecessary, it is worth remarking that the St. Kildans' quiet and deceptive methods of hunting in no way frightened the birds from their traditional haunts (Kearton 1897:80-120). Puffins, gannets and fulmars were hunted as soon as they returned to St. Kilda in the months of March, April and May; when these birds began to lay, efforts were then directed to the collecting of eggs, and at such time (approximately mid-May until the end of June) the gannets and fulmars were not molested. Fulmar eggs were not taken on account of their undesirable flavour, and this certainly helped to maintain the numbers of the St. Kildans' most valued sea-bird, especially too, since the fulmar lays only one egg: on the other hand, however, large numbers of young gannets and fulmars were taken in August before they could leave the nest, the young gannets being prized for their flesh and feathers, and the fulmars for their flesh and oil. It is interesting to note, that by taking eggs systematically from the gannet and puffin, the St. Kildans were able to delay the departure of a proportion of these birds and so prolong the fowling season (Martin 1698:41-2). The eggs and flesh of the various birds were kept in great quantities as provision for the winter months, both being stored in cleits, and a small proportion of the carcasses also being salted and kept in casks; the latter method was unusual, however, the restricted supply of salt being more profitably used for preserving mutton. Feathers and fulmar oil ranked as the island's two chief exports, something of the order of 400 gallons of oil being sent out annually after about 1830 (Sands 1878:59).

The waters around St. Kilda abound with fish which of course provide food for the teeming numbers of gannet, puffin and guillemot, but the St. Kildans never seem to have

exploited this resource as they did the sea-birds. There would appear to be a number of reasons for this: boats and fishing equipment required to be imported, bait was scarce upon the island due to the small intertidal area, and sailing in such exposed waters was undoubtedly a hazardous business, and was rendered even more so by the difficulty of embarking and disembarking in heavy surf. The St. Kildans were not boat-builders, and it is significant that no mention occurs anywhere of boat maintenance; in fact Macculloch observed in 1819 that the one boat on the island was being left to rot, and toward the end of the nineteenth century, Connell and Heath-cote each remarked separately upon the ineptitude of the men as boatmen and fishermen. Contrary to this view, how-ever, it must be allowed that the St. Kildans handled their boats with skill when landing on Soay and the isolated rock stacks (Macaulay 1764:188-91), and in 1875 it is recorded that fish accounted for 12 per cent of the value of St. Kildan exports (Sands 1878:59). There would thus appear to be some truth in the assertion by Kearton that the St. Kildans regarded fish as being tasteless and therefore in their view valueless: boats would be utilised primarily as a means of gaining access to the cliffs of neighbouring islands, and fishing seems to have become important only in the nineteenth century, when the export of dried and salted fish was necessary to help pay for a growing volume and variety of imports.

The business of providing clothing and warmth occupied a large part of the islanders' time. Using the coarse wool that was plucked crudely from the cross-bred sheep on the main island, the women in the community carried out the cleaning, combing and spinning, whilst the men did the weaving and tailoring; the products of the coarse tweed (blankets and rough clothes) were unattractive and inevitably of a grey or black hue, since the people lacked any skilled knowledge of dyeing. The men spent long hours at this work during the months from November to February, and as time advanced even more labour was given to it, for during the latter half of the nine-teenth century blankets and tweed became together a more valuable export than either feathers or fulmar oil; in the eighteenth century tweed did not figure at all in the trade of the island. St. Kildan shoes in the case of the men were crudely made from leather, and until the nineteenth century the women commonly had to make do with the neck-skins of gannets (Martin 1698:110-11), but in the main the islanders went

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about barefooted, resorting to foot covering only when the weather was bad and when snow lay on the ground. For fuel, the St. Kildans relied basically upon "turf", which meant sods of grass or heather cut from the hill-sides (Macaulay 1764:44; Mathieson 1928:78-9). Peat does exist upon the island (Petch 1933:96) and it is difficult to understand why the people did not use it, for with the advantage of cleits for storage, there would have been no more difficulty about drying than on the Hebrides, probably less. Turfs were cut from Mullach Mor to Mullach Sgar and on the slopes of Conachair and Oiseval, and were stored in cleits in elevated, windswept positions where the process of drying was relatively quick; this entailed considerable hardship for the women, however, whose task it was to carry fuel to the village, and often through the mire and snow of winter when the demand was greatest. Turf was unsatisfactory as a fuel since it would only smoulder, and as a result St. Kildan cooking involved a process of perpetual stewing in a single, large pot, and in winter the houses could never be kept properly dry, but only (with the aid of the cow's presence) warmly damp. Turf cutting was unwise too, in that it impoverished the land and reduced the value and extent of natural pasture; even to-day the consequences are evident on the western flank of Oiseval, where the rain washes directly downhill across extensive patches of gravel and rock, which would never have been exposed but for turf-cutting. Admittedly it is questionable whether the island's limited peat resources would have sufficed for all generations of St. Kildans, but it was in their exclusive dependence upon turf that the fault lay.

In assessing the manner in which the people of St. Kilda utilised the resources at their disposal, the verdict must surely be of a mixed character. Their agriculture might have been more efficient, but the climate was greatly against them, only in the lower infield did the soil offer any real promise, and being poor and remote they were badly placed to receive supplies of seed. They seem to have been efficient in their time in the management of cattle, the wonder being that their beasts survived the winter at all, but there is little doubt that with some care they could have improved the quality of their sheep and of the wool that they yielded; shelter in winter, care at lambing, and wool shearing instead of primitive plucking and cutting, would all seem to have been possible improvements. The ring of green turf now surrounding each cleit, a direct

result of fertilisation by sheep seeking shelter from the elements, bears clear witness to the fertility that sheep-folding could have produced in the infield area; St. Kildan records nowhere indicate that this was ever done, although the cattle were pastured there in spring and autumn.

If the St. Kildans were only moderate farmers and rather poor fishers, they were on the other hand remarkably skilled in wild-fowling.[6] Their dependence upon sea-birds is one of the most fascinating aspects of the St. Kildan economy, and it is on this very account that the community may be judged to have ranked as unique; in addition, the skill and daring with which the St. Kildan men-folk scaled the great cliffs of the St. Kildan group of islands brought them tributes of respect from the time of Martin until that of Cockburn (1697-1927), thus conferring a special distinction upon the island and its inhabitants.

It may well be argued that operations on the cliffs were time consuming and that it would have paid the people better to give more time to farming and fishing, but against this it must be recalled that the yields from farming and fishing were bound to be uncertain, and that particular psychological factors were also influential in moulding the people's way of life. On an island such as this time was reckoned in terms of seasons, not in days and hours and minutes; when food or fuel was in short supply, then action was urgent and imperative, but when supplies were adequate, the community lived at whatever pace suited its inclination. Such a tempo was in accord with a hunter's life much more than a farmer's, with the further condition that the excitement of the hunt urged men on to the maximum effort, and brought about achievements that were the basis of gossip and tradition. A similar attitude made itself evident when the sheep were plucked in June and slaughtered selectively in October; great excitement then prevailed, and having virtually ignored the animals for several months, the whole community then turned out to take part in the rush and tumble and fun of herding! To the St. Kildans therefore the reasons for concentrating upon the sea-birds were probably obvious; the birds were there, the supply was assured, they were relatively easily caught with fowling-rods and noose snares, and skill as a cragsman and the respect thus commanded were the peaks of St. Kildan ambition (Martin 1698:107).

The houses of the St. Kildans were at any time probably

quite as good as those of the folk in the Hebrides, and after 1862 certainly better. Lack of timber was the chief handicap, but in spite of this the native houses (pre-1834 and 1834 styles) were of admirably stout construction, were wisely oriented, and were effectively proofed against the weather. On the other hand, the refusal to copy the Hebridean use of peat is difficult to understand; certainly turf was available close to the village, whereas the peat-moss lay three-quarters of a mile away at an elevation of 1,000 feet, but the better fuel would have done much to cheer and ease the long, damp winter. Similarly no effort seems to have been made to introduce comfort into the houses; feathers were scattered everywhere but there is no mention anywhere of feather mattresses or quilts, nor were sheep-skins or seal-skins ever used as floor coverings. Standards of sanitation and personal hygiene were very low indeed— Macaulay writes of the offensive smell of the St. Kildans, and Neil MacKenzie insisted on measures that would reduce the fouling of the village area—and one can only conclude that adult St. Kildans developed a natural resistance to cold, damp, dirt and bad ventilation. Criticism must be levelled too at the St. Kildan diet, which showed a marked and critical lack of balance: the emphasis lay upon the consumption of the flesh and eggs of sea-birds, other available foods such as barley, mutton, milk, cheese and fish, featuring less in the daily diet than might have been the case; whether the people would have paid more attention to the provision of these items if they had been less heavily taxed (Macaulay 1764:40-1; Seton 1878:139-41) is a debatable point, but at least the dependence upon sea-birds constituted an assurance against want and starvation, and it is interesting to note that references to critical food shortage appear mainly after 1860, when the life and economy of the island were clearly failing. The most dreadful feature of life on St. Kilda was the "eight-day sickness" which afflicted babies fatally eight days or so after birth, and which produced an appalling rate of infant mortality; Seton (1878:216) quotes a figure of 67 per cent taken from a count involving 125 children, but in individual families the rate might be as high as 80 per cent. The possible causes of this infant malady were inquired into by a number of persons after 1850 (Seton 1878:219-28), and comparison with other islands strongly suggested that the root cause lay in the unbalanced diet of the St. Kildan mothers. In all other respects, however, the St. Kildans seem to have been perfectly healthy,

various writers making note of their good appearance and strong physique (e.g. Macaulay 1764:210-12).

If anything is to be selected as symbolic of the St. Kildan community, it must surely be that peculiar structure—the cleit (Pl. I, fig. 2). Cleits are narrow, elongated buildings composed of stone slabs upon which rests a roof of turf. The stones forming the walls overlap each other so that the interior narrows gradually toward the roof; the roof may lie 4 to 6 feet above the ground, and consists first of massive stone lintels on top of which lies a smooth, humped mass of earth and turf; stakes up to 18 inches long are driven into the turf to hold it in position, but through time these became superfluous since the live growth of the turf on the roof binds it into one whole. The walls of the cleit are of dry-stone construction with no infilling whatever, so that while moisture is excluded by the slanting overlap of the stones, air penetrates freely through the gaps between them. Cleits vary considerably in size, for some in the village enclosure measure up to 24 feet long, whereas others on the steep face of Conachair and elsewhere are but a third of this size. They are invariably built in line with the direction of slope, not across it, the buttressing of a narrow end being more easily and securely achieved than that of a whole side. For strength as well as dryness the single, low doorway was frequently set in the end facing into the hill-side, but cleits built on gentle or more moderate slopes often had the doorway placed in one side of the structure: of the hundred odd cleits within the village enclosure, there are only two whose door-ways face downhill toward the sea; one is built within an enclosure wall and the other is a modified medieval dwelling. Cleits are found not only in the Village Bay area where the greatest concentration occurs, but generally speaking all over the island; there are many on the slopes of Oiseval and Cona-chair and a fairly continuous string lies along the ridge of Mullach Geal, while others are distributed less densely along the high, indented crest-line from Ruaival to the Cambir. The cleit was vital to the St. Kildan as the store-chamber of the necessities of life, turf, birds, feathers, eggs and hay all being placed in them for the winter (Macculloch 1819:27-8): airy, cold and dry, there is no doubt that in the cleit the islanders devised a structure that exploited the winds and countered the rain of St. Kilda.

It is possible to gather very different impressions of St. Kildan life from various accounts, depending both upon the

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time at which they were written and the outlook of the individual authors, but it is particularly desirable that the St. Kildan community should not be judged by the several reports that were made (mostly with missionary zeal) during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. At that time the community had reached a low ebb of activity, and reports of poverty, laziness and unhappiness were probably well founded. A fair opinion of the St. Kildan people requires full consideration of the geographical setting, and of the documentary evidence applicable to the period 1698-1878; the verdict then might be, that these people lived with a surprising measure of contentment and harmony in face of poverty and restriction, that they worked industriously at times but were dependent upon outside influence and example, and that they established a seasonal rhythm that seemed to accommodate, fairly successfully, both the dictates of the climate and the inclinations of their hearts. Opposite, an attempt has been made to sketch the outline of the St. Kildan calendar, and from this it is obvious that there was indeed a marked seasonal rhythm: the four winter months from November until February, inclusive, may be balanced against the summer season from May until August; and between these major seasons lay a short, chill spring in March and April, and an invariably tempestuous autumn in September and October. There were no attractions about life on St. Kilda in the winter; storms beset the island for the greater part of the time and the people lived in a state approximating to hibernation; excursions into the open were made mainly by the women for the purpose of fetching water, fuel, and other supplies from the cleits, but the men seem to have kept closely indoors where they engaged in weaving and tailoring. The month of March was a landmark in the calendar, for the simultaneous arrival of better weather and flights of puffins and gannets signalled the start of fowling operations, and no time was lost in bringing in fresh supplies of meat: April witnessed a further increase in activity as the cattle were moved out-of-doors to graze the infield, the houses cleared of refuse, and turf-cutting begun on the hill-sides. Through the summer the people were variously engaged in farming, fowling, fishing, turf-cutting, and the preparation of food (e.g. cheese) for the winter: May was a particularly busy month since the crops were then sown, the cattle moved to the shieling in Glen Mor, and egg-collecting begun; but the peak of activity seems to have occurred in the latter half of August and the first half

of September: the much prized young fulmars and gannets were ready for catching, the harvest of crops and hay had to be cut and stored quickly, and to gather the maximum labour force into the village, the shieling had to be evacuated. Thereafter and on into October, the final preparations were made for

St. Kildan Calendar

Nov. .	. Spinning and Weaving.	Turf carrying.		
Dec. .	. Spinning and Weaving.	Turf carrying.		
Jan. .	. Spinning and Weaving.	Turf carrying.		
Feb. .	. Weaving.	Turf carrying.	Food scarce.	
Mar.	. Cattle infield.	Turf scarce.	Razorbills. Puffins.	
Apr.	. Cattle outfield. Prepare land.	Turf cutting.	Gannets. Puffins.	Prepare boat.
May .	. Prepare land. Sow crops. Cattle to Shieling.	Turf cutting.	Fulmars. Gannets. Puffins. Eggs.	Strip old thatch for manure.
June .	. Cattle to Shieling. Ewes at Shieling.	Turf cutting.	Puffins. Eggs. Sheep clip and killing.	Fishing. Fish curing.
July .	. Cattle at Shieling. Ewes at Shieling.	Turf cutting.	Puffins.	Fishing. Fish curing.
Aug. .	. Return from Shieling. Harvesting.	Turf cutting.	Young Fulmars. Puffins.	Fishing. Fish curing.
Sept.	. Hay-making. Feather storing.	Dry corn.	Young Fulmars. Young Gannets.	Building repairs.
Oct. .	. Cattle infield. Wool preparation.	Grind corn.	Young Gannets. Sheep killing.	Thatching repairs. Lay up boat.

the winter; corn was dried and ground, sheep selected and slaughtered, feathers plucked from the young birds caught just previously, and buildings proofed against the weather.

The provision of basic needs, food, clothing and shelter, was thus the prime concern of all St. Kildans, year in and year out, and they lived in the knowledge that any part of the

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provisioning process was liable to be disrupted by the advent of bad weather. It would be wrong, however, to regard the St. Kildans as having been oppressed by a concern for things material; the "misery" associated with material shortages (Wilson 1842:80) was something that came and went with the seasons, but the continuing unhappy state of the people in the latter decades of the nineteenth century arose more from the bigoted impositions of the Free Church missionary than from material want. The writings of Martin (1698:122-3) and Macaulay (1764:216-17) indicate that life on St. Kilda in the eighteenth century had a greater measure of freedom and natural happiness; music and dancing were enjoyed with much enthusiasm, singing and rhyming accompanied spinning and harvesting, and shinty was played with "great pleasure" upon the sand at low tide: the decay of these arts and the disappearance of this buoyant spirit were two of the several changes brought about by closer contacts with the mainland.

At the close of the seventeenth century, Martin estimated the population of St. Kilda at 180 persons: the community traded mainly in feathers, but its possessions included 18 horses and 90 cows, and although the houses were tiny and the people very poor, yet the community struck Martin as being hospitable and vigorous. By 1840 the population had dropped to about 110 persons, but as has already been indicated, the resources of the island were probably better organised than at any other time in its history, and in return for feathers, oil, cheese, barley and cloth (Seton 1878:132), the islanders received sugar, tea, tobacco, and wooden and metal goods; as a community they were still vigorous and self-reliant. By the 1880's, however, the position was very much changed, for the population had fallen below 70, the area under cultivation was rapidly declining, gifted boats were largely unused, and the people were fast becoming dependent upon a substantial measure of charity: the sequel to this sad decline was the evacuation of the population (numbering only 43) in 1930. The reasons leading to the decline and extinction of the St. Kildan community, were essentially similar to those that have operated elsewhere in the world against lonely, primitive subsistence groups. The St. Kildans of Neil MacKenzie's time had come to terms with their environment, but closer contact with the Scottish mainland produced fatal changes in the outlook and structure of the community.

Basically St. Kilda and the adjacent islands were managed

as a tiny commonwealth, and although this did not mean that there was an equal division of wealth between the people, they certainly seem to have been strongly motivated by socialist principles: lands and other properties were shared by the community, and when the village was replanned in the 1830's, care was taken to lay out field-strips of equal size. On the other hand, Martin and Macaulay make it quite clear that the people ranked differently in regard to the possession of both land and goods: possession of land was the key factor, for upon this was based a share of the fowling rocks (Macaulay 1764:147), a space in the boat (Martin 1698:115), a share of the birds killed on the stacks (Martin 1698:41), and even an allocation of cleits upon the main island; Macaulay (1764:125) also writes of the St. Kildans as being divided into three classes according to the number of cattle held, a ranking that would again relate directly to the area of land possessed. There can be no certainty as to how the lands came to be owned un-equally, but there is just a hint from Martin (1698:28) that it came about in time through hereditary succession, assisted too by fluctuations in population. It would be unwise, however, to attach much significance to differences in land-ownership; no specific mention is made of acreages, and it is difficult to see how marked inequalities could have survived the procedure of reallocating lands every three years (Martin 1698:96). There is, however, plenty of evidence to support the claim that St. Kilda was managed on commonwealth lines; the shieling grazings and the sea-stacks were treated as common property, as were also the corn-kiln, boats and climbing ropes (Martin 1698:102-15); except for buildings belonging to the church and the factor, all dwellings, cleits and walls were built to standard patterns; and activities such as sheep-shearing, harvesting and gannet-hunting were treated as group enter-prises. Whenever necessary, which might be every day of the week except for Sunday, the men-folk met together to discuss and decide upon the programme of work (Macaulay 1764:149; Mathieson 1928:79), but this provided no assurance whatever that work would be carried out expeditiously; Mathieson (1928:79) remarks that discussion was liable to continue throughout the entire morning, and MacKenzie (1911:8-10) was from time to time discouraged by the "lack of thorough-ness" of these "everlasting talkers"—the men! From all accounts it appears that the St. Kildan women were much the more industrious sex, since, in addition to their domestic

duties, they tended and milked the cows and the ewes, assisted in sheep-driving, engaged in spinning, hay-making and corn-grinding, and were the bearers of turf and water; they frequently engaged in puffin-snaring on St. Kilda in the summer, and periodically some of them would accompany the men to Soay or Boreray to help gather sea-birds' eggs. Work that belonged more exclusively to the men included cultivation, sheep-shearing, fulmar and gannet fowling, turf-cutting, thatching, building, weaving and tailoring. Environment and the economy of the community had much to do with this division of work between the sexes: climbing, fowling, sheep-shearing and building were operations that required a man's physical strength, whereas the bearing of heavy loads of turf and water was a task which better suited the female physique; it was convenient too, that the women should be primarily responsible for the work at the shieling in the summer, since the men were thus free to depart on fowling and fishing excursions whenever season, weather and tide were favourable. Inevitably therefore the tendency was for the routine tasks to fall to the women, and thus it may have come about that they gained a reputation for diligence, which contrasted with that of the men for dilatoriness.

Organised in this fashion and living in the harsh environment of St. Kilda, the community could only continue to exist as an independent group while certain conditions prevailed. Numbers and physical vigour were first essentials: as long as the population exceeded 100 it was possible to carry on a full round of activities, and various parties could all be engaged separately and at once hunting gannets on Borera, catching puffins on St. Kilda, cutting turfs on Oiseval, and digging ground in the village enclosure. It is obvious that these activities required fit and able men, and as soon as the population fell in numbers, the availability of teams of able men was reduced; inevitably therefore the tempo of life slackened and productivity declined. A population of 110, which seems to have been the approximate number between 1800 and 1850 (Seton 1878:143), gave a male working force of about 25 persons; but a drop to 70 as in 1871 reduced the male working strength to only just over a dozen[7]: thus the plague of smallpox in 1724 and the emigration of 36 people in 1856 seriously depleted the little island force, and although immigration from the Hebrides brought recovery from the smallpox losses, the 1856 emigration was a fatal blow. Another condition attached

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to life on St. Kilda was that the community should work steadily as well as vigorously, and in a fashion suited to the environmental conditions, and it is evident that a lead in such matters could be of great assistance. Neil MacKenzie obviously gave the St. Kildans a superb lead and was able not only to direct their efforts, but was probably the means of stimulating them to make such efforts: left to themselves they evidently tended to procrastinate and dally (MacKenzie 1911:8 and 22), taking advantage of fine weather to enjoy the pleasure and interest of a social gathering. There were occasions, however, when the St. Kildans were saddled with ministers of the Church who failed to understand either the nature of the island or the problems of the people, and thus in 1887 a point was reached when holy worship during the week interfered seriously with daily work. It was about this time in the late nineteenth century that the folk of St. Kilda greatly needed wise counsel and experienced encouragement, since they were then being subjected to various pressures applied in different ways from the outside world. Through trade they had begun to taste of the luxuries outside St. Kilda, and some through travel and all by report had learned of the comforts and opportunities offered by life on the mainland: at the same time visitors to the island adopted the habit of making gifts to the islanders, and invariably took back to Scotland dreadful reports of St. Kildan poverty. Accordingly from about 1860 onwards, relief measures were taken quite frequently either by the Government, the Church, or by individuals, which were at first confusing to the St. Kildans, and which latterly quite undermined their moral and economic viability. In the giving of gifts and in the application of relief measures, it does not seem to have been realised that the recipients had in fact little sense of property and small knowledge of economic workings outside their little island. Thus it was on a number of counts that the community of St. Kilda lost its self-reliance, and in due course thereafter its identity.

The question that finally springs to mind, is whether the St. Kildan community could have survived into this present age? As a community the answer must surely be "No", unless the community was prepared to accept a very low standard of living indeed. It is doubtful whether even a small group of healthy persons could to-day live independently on St. Kilda, always supposing too, that they were prepared to live a simple, hard and isolated life, foregoing the social advantages and

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material comforts of modern civilisation. The availability of perhaps 25 acres of arable land, and about 1,000 acres of rough grazing, provides the basis for a mixed stock farm, in which case an income could be expected from the sale of cattle, sheep and wool; but considering the poor prices currently payable to mainland crofters, and remembering the difficulty of wintering stock and the different aspects of the transport problem, it is certain that the income obtained would be wholly inadequate to meet the costs of maintenance and equipment. Life could only be rated as existence—and a very lonely existence at that. St. Kilda, which required that man should develop a unique economy for his survival, more than ever asserts its lonely independence, and will accept modern man only so long as he can maintain himself by contact with foreign sources of supply. Realising this to be the case, and viewing the appalling cliffs upon which the St. Kildans were so dependent, one cannot but be struck with admiration for the generations of men and women who, defying the elements, lived and worked on this isolated, rocky outpost in the deeps of the Atlantic.

The grip of St. Kilda on human emotions might not be so great, but for the traces of human occupance that meet the eye upon the island. The neat little crescent of houses, the homely cluster of church buildings, and the scatter of cleits through the infield and away up on to the sweeping hill slopes— all these fire one with a longing to see the St. Kildans back home again upon their island. Such a wish has a happy quality about it, perhaps simply because it is essentially of a romantic nature, but it is important that one should try to see things in the true light of reality; the poverty of the people, their primitive ignorance, and their helplessness in the face of illness and death —all these were St. Kilda too!

Surely then it is better to accept the march of events. When we remember these hardy, simple, island folk, let us remember them at their best, picturing them upon the cliffs, at work upon the cleits which stand in memory of them, and wending their way along the village street to the tiny church where they gathered as a community in simple faith and fellowship.

Macaulay Institute for Soil Research for his willing co-operation in the pollen analysis of soil samples. The author would also like to record his appreciation of the friendly and helpful discussions that were held with the late Dr. A. M. Cockburn.

NOTES

1 The references given at the end of this article are selective and in no wise form a complete bibliography of St. Kilda.

2 After c. 1900 trawlers called periodically to shelter in Village Bay, sometimes bringing mail and often leaving small loads of coal.

3 It is notable that it was unnecessary to exaggerate the vertical scale when constructing Fig. 3. This is unusual and is directly attributable to the height and steepness of the hills of St. Kilda.

4 The term "Village Bay" is commonly used in two different senses: it applies strictly to the actual bay itself, but it has also come to be used to describe the shelf of land which stretches up from the shore, and upon which was sited the village of St. Kilda.

5 References relating to St. Kildan work and equipment are too numerous to give in full, without ruining the continuity of the text. The majority of the evidence has been gathered from the accounts of Macaulay, MacKenzie, Martin and Seton.

6 Many people have doubted whether the St. Kildans succeeded in killing tens of thousands of sea-birds annually: MacKenzie (1911:48) queried Martin's figures (1698:106 and 115). Thus it is worth noting that in Kearton's time (1897:81), Angus Gillies took 620 puffins in the course of one day with only a fowling-rod!

7 The number of males on St. Kilda was consistently less than the number of females; the reasons for this were a higher accident rate and a lesser measure of longevity. Thus the male working strength was always less than the total population figure would suggest.

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Maps by the author and Miss Margaret Bodie ; photographs by the author, except for Plate I, fig. 2 and Plate IV, which are by Ian Whitaker, May 1957.

EDITOR'S NOTE

This is the first of two articles arising from the School of Scottish Studies expedition to St. Kilda in 1957, financed by the Russell Trust on behalf of the National Trust for Scotland. In Part 2 (October 1960) of this volume Professor Ian Whitaker will deal with ethnographical aspects of St. Kildan life.

NORSE PLACE-NAMES IN SOUTH-WEST SCOTLAND

W. F. H. Nicolaisen *

INTRODUCTION

In the Scandinavian contribution to Scottish river-nomen-clature, we can distinguish at least three different subdivisions. The first two become apparent when the geographical distribution of various elements of Norse origin is examined; one contains elements to be found in all areas where Norsemen settled, like ON. *ā* "a river", the other comprises those that show a more limited geographical scatter, like *gro*<ON. *grōf* "brook, pit, cave" in the island of Lewis, and *beck*<ON. *bekkr* "burn" in SW. Scotland. The third group consists of Scandinavian generic terms which did not directly enter into Scottish hydronymy but probably found their way into the names of Scottish water-courses as Scots or Gaelic loan-words from Norse; examples of this last category would be Scots *grain*<ON. *grein* "a branch" which occurs only in southern and eastern Scotland (thus partly qualifying for group two), and Gaelic *lón*<ON. *lōn* "quiet water" (for a more detailed study of the latter see Nicolaisen 1958:196-8).

Only the second of these groups which are ultimately of Scandinavian origin, is to concern us here, i.e. the category comprising certain name-clusters with a very limited geographical scatter; of these the relevant examples from the Western and Northern Isles are to be left aside so that we can devote the space at our disposal to the group of names of which the above ON. *bekkr* is representative, but certain names of the *grain*-variety will also have to be examined. *Beck*-names occur in the very south of Scotland, seemingly exclusively in LAN, ROX, KCB, and particularly in DMF; they appear to form a unit with others in *beck*, as they are found in the adjacent north-western counties of England as well as in other parts of England where Scandinavians settled (Yorkshire, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk), and this seems to indicate

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either that Norsemen belonging to the same group of settlers also came to those parts of Scotland in which *beck*-names occur or that the hydronymic usage of that term spread to these parts in post-Scandinavian times.

It is the object of this article to undertake further examination and clarification of this provisional statement about our Scottish *beck*-names and to find out how much research into place-names can contribute to the study of Norse settlement in SW. Scotland and its linguistic impact on that part of the British Isles. In this respect, it is advisable not to attempt too much and to restrict this inquiry to one aspect of the subject. For this reason, detailed analyses of individual place-names will be kept to a minimum and special emphasis will be placed on the geographical distribution of certain toponymical elements which seem to be ultimately of Scandinavian origin, in our area.

It is obvious that the evidence of our Scottish *beck*-names alone cannot carry sufficient weight to support or refute either of the two alternatives briefly outlined above. Their distribution may be striking enough from the point of view of hydronymic research in Scotland and may to a certain extent indicate the kind of result to be expected from an investigation of the wider field, but in order to be able to state these results with anything approaching definitive certainty, other elements depicting geographical features other than water-courses will have to be searched for in and near the area covered by our group of stream-names.

Quite a number of categories—apart from individual names of Scandinavian origin—offer themselves for investigation. It remains to select the most suitable and numerically most prolific in order to have a fairly dense network of names and to avoid drawing conclusions from insufficient evidence. Guided by this principle of selection this study will include names in -*by*, representing names of human settlements, names in -*fell*, as examples of mountain-names, names in -*thwaite*, showing the impact of human activities on the region and at the same time supplying another of the so-called West Scandinavian "test-words", the other being *bekkr* itself. Finally, one group of what has come to be known as "inversion compounds", i.e. Germanic compound names showing Celtic word-order with the defining element coming last, will be discussed; this group of names will be represented by names beginning with *Kirk*-.

This means that names containing elements like -*holm*

(<ON. *holmr*), -*garth* (<ON. *garðr*), -*gill* (< ON. *gil*), -*grain* (< ON. *grein*) or -*dale* (<ON. *dalr*) will have to be excluded although there are many examples of them, especially of the *holm-* and *gill*-names, in our region.

Printed sources for this kind of investigation are not numerous; they include Sir Herbert Maxwell's *Place-Names of Galloway* (Glasgow 1930), Colonel Sir Edward Johnson-Ferguson's *Place-Names of Dumfriesshire* (Dumfries 1935), David Christison's article "On the Geographical Distribution of certain Place-Names in Scotland" (*Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* 1892-3); in addition, there is an excellent thesis by Miss May Williamson on *The Non-Celtic Place-Names of the Scottish Border Counties* which, although successfully submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in 1943, has unfortunately never found its way into print and lies in typescript form in Edinburgh University Library. For the English side of our problem the appropriate volumes of the English Place-Names Society are referred to, as well as Sedgefield's *Place-Names of Cumberland and Westmorland* (Manchester 1915), Ekwall's *Place-Names of Lancashire* (Manchester 1922), Mawer's *The Place-Names of Northumberland and Durham* (Cambridge 1920), and Moorman's *Place-Names of the West Riding of Yorkshire* (Leeds 1910), which cover counties not so far included in the series of the EPNS. Above all, however, this study is greatly profiting from consultation of the alphabetical index to the archives of our own Scottish Place-Name Survey which, as it is geared to the National Grid as used by the more recent editions of the Ordnance Survey, provides the necessary references to the co-ordinates of that network and thus makes the drawing of fairly accurate distribution maps of Scottish place-names possible, practically for the first time. At present, however, it is limited in so far as it only contains all the names mentioned on the one-inch Ordnance Survey maps and excludes all additional ones that might be found on the more detailed six-inch sheets or in oral tradition. Although incomplete, the collection used here is sufficiently comprehensive to show the overall pattern, and only minor adjustments should be necessary after a thorough scrutiny of the six-inch maps.

As geographical distribution and its implications become much more real and are much more easily understood when seen by the eye rather than when only explained in numerical proportions and percentages, the selected names have been plotted on maps which form the basis of the discussion below.

Unfortunately, the picture is incorrect and perhaps even slightly misleading is so far as—with the exception of the *Kirk*-names—these maps only show the geographical scatter of our names inside Scotland because the English material is not yet available in the same way, i.e. in the form of alphabetical indexes containing all names mentioned on the English one-inch maps, complete with grid-reference. The cut at the Scottish border is, of course, unnatural and it is hoped to discuss the combined English and Scottish evidence in a later and more comprehensive paper, based on fuller distribution maps. At present, the scatter of these place-name elements in England can only be hinted at and the figures given on the maps for the various counties will have to serve as a temporary substitute.

We will now examine the geographical distribution of the five selected elements in more detail.

(a) ON. *bekkr* "a stream"

The first map (Fig. 1) indicates the distribution of the Scottish *beck*-names, point of departure of this little study. Although they are found in four counties—DMF, ROX, LAN, and KCB—they form geographically a much closer cluster than such an enumeration indicates, with DMF forming the centre and the examples from the other counties situated just across the DMF-border. In most cases, the names still apply to water-courses, in others they now serve as names of human settlements on the banks of these streams as well, or as those alone. In others again they have become part of the name of another geographical feature, like *Elbeckhill* in the parish of Wamphray DMF. The defining elements in these names are usually of non-Scandinavian origin, mostly Anglo-Saxon but also Norman, as in *Butcherbeck Burn* (*Bochardbech* ante 1329 Duke of Buccleuch MSS.), and Gaelic, as in *Gille-martinebech* of 1194-1214 *ibid.*, now "lost", or *Craigbeck*. Some Scandinavian elements occur, as for instance in *Allerbeck* whose earlier form *Elrebec* (*c.* 1218 *ibid.*) points to an original ON. *elri bekkr*, or possibly in *Fishbeck* and *Greenbeck* where *Fish-* and *Green-* might represent the Scandinavian cognate rather than the Anglo-Saxon word. For our own investigation it suffices to say that genuinely Scandinavian compound names in *-beck*, i.e. compounds in which the preceding element is also Norse, do occur in our region which means that speakers of a Scandinavian language or languages must have settled here.

The majority of names, i.e. those with defining elements other than Norse, is more difficult to assess. The question is whether they indicate that a Norse language was still spoken up to and after the Norman invasion or whether the word *beck* passed into the local Lowland Scots dialect and remained productive in this way. I think that there are probably examples

Fig. I :

PLACE-NAMES in -beck
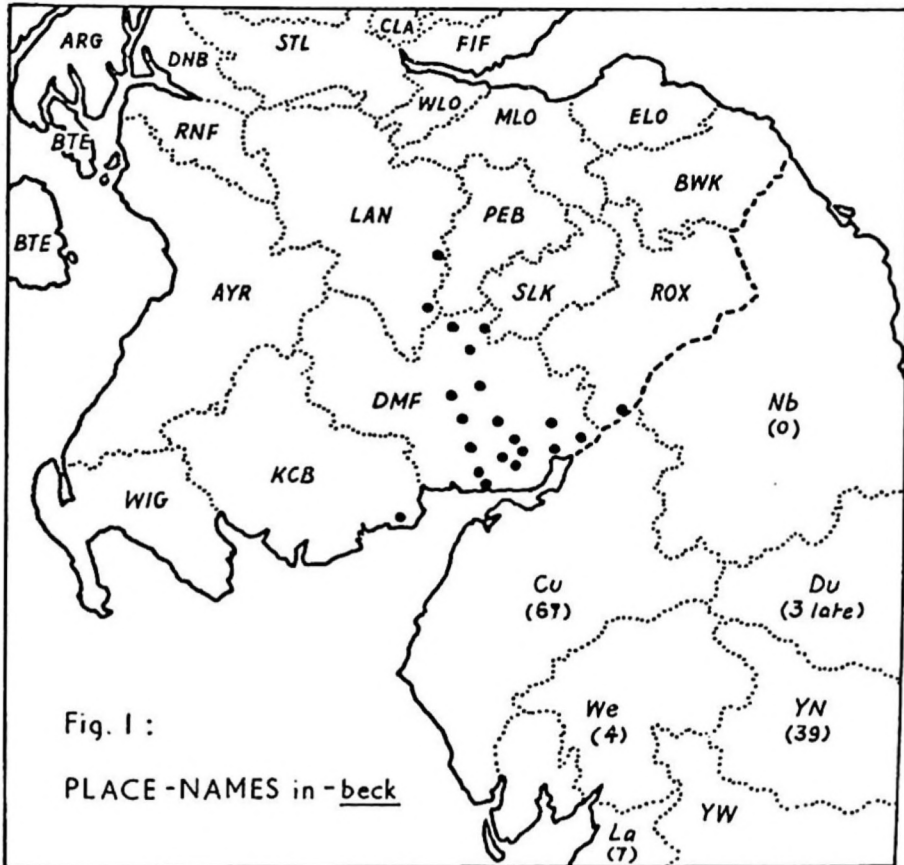
illustrative of both sides of this question: *Beck*-names containing Anglo-Saxon or Gaelic personal names, like *Archerbeck* and the "lost" *Gillemartinebech*, may have been coined by Norsemen living in the neighbourhood of these streams, and even *Bochardbech* may belong here. On the other hand, names like *Mere Beck*, *Kings Beck*, *Muckle Hind Becks*, *Muirbeck*, and such as *Beckfoot*, *Beckhall*, *Beckton*, and *Beck Burn*, with tautological addition of Scots *burn*, are indicative of the second alternative and must have been created by English rather than Scandinavian speakers. Even *Craigbeck* may contain the Scots loan-word *craig* rather than its Gaelic original, and in *Allerbeck*

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the Anglo-Saxon term replaced the Norse one as we have seen above. We do well, however, to bear in mind that neither the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* nor the *Scottish National Dictionary* mentions a word *beck* in the meaning of "stream, water-course", and it may well be that this word was never really established in local dialect usage, something which cannot be said of the North of England where, in some districts, *beck* has replaced earlier *burn* in toponymical and appellative usage. Alternatively, *beck* may have been obsolete in the local Dumfriesshire dialect by the time our, rather scanty, early literary sources begin.

On the English side, according to A. H. Smith (1956:I,26), *bekkr* "is extensively used throughout the Danelaw and the North Country (except for Nb), taking the place of *brōc* and *burna*". In this respect, compare for instance the name *Linburn Beck* Du, with pleonastic usage of *beck* (Mawer 1920:XIX), with the above *Beck Burn* KCB. There are at least 67 instances of *beck*-names in the neighbouring Cumberland where it is said to be "the most common stream-name element among names which have survived" (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:498), and 4 in Westmorland. The North Riding of Yorkshire shows 39, and Lancashire has at least 7. There is also one in Derbyshire, just across the Yorkshire border. It has, on the other hand, "not been noted in early names in Nb and Du" (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:498; see also Mawer 1924:4). Marstrander (1932: 269) mentions *Claveg* and *Strenebeck* for the Isle of Man.

It is obvious that our Scottish *beck*-names in and near Dumfriesshire are part and parcel of this Northern English group of names containing the same element, and form the most northerly section of the more general *beck*-area. Further proof of this is to be found in the fact that there are identical equivalents on both sides of the border: The Scottish *Merebeck* has at least 3 equivalents in Cu and one in YN; apart from the *Troutbeck* in DMF there are 4 in Cu and one in We; *Ellerbecks* occur in Cu (4), La and YN, as well as in DMF, represented by the *Allerbeck* mentioned above, and by *Elbeckhill* whose first part is *Elrebec* in 1194 (Duke of Buccleuch MSS.); and *Butcherbeck* (*Bochardbech* ante 1329) links up with *Butcherby* in Cu.

In addition, the English examples show exactly the same kinds of compound as our Scottish instances: (1) Genuine Scandinavian names, (2) Names in which the first part of the compound is of Germanic but not of Norse origin, and (3) Names compounded with Norman-English elements. There

seems, however, to be a much higher percentage of names belonging to the first category, i.e. genuine Scandinavian names on the English side of the border, and our own Scottish names look as if they are, on the whole, a little later than their English counterparts. Only names in which the defining element is without doubt of Norse origin as well, can, of course, be taken as proof of Scandinavian settlement.

Fig. 2:

PLACE-NAMES in –bie , –by
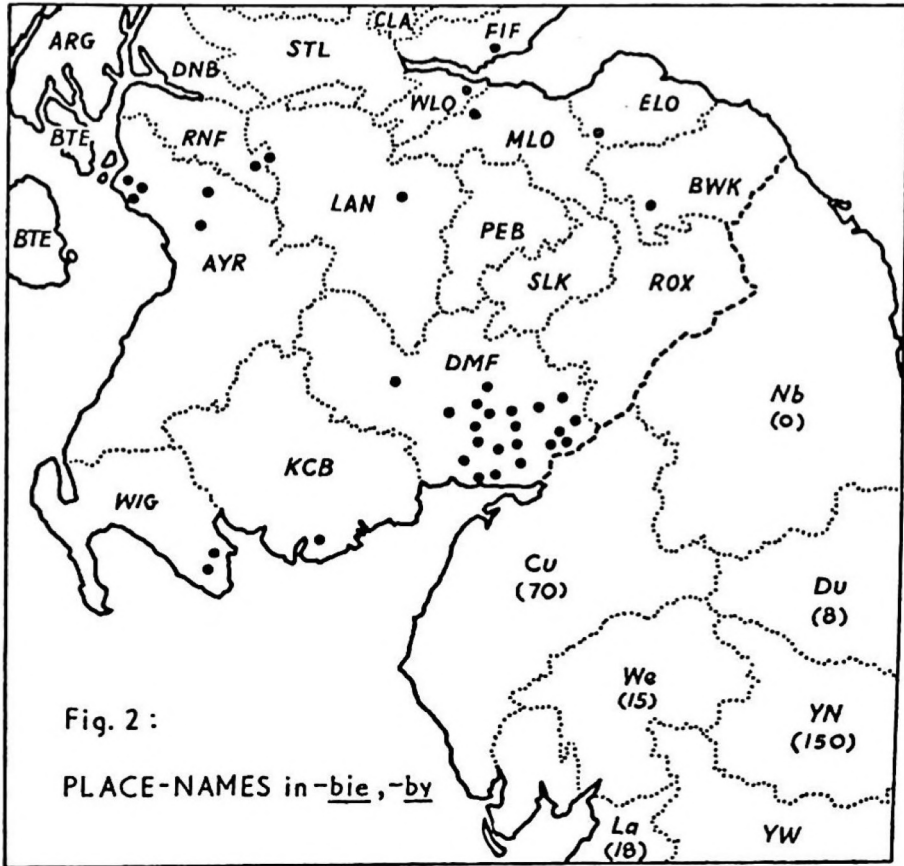
(b) ON. býr, bær "a farm-stead, a village"

We now proceed to examine names which denote primarily human settlements, and not water-courses. Of all the Scandinavian generic terms used in this connection, the element býr, bær is to be representative (Fig. 2), an element whose etymology and original meaning has been widely discussed (see, for instance, Smith 1956:I,66-72, for a summary and literature) but does not concern us here; it is sufficient to say that it is always connected with permanent buildings in our

area and could either be translated as "farm" or "hamlet" or "village", according to the size of the settlement.

As was the case with our *beck*-names, the Scottish stronghold of names in *-bie*, *-by* is DMF. We do, however, get a few scattered outliers in other parts, as the distribution map indicates, and there is a pronounced little cluster in Ayrshire, in the Ardrossan area. *Býr* also occurs in a few individual and apparently unconnected examples from Argyllshire and the Hebrides, as well as in Caithness, but as it has never been an important ingredient of the Norse contribution to the place-names of the Western Isles and the adjoining mainland, these have no direct bearing on our problem. MacBain lists most of them in his paper on "The Norse Element in the Topography of the Highlands and Islands" (MacBain 1895:224).

Apart from an almost identical geographical distribution of their main group, our Scottish *by*-names resemble *beck*-names in other respects. Their linguistic and lexical make-up shows very similar features, and again fully Scandinavian names stand side by side with names containing Anglo-Saxon, Norman and Gaelic elements, in particular personal names. Their English counterparts are numerous, and although more widespread than names containing *beck*, conform on the whole to the pattern outlined for them. The English counties of particular interest to us as centres of *beck*-names, are full of names containing *by*. YN has 150 of them, Cu has over 70; there are at least 15 in We, and La produces three more than this number; Db has a minimum of 10 *by*-names. Scottish-English identical equivalents are numerous, the most remarkable example being *Sowerby* which is on record in all the English counties mentioned, except We and Db, and appears twice in our area as *Sorbie*—one in DMF and one in WIG—and, in addition to two further instances from AYR and FIF (!), also occurs four times in ARG, including one example each from the islands of Mull and Tiree; *Surby* I.o.M. also belongs here (Marstrander 1932:111-12, 290). Perhaps the frequency of this particular name whose original form must have been an ON. *saur-býr* "mud village" or "swamp village", gives us an insight into the type of colonisation undertaken by the Scandinavian settlers responsible for all these names. If our interpretation is correct (see also Smith 1956:II,97), they speak of hard-working newcomers trying to make a living out of poor soil, under adverse conditions. (Or could *saurr* sometimes refer to the mud flats covered by water at high tide and dry at low

tide?) One other explanation must, however, be borne in mind, i.e. the one put forward by Guðmundsson for the Icelandic counterparts of our *Sowerbys*. Basing his argument on the opposition *saurr-sýr*, on the particular meaning "manure" which the word can have, on the significant distribution of the Icelandic examples, and on their association with the goddess Freyja, he thinks of them as centres of a fertility cult (Guð-mundsson 1942:58-69). If this interpretation can be confirmed, the importance of this group of names in the study of pagan religious practices amongst the Scandinavian settlers in this country would be extremely great.

Another common name is *Crosby* "cross-farm", attested for all the four English counties under consideration, and for the Isle of Man (Marstrander 1932:158, 270), and appearing on the Scottish map as *Corsby*—with metathesis—in WIG, AYR and BWK. The *Newbys* and *Al(d)bys* are common to both the Scottish south and the English north, and the DMF *Mumbie<Monkeby* 1552 (Bullock's Map of the Debateable Land on the West Borders), has its English counterpart in the Yorkshire *Monkby*, whereas WIG *Applebie* is paralleled by places of the same name in We and Db. There is quite a number of identical parallels of this kind (c.f. *Bombie*, *Canonbie*, *Denbie*, *Esbie*, etc.) which do not require discussion in this context. A notable absentee from the Scottish contingent is *Kirkby*.

The overall picture, however, is the same as that estab-lished above for names in *beck*. Again our Scottish group of names forms the northernmost part of a much wider scatter south of the border. They are by no means to be ascribed to the same stratum of settlers that created the few *by*-names in the Inner Hebrides and in ARG where this element is of no great significance whatever, unless it demonstrates the almost total absence of permanent buildings at that time, which is unlikely; for *beck*-names share the same fate in this region and this can hardly be due to the lack of water-courses of a suitable size. For our area in the very south of Scotland one could say, and particularly for DMF, that it is more than likely that the burn flowing past a *by*-place will be a *beck*.

(c) ON. *þveit* "a clearing, a meadow, a paddock"

It has proved to be unnecessary to plot the distribution of the third category of names under review, i.e. those containing the element ON. *þveit* "a clearing, a meadow, a paddock",

for apparently all the Scottish examples—and there are more than 30 of them—are to be found in DMF, and I do not know of a single instance outside that county, either amongst the still extant or the recorded but seemingly "lost" names. It must suffice to say that in our Scottish names this element usually occurs now as -*that* or -*what*, as in *Howthat*, *Murthat* and *Slethat* on the one hand, and *Robiewhat* and *Thorniewhats* on the other. *Murraythwaite* and *Thorniethwaite*, however, conform to the normal modern English end-product of names in *þveit*.

In England it occurs most frequently in our usual four counties, the figures being Cu about 80, We 30, La 40, YN 30; it is also common in the western parts of YW, but is rare in the remaining Danelaw counties for which Smith (1956:II,19) mentions 4 in YE and 7 in Nt; Db has another 7, three of them in field-names (Cameron 1959:III,709 and 752). The usual identical parallels are not infrequent, and on the whole *þveit*-names—there is apparently no example in the Isle of Man—neatly fit into the pattern drawn above. It is doubtful whether their particular geographical distribution is only due to the abundance of forest and waste-land in the north-west of England, as Smith maintains (1956:II,219). Undoubtedly it is connected with this geographical condition but, in addition, the particular type of settler, i.e. his way of conquering unprofitable land and of increasing his area of land under cultivation, must be taken into account too, a settler who, as far as can be established, seems to have been the same who built the *bys* and called the streams near them *becks*. As is the case with *by* and *beck*, *thwaite* must have been productive as a place-name element for many a century and can probably tell us very little about the immediate and direct linguistic impact of the first Scandinavian settlers on the regions in which it occurs. This is particularly true of the English north where it is still alive in the regional dialects in the meaning of "a forest clearing", although the south of Scotland does not seem to share this dialect usage. Like *beck* and *by*, *thwaite* enters into many a hybrid compound which might have been formed at any time after the Anglicisation of the Scandinavian settlement area. Its very limited geographical distribution is, however, of considerable significance, even if it only indicates the borders of the area where, for a time, it penetrated into the active local dialect vocabulary; unless, of course, its usage was restricted to place-names in this part without any reflection in local living speech at any time.

(d) ON. *fjall, fell* "a hill, a mountain"

From the water-courses, the human habitations and the results of human colonisation and cultivation, we now proceed to the mountainous regions of our area and consider a term particularly applied to hills, ON. *fell* or *fjall*. This appears in South and South-West Scotland as *fell*, and there are numerous instances of it, as can be seen from Fig. 3. One look

Fig. 3.

PLACE-NAMES in -<u>fell</u>
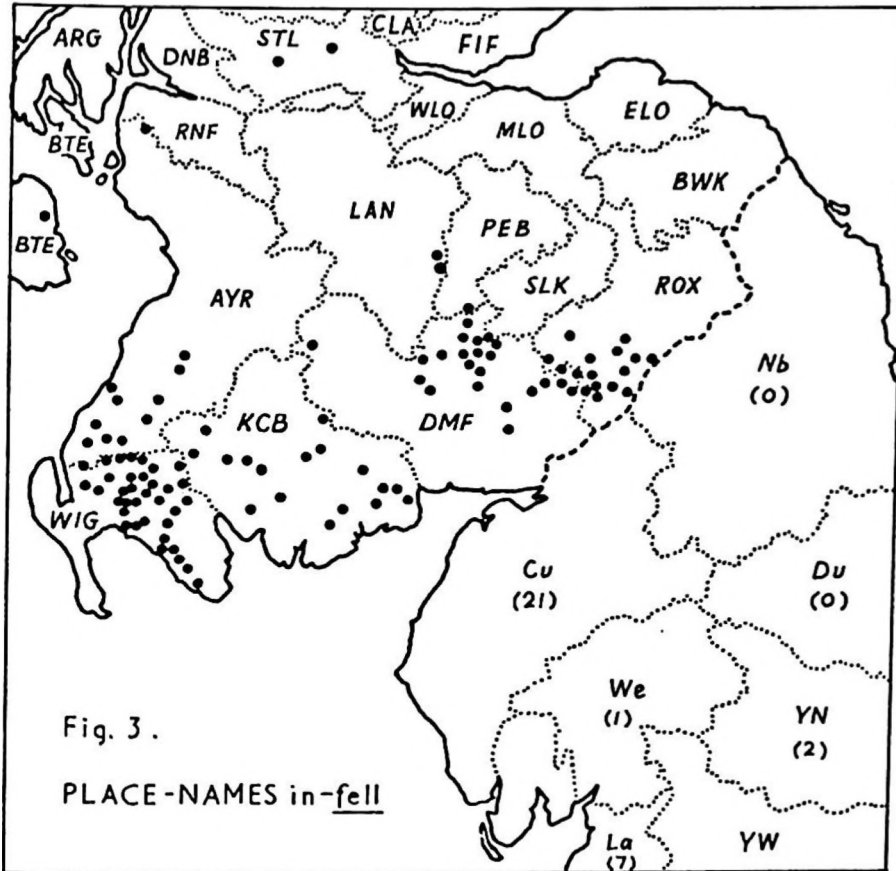
at the map shows that *fells* are much more widely distributed over our part of Scotland than the three categories which we have discussed so far. The different emphasis, however, is worth noting. Particularly striking is the large number of instances in WIG, as well as the frequent occurrence of this element in KCB. There are no *becks* and no *þveits* in these two counties, and only 3 *bys* is coastal districts meagrely represent an element so common in other areas once occupied by Scandinavians.

Not unexpectedly, Cu furnishes the highest number of *fell-*

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names in England; the EPNS volume lists 21 of them (Armstrong *et al.* 1952:472), whereas La has 7, YN 2, and We shares one with Cu; there are none in Nb and Du. In the Isle of Man we have *Snaefell, Stockfield* and *Masool* (Marstrander 1932:270-1).

It looks as if only very few of the names containing this element can be said to go back to Scandinavian settlers themselves. Very often the first element is the name of another geographical feature in the vicinity, in many cases of English or Gaelic origin, which gave its name to the *fell*, amongst them *Balmurrie Fell* and *Glenkitten Fell* in WIG and *Ewenshope Fell* in DMF. Even *Borgue Fell* WIG probably belongs to these later names although *Borgue* is, of course, purely Scandinavian itself, going back to an original ON. *borg* "a fort, a stronghold, a fortified hill, a fort-shaped hill". However, *Borgue Fell* is not an original compound dating from the time of early Scandinavian settlers but *Borgue* had already been in use as a well-established place-name before the hill was called after it. It is quite possible that this *fell* was the original *borg*, the "fortified or fort-shaped hill", that gave its name to the human settlement nearby. An exact parallel is the place-name *Burrow* < *Borg* (Marstrander 1932:266) in the Isle of Man.

The English examples show similar signs of lateness, although Gaelic elements are completely lacking, of course, and it seems that—as was to a lesser extent the case with *beck*—here we have to deal with a toponymical element whose ultimate Scandinavian origin cannot be doubted but which passed into the local dialect as a loan-word before becoming one of the distinctive features of the place-nomenclature of South and South-West Scotland, as well as of North-West England. Only when Lowland Scots began to supersede Gaelic in the south-west, did this element enter Wigtownshire toponymy and did it reach the North Channel in a westward movement. Nevertheless, its seedbed must again have been the area straddling the Solway Firth, i.e. the Scottish county of Dumfries and the English county of Cumberland. The earliest example on record mentioned by the *Dictionary* of *the Older Scottish Tongue*, stems from 1448, and the *Scottish National Dictionary* quotes literary examples from the beginning of this century.

ON. *fell, fjall* is, of course, a well-known feature of the hill nomenclature of the Hebrides where it normally appears as *-val*, but also as *-al* usually after *s(h)*. Examples would be

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Liaval (Lewis), *Bleaval* (Harris), *Eaval* (North Uist), *Stulaval* (South Uist), *Hartaval* (Barra), *Heishival* (Vatersay), *Roineval* (Skye), *Orval* (Rum), *Oiseval* (St. Kilda), and on the other hand *Roishal*, *Uishal* (Lewis), *Haarsal* (South Uist), *Preshal* (Skye), and *Minishal* (Rum). It also occurs in the Northern Isles where its reflexes are often *Field* in Shetland (cf. *Fugla Field*, *Hamara Field*, *Mid Field*, *Tonga Field*, *Valla Field*) and *Fiold* in Orkney (cf. *Fibla Fiold*, *Low Fiold*, *Sand Fiold*, *Vestra Fiold*), but these instances are unconnected with *fell* as we find it in South and South-West Scotland (apart from their ultimate etymological identity, of course).

(*e*) "Inversion Compounds" in *Kirk-*

The last group of names to be examined in connection with the subject of this paper not only contains a certain Norse place-name element, namely *kirkja* "a church", but also illustrates a phenomenon which in linguistic circles has come to be known as "inversion compound", i.e. a Germanic compound name showing Celtic word-order. This is a phenomenon to which Professor Ekwall practically devoted the whole of his monograph on "Scandinavians and Celts in North-West England" (Ekwall 1918).

Apart from having produced the current Scots equivalent of English *church*, *kirkja* does, of course, feature in Scottish place-names in the normal way in cases like *Whitekirk* ELO, *Muirkirk*, AYR, *Mearnskirk* RNF, *Falkirk* STL, *Brydekirk* DMF, *Ashkirk* SLK, and *Selkirk* itself, where it is preceded by the defining element. It is also extremely common as a defining element and is then followed by the generic term, as in *Kirk Burn* LAN, *Kirkcleuch* DMF, *Kirkhill* ABD, and many others, but these are genuine Germanic compounds which do not fall into the category under discussion. We are also not concerned with the type *Kirkliston* WLO, *Kirknewton* MLO, *Kirk Yetholm* ROX, etc., which is paralleled by names like *Kirk Deighton*, *Kirk Hammerton* and *Kirk Leavington* in Yorkshire; these are, in a way, shortened versions of the more elaborate **Kirktown of Liston*, **Kirktown of Newton*, etc., or of some such fuller name, although they may be structurally allied to our group of names.

What does interest us here is the type *Kirkbryde* WIG and KCB, when there is *Brydekirk* in DMF, or *Kirkoswald* in AYR, when there is *Oswaldkirk* in YN. Both these names actually have exact parallels in Cumberland. But even if they cannot

be compared with examples of "normal" Germanic word-order, names compounded of other saints' names and *kirk* nevertheless qualify for our category, and instances like *Kirkchrist, Kirkcolm, Kirkcowan* in WIG, and *Kirkanders, Kirkcormack* and *Kirkcudbright* in KCB belong here. With regard to them, it has been possible to plot all the Scottish and English examples on the map (Fig. 4). It is absolutely clear from this

Fig. 4.
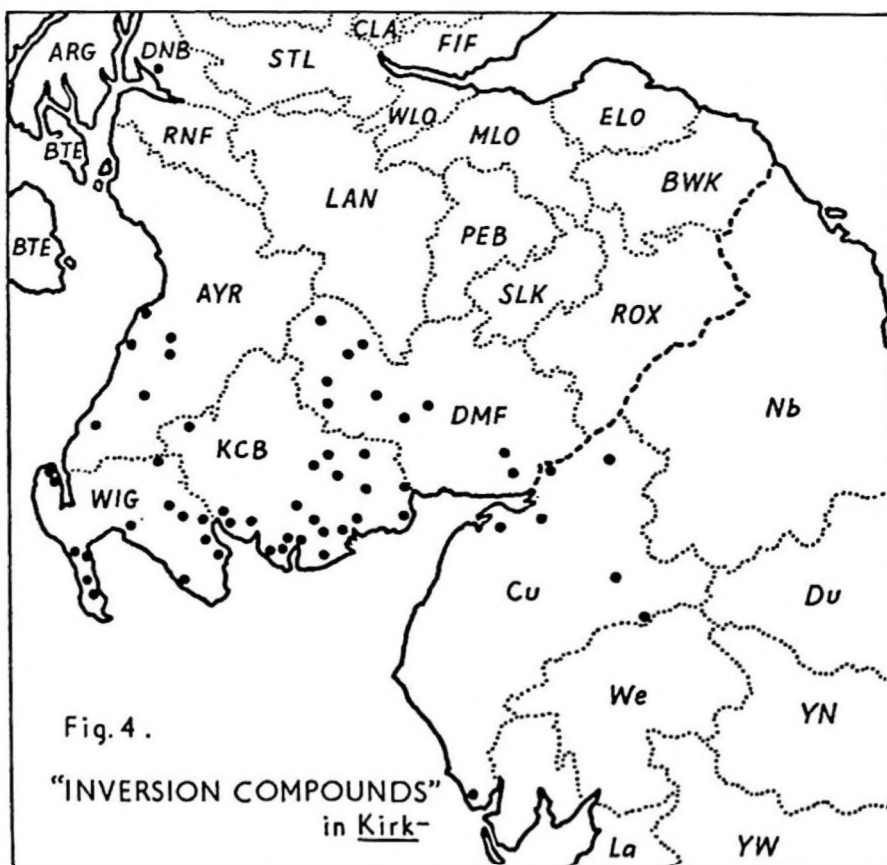
"INVERSION COMPOUNDS"
in Kirk-

distribution that these names are limited to the south-west of Scotland and to the very north-west of England, but their scatter significantly differs from that of names in *beck, by, þveit,* and *fell*. Whereas these latter name-groups form rather extreme and small appendices to the large bulk of English names containing the same elements, "inversion compounds" with *Kirk-* show exactly the opposite distribution of weight. They are essentially a south-west Scottish feature, with a few scattered additional instances from the English county immediately adjacent to that part of Scotland. The emphasis lies no

longer on DMF but on WIG and KCB, and practically all the names are to be found in coastal districts or in easily accessible river-valleys. As Macqueen pointed out in his admirable paper on "Kirk- and Kil- in Galloway Place-Names" (Macqueen 1956), the linguistic background of the Galloway names in *Kirk-* is predominantly Gaelic. He comes to the conclusion that Gaelic must have been established in Galloway before the Norse settlement began. He does, however, reckon with the simultaneous arrival of Norse and Gaelic speakers in Galloway, and it looks as if, to a certain extent, these may have been responsible for the creation of the first of these "inversion compounds" in *Kirk-*. It seems to be equally clear, on the other hand, that not every *kirk*-name of this type goes back to these early times, say the early tenth century. Macqueen himself considers the possibility of *Kirkmaiden*, *Kirkmadrine* and *Kirkmabreck*, which contain *mo* "my", being part translations of an earlier **Kilmaiden*, **Kilmadrine*, **Kilmabreck* and assumes (1956:142) these translations to have been made "by Scandinavians acquainted with Irish and the function of *mo*", at an early date. This may be so, but when one of the *Kirkbrides* in the Rhinns of Galloway is still locally known as *Kilbride*, and when *Kirkcormack* KCB is sometimes *Kilcormack* in records (Macqueen 1956:141) and *Kirkpatrick* (*-Fleming*) appears as both *Kirkepatric* in 1189 (Bain's Calendar I,197) and *Kilpatrick* in 1296 (*ibid.* II,198), it is difficult to imagine that our *Kirk*-names always go back to the earliest period of Scandinavian, or rather Norse-Irish settlement from Ireland. A similar case is *Kirkdominie* in AYR, which is on record as *Kildomine* in 1404 in a MS. charter in the possession of the Earl of Cassillis, according to Chalmers who had no doubt (1824:539) that *Kil*-domine was afterwards changed to *Kirk*-domine. In 1541 the Register of the Great Seal refers to a *Kilquhonell* in Garrick, which takes its place beside the *Kirkconnels* of DMF and KCB.

Examples from other parts of Scotland support this consideration, although purely documentary evidence is not always conclusive; according to Watson (1904:121), *Kirkmichael*, in ROS was known in Gaelic as *Cill Mhicheil*, and Ekwall states (1918:57) that the old name of the parish of Strath in Skye used to be *Kilchrist* or *Christiskirk* in 1505 (see also Mackinlay 1904:84, and Forbes 1923:223), but was *Kirkchrist* in 1574. *Kilmorie* in the island of Arran, is, again according to Ekwall (1918:57), *Kilmory* in 1483 but *Kyrkmorich* in 1595, and from Jackson's book on Manx phonology (Jackson 1955:

84) we learn that one of his informants calls *Kirk Bride* in the Isle of Man, *Killey Bridey*; similar Manx versions seem to have prevailed for all the *kirk*-names in the Isle of Man as long as Manx was extensively spoken in the island (Moore 1890: 204-13; Kneen 1925:7, 61, etc.).

It appears to be self-evident from all this that we must expect to find a number of late part-translations amongst our *Kirk*-names in which *Kirk-* transplanted *Kil-*. Other *Kirk*-names may have been formed at a later date following an established pattern. Some may be much later than the time during which a Scandinavian language was still current in our area. Sometimes the second element may provide some clue as to the originators of a certain *Kirk*-name. The information it supplies may not always be of a linguistic nature, and that seems to be why linguists have paid so little attention to the hagiological implications of the saints' names that form the second parts of these compounds, apart from their linguistic analysis. Certainly, scholars like Watson, Mackinlay, and others, have identified most of the saints to whom the dedications expressed in our names were made, but as far as I am aware, these names have never been utilised in the identification of the linguistic people who created our "inversion compounds" in general, and those in *Kirk-* in particular. Names like *Kirkbride*, *Kirkcolm*, *Kirkconnel*, *Kirkcormack*, *Kirkmirran*, *Kirkpatrick*, etc. obviously point towards the Irish church, and *Kirkmabreck*, *Kirkmadrine*, and *Kirkmaiden* are just as clearly basically Gaelic in thought and construction. Even if such a form has not actually come down to us on record, we can more or less assume that the original first element in these names was *Kil-*, rather than *Kirk-*. These are essentially Gaelic names, with a Gaelic religious background, and there does not seem to be any reason why they should be attributed to Scandinavians, unless as part-translations adopted by Norse incomers when they reached this Gaelic speaking area. Even this possibility, however, seems to be less plausible than the explanation that *Kirk-* supplanted *Kil-* not in Scandinavian, but in Anglian mouths. In this respect, names like *Kirkoswald* and *Kirkcudbright* may be keys to a solution of this problem. Both, St. Oswald, the Northumbrian king and saint who was slain in 642, and St. Cuthbert, the influential seventh century missionary and Bishop of Lindisfarne who belonged to the Lothians or the Scottish Borders, are great figures of the church in the English north-east, and although their cults very probably reached South-West Scotland before the

arrival of the Scandinavians, one would hesitate to attribute the linguistic origin of these dedications to the Norse new-comers.

This does not mean that all *Kirk*-names of this kind are completely un-Scandinavian; it only implies that many of them may be post-Norse. They and other "inversion compounds" undeniably speak of linguistic contact between Scandinavian and Gaelic speaking people in our area, but do not necessarily prove that the Norse raiders and settlers imported this type of name from the Viking colonies in Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Hebrides from where they are supposed to have reached the shores of North-West England and South-West Scotland. There is, of course, the evidence of "inversion compounds" containing first elements other than *Kirk*-, a comprehensive list of which has been compiled by Ekwall (1918) for North-West England. A certain number of these is to be found in the part of Scotland under discussion. *Cross-raguel* in AYR, for instance, again points to a religious context (apart from its vicinity to *Kirkoswald*), and *Torthorwald* DMF, containing Gael. *tòrr* "a hill" and the ON. personal name *þorvaldr* (Williamson 1943:323), must have been coined by Gaelic speakers describing the property of a Scandinavian neighbour; this again stresses the fact that the inhabitants of our area at this time must have been predominantly Gaelic. A possible example of complete adaptation of the Gaelic principle of word-order is *Westerkirk* DMF, which is on record as *Wathstirkir* in 1305 in the Liber Sancte Marie de Melros; it is probably to be derived from ON. *vað* "a ford" and the pers. n. *Styrkárr* (Williamson 1943:324). There are others which cannot be analysed in detail here, but on the whole the Norse "inversion compound" which shows total adoption of the Gaelic principles of formation is the very rare exception rather than the rule.

In general, the Scandinavian impact on the place-nomenclature of our area is much purer and shows no signs of the strong influence of Goidelic speech on the language of the Norse immigrants which Ekwall claimed it to possess (1918: 51; 1924:33). Purely Norse names which show no trace of Irish influence whatever are, for example, *Borgue* KCB (*Borg* 1469 Register of the Great Seal) <ON. *borg* "a stronghold"; *Stoney-kirk* WIG (*Stennaker* 1534 Logan Papers) <ON. *steina aker* "field of stones"; *Applegarth* DMF (*Apilgirth* 1275 Registrum Episcopatum Glasguensis) <ON. *apaldr(s) garðr* "apple-orchard"

which has two identical parallels in Yorkshire (in all cases OE. *æppel* "Apple" has probably later replaced ON. *apaldr* "apple tree"); *Float* WIG (*Flot* 1540 Register of the Great Seal) < ON. *flǫt* "a piece of flat ground"; *River Fleet* KCB < ON. *fljót* "a river" (but possibly OE. *flēot* "an estuary"); *The Wig* WIG < ON. *vik* "a bay". In addition we have the four elements discussed above, as well as numerous other names containing either one or two Scandinavian words. The distribution and the importance of these elements may vary, but their ultimate connection with Scandinavian speaking immigrants cannot be denied.

It may be well, however, to remember Christison's observation (1893:280) "that many individual place-names may not have been introduced by the race from whose language they are derived. If the meaning of a convenient term is known to an intruding race, it may be adopted by them and continue to be spread to the present day. In this way probably a good many of the existing *Gills*, *Becks*, and *Grains*, for example, may have arisen".

SUMMARY

Summing up our preliminary and very tentative findings, we should like to stress again the fact that the distribution of the elements *bekkr*, *býr*, and *þveit* suggests close connection with a larger area south of the English border, particularly Cu, We, La, and YN. A substantial proportion of the names containing these elements may go back to the original Scandinavian immigrants, others must definitely be ascribed to later times, some of them post-Norman. The case of *fell* is slightly different in so far as this element does not seem to have entered the toponymy of our area during the early period of Scandinavian settlement, but rather as a local dialect word borrowed from Norse, peculiar to North-West England and South-West Scotland. In the latter part, it forms a later stratum in place-nomenclature, occurring in comparatively young formations and overlaying older Gaelic, Scandinavian and Anglian strata.

The names containing these elements are not due to Irish-Norse settlers from Ireland, but to a different stratum of Scandinavian settlement. It is difficult to believe that DMF should have been settled direct from Ireland or the Hebrides. It rather looks as if it was settled by Scandinavians a little later than the larger region in Northern England, when the Norse sphere of influence expanded. There is a certain West

Scandinavian flavour about these names—if "test-words" mean anything—but there is also *Denby* in DMF, which in 1304 (Bain's Calendar) is recorded as *Daneby*; this is paralleled by four *Danbys* in YN, and it looks as if we have to take into account a certain East Scandinavian element in the Norse population of these parts of the British Isles. The movement of this Norse settlement must have come from south and south-east of the Solway and from across the English border, rather than direct from across the Irish Sea. That, at least, seems to be the verdict of the place-name evidence in this area, as derived from our distribution maps.

The "inversion compounds" in *Kirk-* have to be interpreted differently. They cannot be separated from an essentially Gaelic background. Some of them may be attributable to Norsemen from Viking colonies in Ireland and in the Isle of Man, who reached Galloway and parts of Carrick from the early tenth century onwards and, seemingly, also settled in the extreme English north-west. One would like to exclude the Hebrides from the possible places of origin of these Scandinavian settlers, as, apart from the Skye example noted by Ekwall and quoted above, there does not seem to be the slightest indication of a development of a similar type of compound name. It is very likely that Gaelic speakers from Ireland arrived simultaneously with the Norse immigrants and introduced the Irish-Gaelic element in the nomenclature under review. This is an explanation also given by Ekwall (1940: XXI) in his modified statement on words and names of Irish-Gaelic origin in the north-west of England. The first *Kirk-*names, depicting dedications to Irish saints, and the widespread juxtaposition of *Kil-* and *Kirk-*names in the Scottish south-west, may be due to close linguistic contact between these two groups of settlers, as well as with the already existing Gaelic speaking inhabitants of the district. The first cases of substitution of *Kirk-* for *Kil-* (and *vice versa?*) may also be ascribed to this early period, but once the pattern had been established and once *kirk* had gained sufficient currency in the Anglian dialect of the district, the precise linguistic background of our *Kirk-*names becomes obscure and we must assume them to have been created, re-created and translated for a number of centuries, owing to this threefold linguistic contact Gaelic-Norse, Gaelic-English, Norse-English, rather than to genuine bilingualism.

It would be of considerable interest to see what a closer

analysis of all types of "inversion compounds" in the place-nomenclature of our area may have to say on the movements of people and their languages into this part of Scotland, and particularly on the immigration of Scandinavians which is practically unrecorded. It would also be desirable to establish a more factual knowledge as to the geographical origin of these Scandinavians, beyond the rather vague speculations on which we have to rely at present.

ABBREVIATIONS

ARG	Argyllshire	Nb	Northumberland
AYR	Ayrshire	Nt	Nottinghamshire
BTE	Buteshire	OE.	Old English
BWK	Berwickshire	ON.	Old Norse
CLA	Clackmannanshire	PEB	Peeblesshire
Cu	Cumberland	RNF	Renfrewshire
Db	Derbyshire	ROS	Ross-shire
DMF	Dumfriesshire	ROX	Roxburghshire
DNB	Dunbartonshire	SLK	Selkirkshire
Du	Durham	STL	Stirlingshire
ELO	East Lothian	We	Westmorland
EPNS.	English Place-Name Society	WIG	Wigtownshire
		WLO	West Lothian
FIF	Fife	YE	Yorkshire East Riding
KCB	Kirkcudbrightshire	YN	Yorkshire North Riding
La	Lancashire		
LAN	Lanarkshire	YW	Yorkshire West Riding
MLO	Midlothian		

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THE DOMICILES OF SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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During 1957 the domicile of Glasgow university students was analysed geographically as part of a study of the "sphere of influence", or "hinterland", of the city.[1] For comparative purposes statistics were obtained for the other universities and, considered together, the data may be of wider interest than the original study.[2] Only Aberdeen university keeps a geographical record of the home residences of students, therefore individual student records had to be examined at the other universities and, since the original task was of some urgency, only those entering first degree courses in October 1956, were taken as a sample. They constitute about 25 per cent of the student body.[3] Domiciles were classified by counties, cities and large burghs.

THE "HINTERLANDS" OF EACH UNIVERSITY

Two complementary methods were used: in each case the counties,[4] including their large burghs, were taken as primary working units, but the smallest were combined with their neighbours in order to avoid dependence on very small figures. The number of students from each county, entering each university, was calculated:—

(i) as a proportion of the total 1956 population of the counties, and

(ii) as a proportion of the total number of students from each county entering all Scottish universities.

Method (ii) is cruder than method (i) but avoids anomalies which might arise should age and social structures of the population vary amongst the counties. It was immediately apparent that the hinterlands were remarkably clearly defined and to a considerable extent mutually exclusive. The results were mapped for each university (method (i)) and are shown in Figs. 1 to 4, the counties being shaded arbitrarily to emphasise the variation in the proportion of students to total population.

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Fig. 5 shows the hinterlands as defined by method (ii) and these have been added to Figs. 1 to 4 for comparison.

Each university, except St. Andrews, can be seen to have a tributary region, the inner parts of which (defined as those counties sending at least 75 per cent to one university) send students almost exclusively to the local university. The outer part, defined as those counties sending at least 50 per cent to one university, is shared with only one other university as a rule. Only seven counties—Perth, Kinross, Clackmannan, Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland and Caithness—were not dominated by one university. In the case of Edinburgh and Glasgow the exclusive regions met sharply between Lanarkshire and the Lothians and Peebles, but the allegiance of the Solway counties was divided slightly in favour of Edinburgh; the high Glasgow entry from Kirkcudbright is not usual, as was shown by a later check (see note 1). To the north, Stirling sent half of its students to Glasgow, the rest to Edinburgh and St. Andrews. St Andrews University was dominant only in Angus and Dundee; Fife, rather surprisingly, sends more students to Edinburgh than to St. Andrews. Aberdeen University had an "exclusive" region, including the city and county and the county of Banff, and was clearly dominant in Moray and Nairn. To the west and north, in Inverness, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland and Caithness, the universities of Edinburgh and, to a slightly less extent, Glasgow, took a substantial share of the students. But it is remarkable that St. Andrews received only six students from these counties in 1956, whilst the other universities received 101. It is notable, too, that Glasgow received a far greater proportion of the students from Inverness, Ross and Cromarty than of those from Caithness and Sutherland, a fact which may suggest that if Hebridean students could be distinguished they would be found to show greater allegiance to Glasgow than do those from the mainland. Shetlanders and Orcadians, however, favoured Aberdeen and Edinburgh almost equally.

All but seven counties were dominated by a single university, i.e. sent more than 50 per cent of their students to one university, and from no less than eighteen counties at least 75 per cent of the students went to the "local" university. These figures take no account of any students who might have entered English universities, but the number cannot have been very high, and, since the eighteen counties account for 74 per cent of Scottish students entering Scottish universities, the
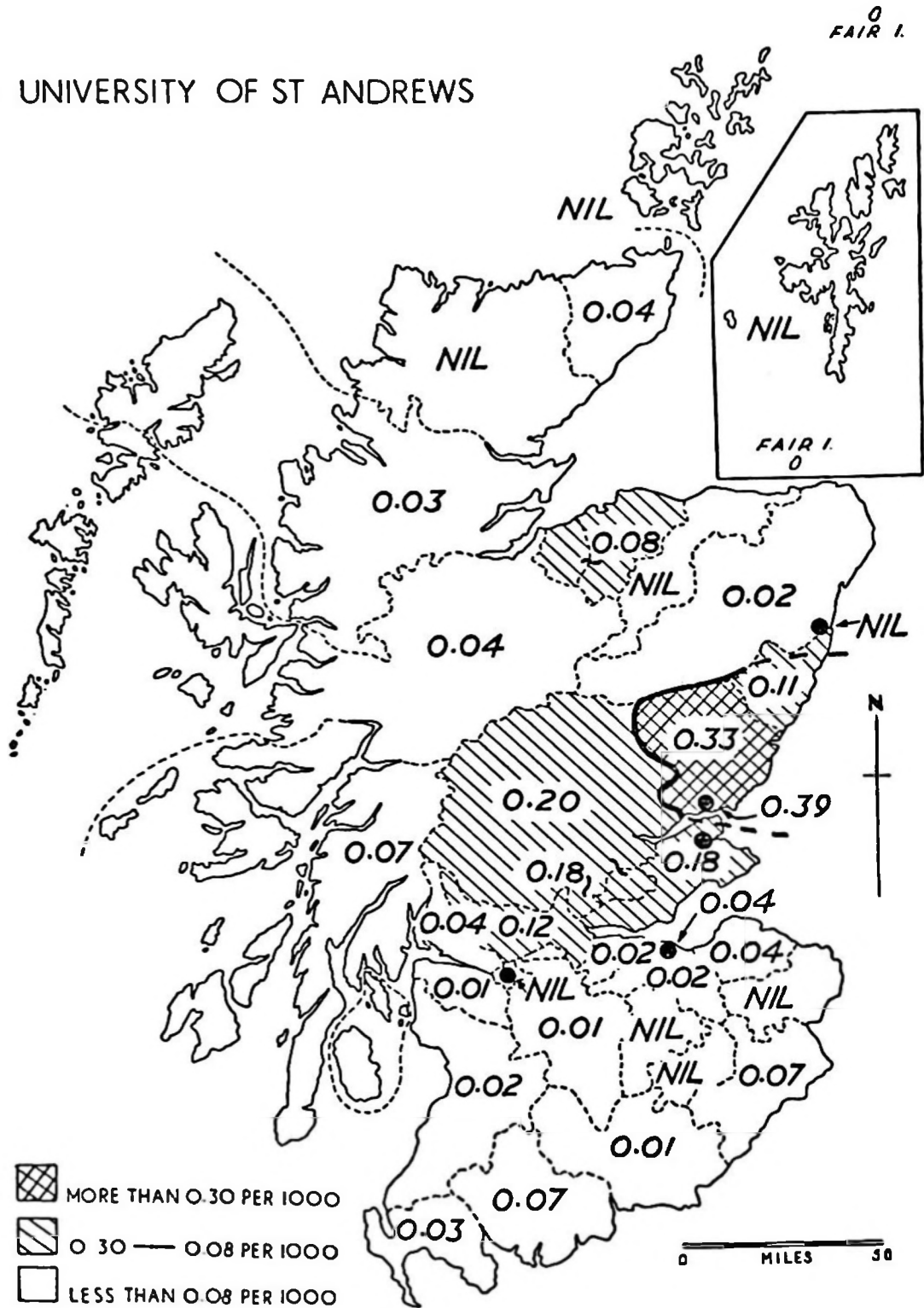
72

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

FAIR I.
0

0.30

0.21

0.15

0.26

FAIR I.
0

0.22

0.40   0.39

0.54   ←0.74

0.22   0.07

0.08

NIL

NIL

NIL

NIL NIL

NIL

NIL NIL

NIL

NIL

NIL NIL

NIL

NIL

NIL

NIL NIL

NIL

NIL

NIL

MORE THAN 0.30 PER 1000
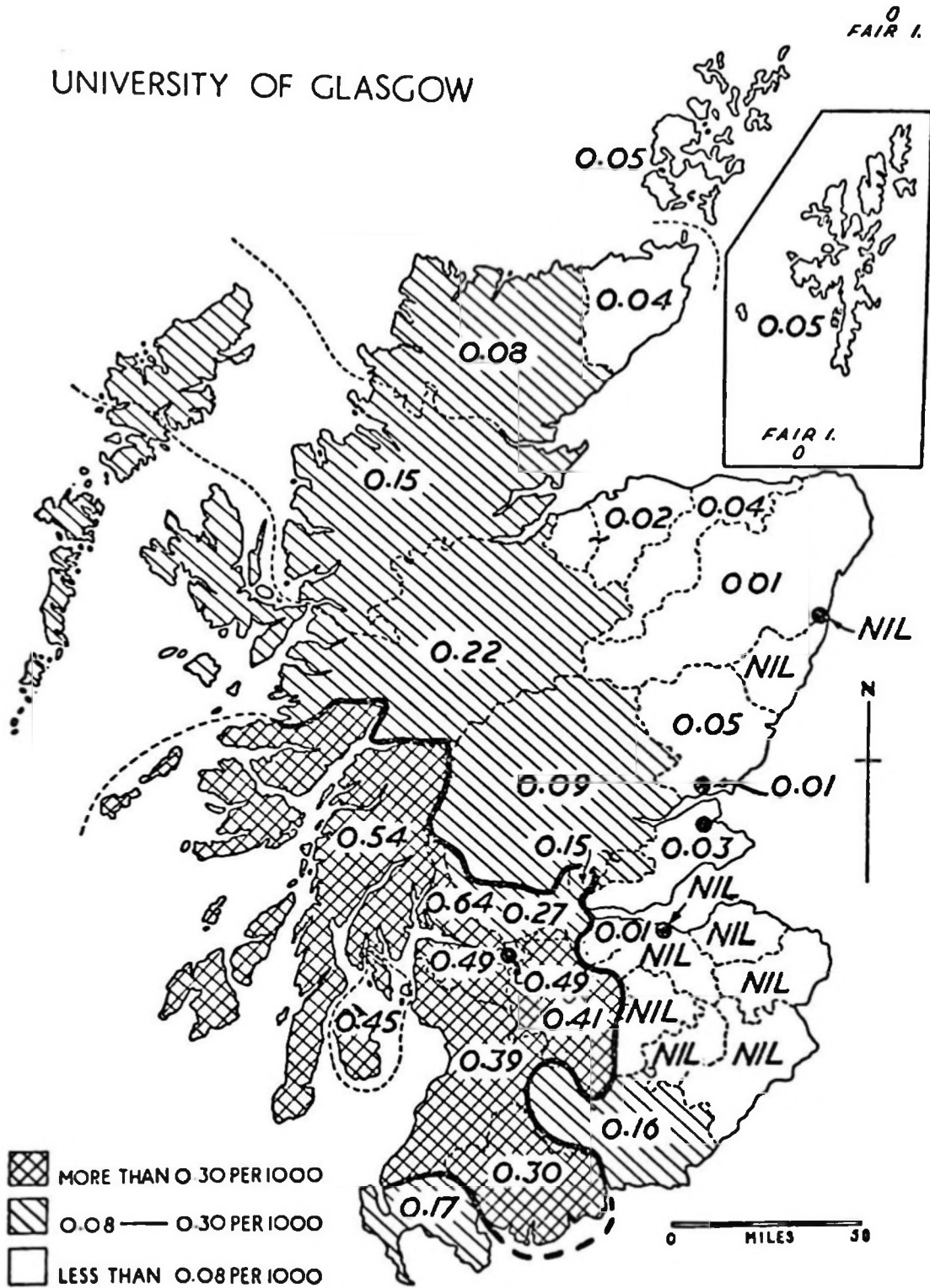
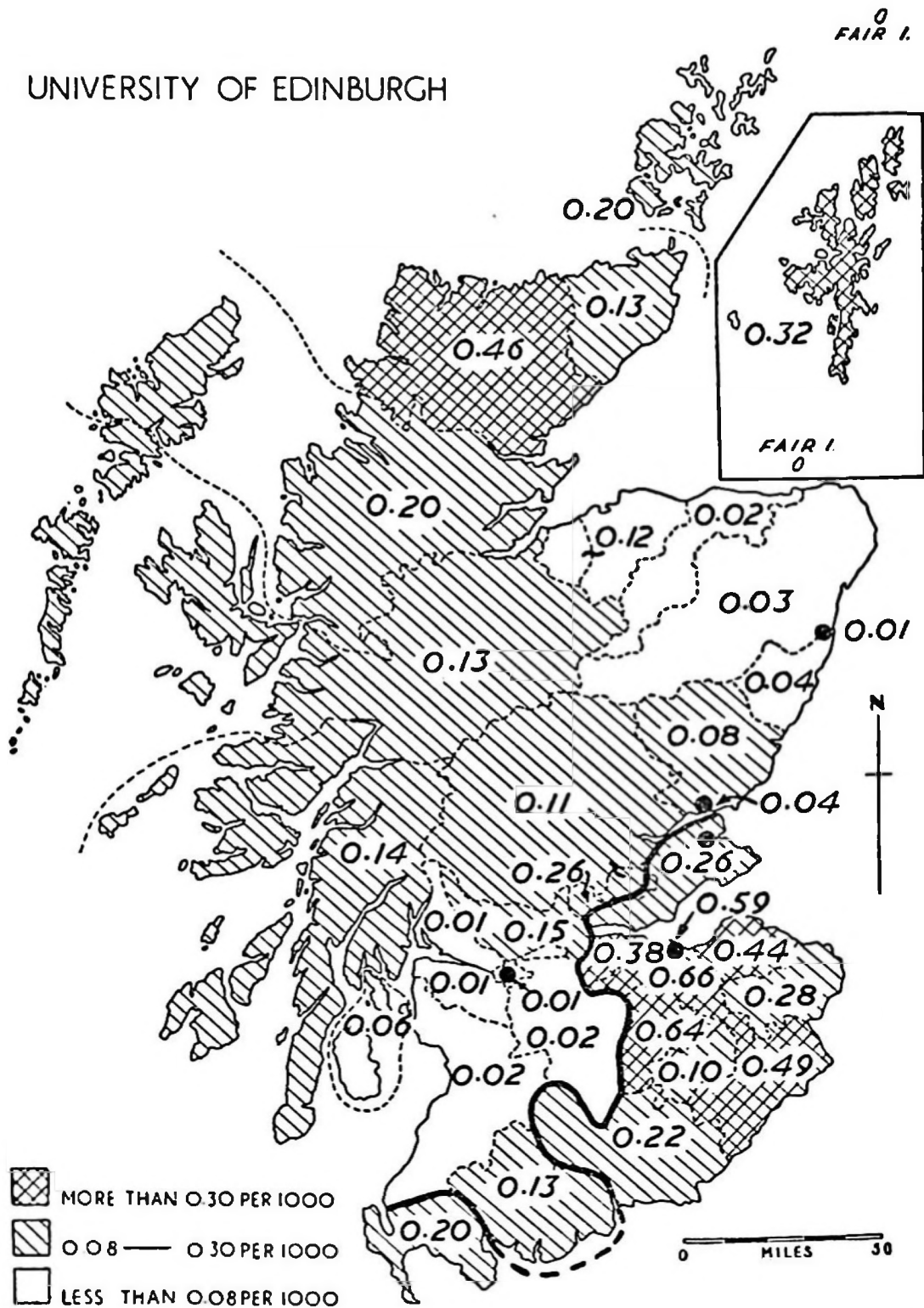0.30 ——— 0.08 PER 1000

LESS THAN 0.08 PER 1000

N

0   MILES   50

Fig. 1.—The number of students, per 1000 of the total population of each county,
entering first degree courses of the University of Aberdeen in October 1956.
The heavy black line demarcates the "hinterland" of the University as
defined in fig. 5.

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UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

FIG. 2.—The number of students, per 1000 of the total population of each county, entering first degree courses of the University of St Andrews in October 1956. The heavy black line demarcates the "hinterland" of the University as defined in fig. 5.

UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

Fig. 3.—The number of students, per 1000 of the total population of each county, entering first degree courses of the University of Glasgow, including those attending the Royal College of Science and Technology, in October 1956. The heavy black line demarcates the "hinterland" of the University as defined in fig. 5.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

FAIR I.
0

0.20

0.13

0.46

0.32

FAIR I.
0

0.20

0.02

0.12

0.03

0.01

0.04

0.08

0.13

N

0.11

0.04

0.26

0.26

0.14

0.59

0.01 0.15

0.38 0.44

0.66

0.28

0.01

0.01

0.64

0.06

0.02

0.10 0.49

0.02

0.22

MORE THAN 0.30 PER 1000

0.08 —— 0.30 PER 1000

0.13

LESS THAN 0.08 PER 1000

0.20

MILES   50
0

FIG. 4.—The number of students, per 1000 of the total population of each county, entering first degree courses of the University of Edinburgh in October 1956 The heavy black line demarcates the "hinterland" of the University as defined in fig. 5.

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PROPORTION OF STUDENT POPULATION
ENTERING ANY ONE UNIVERSITY

more than 75 %
50 % — 74 %
less than 50 %

The 'hinterland' of each university is surrounded by a thick line:

FIG. 5.—The hinterland of the four universities. The "student population" of each county is taken as the number of students entering Scottish universities only. In examining the figure it is relevant to note that whilst Scottish domiciled students made up 91 per cent. of the first entries at Glasgow, the corresponding figures for the other universities were Edinburgh 63 per cent., St Andrews 47 per cent., and Aberdeen 86 per cent.

degree of "parochialism" is high. In particular, Edinburgh and Aberdeen cities provided 39 per cent and 40 per cent of the entrants to their respective universities, 34 per cent of those entering the University of Glasgow had their bases in the city and 24 per cent of those entering the University of St. Andrews came from Dundee. The policy adopted in awarding bursaries had probably been influential in this respect: a student wishing to study at a "remote" institution when the "nearest" offers the same facilities is often unable to obtain assistance towards the extra cost. Moreover there are a number of students who do not qualify for bursaries and, unless their families are particularly wealthy, most of these will naturally attend the university which can be reached daily from their homes. These factors become most effective in the Glasgow region where nearly half the population of Scotland lives within daily travelling distance of the city. Whether the lack of residential accommodation is a factor, too, or whether it is the result of this situation, is not clear, but, whatever the cause, this "parochialism" and the tendency to reside at home which goes with it, is neither in accordance with centuries' old tradition nor does it help to promote a corporate spirit amongst undergraduates.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL ORIGIN OF STUDENTS

When, for each county, the entrants to all four universities are taken together, one can obtain a picture of the contribution of the various parts of Scotland to the Scottish undergraduate population. This was tabulated as students per 1,000 of the 1956 population (Table 1, col. A), and the variation from county to county was found to be so great that some explanation was sought; it seemed unlikely that the range was due to some inherent geographical variation in intelligence, and this was confirmed by mapping, which failed to show any orderly pattern. In view of the strong tendency to enter the nearest university already described, one might perhaps have expected that the remoter counties would contribute a smaller proportion than the nearer ones; but Inverness, Ross and Cromarty and Shetland send a remarkably high proportion of their populations, whilst some of the lowest figures are shown by Perth, Glasgow and West Lothian. Certainly, all the Border counties show low figures; this, however, may reflect a slight "leakage" of students to the universities of the north of England which cannot readily be demonstrated. Regional variations in age

structure in Scotland are considerable; to test the influence of this possible factor the numbers of students were proportioned to the numbers in the 10 to 14 quinquennial age group for each county as recorded in the 1951 Census[5] (Table I, col. B). Little material change in the positions of the counties was found. Similarly student population showed scarcely any correlation with regional variations in the distribution of "Social Groups" as defined in the 1951 Census; see Table I, col. C for example.

TABLE I

Domicile of Students Entering First Degree Courses at Scottish Universities, October 1956

Column A: Students per 1,000 of total population, 1956.
Column B: Students per 1,000 of the 10-14 years of age group (1951 Census)
Column C: Males in Social groups I and II as per cent of all occupied males (1951 Census).

	A	B	C		A	B	C
Aberdeen City .	0·75	10·5	16	Renfrew .	0·51	6·5	17
Argyll and Bute .	0·68	9·2	23	Kirkcudbright*	0·50	6·4	22
Dunbarton .	0·68	9·9	17	Dundee City .	0·50	6·8	13
Midlothian .	0·68	9·5	11	Angus, Kincardine .	0·49	6·8	21
Shetland* .	0·64	9·3	33	SCOTLAND .	0·49	6·6	...
Edinburgh City .	0·63	9·6	19	E. Lothian* .	0·48	6·0	12
Ross & Cromarty*	0·60	7·9	23	Fife .	0·47	6·9	12
Inverness .	0·60	8·3	25	Lanark .	0·44	5·2	12
Aberdeen Co. .	0·60	8·5	27	Ayr .	0·43	5·7	15
Clackmannan* .	0·59	8·3	12	W. Lothian* .	0·41	5·3	9
Stirling .	0·56	7·1	13	Glasgow City .	0·40	5·1	12
Roxburgh* .	0·56	8·1	18	Wigtown* .	0·40	4·7	20
Moray, Nairn, Banff	0·53	6·6	...	Dumfries* .	0·39	5·6	20
Caithness, Sutherland*	0·52	6·7	30	Perth, Kinross .	0·38	5·5	21
Orkney* .	0·51	7·2	47	Peebles, Selkirk,* Berwick	0·30	4·4	20

* Indicates counties sending fifty, or less, students to all Scottish universities.

N.B. Counties include the large burghs.

Unfortunately the nature of the data originally extracted does not permit a full analysis according to rural and urban domiciles but, for the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and St. Andrews, representing 87 per cent of all entrants, the proportion of students originating in cities (37 per cent), large burghs (18 per cent) and other areas (45 per cent) was almost identical with the general distribution of population (38 per cent, 16 per cent and 46 per cent respectively). However some light may be thrown on the problem if we examine the individual large burghs as shown in Table II.

Some of the figures are small and will no doubt vary from

year to year: for this reason one should perhaps ignore the figures for burghs sending less than fifteen students. Apart from these the probable variation from year to year is not large: Perth, for example, would have to double its number of students in order to rank above Falkirk, whilst Rutherglen would have to send eight instead of twenty-six in order to rank as low as Greenock. This table does show that many of the industrial burghs produced fewer students than the others, but there is no general rule; Falkirk, Hamilton, Dunfermline

TABLE II

The Large Burghs: Students Entering First Degree Courses,
October 1956
(All Scottish Universities)

Burgh.	No. of Students	No. per 1,000 population
Rutherglen	26	1·05
Falkirk	29	0·78
Arbroath	15	0·75
Hamilton	31	0·75
Inverness	18	0·65
Dunfermline	26	0·57
Airdrie	18	0·56
Paisley	47	0·49
Motherwell and Wishaw	30	0·45
Ayr	19	0·44
Coatbridge	21	0·41
Perth	17	0·41
Stirling	11	0·41
Kilmarnock	17	0·39
Clydebank	19	0·39
Kirkcaldy	18	0·35
Greenock	24	0·31
Dumbarton	8	0·31
Port Glasgow	4	0·17

and Airdrie all sent more than the Scottish average, whilst Kilmarnock, Stirling, Perth and Ayr all sent less. It is notable that some of the high ranking burghs have secondary schools of outstanding repute, but Glasgow's several well-known fee-paying schools do not lead to the city's ranking high. In this case the adjacent suburban "county" areas of Dunbartonshire and Renfrewshire probably provide proportionately more pupils for these schools than does the city itself. Also, in a commercial city such as Glasgow there are probably more alternative careers, particularly in family offices and warehouses, for youngsters of university calibre, than there are in outlying districts. The lack of other opportunities certainly

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leads to a considerable influx from crofting districts to the universities. Some of the burghs with low student populations are those with large Roman Catholic populations; this does not imply a direct co-relation, but large families and relatively low family incomes often make it essential that wage-earning begins at the earliest possible age. Moreover, in industrial

TABLE III

Counties including Large Burghs. Students Entering Scottish Universities, October 1956

County	No. of Students	No. per 1,000 population
Dunbarton	91	0·94
Argyll	44	0·77
Renfrew	92	0·68
Midlothian	71	0·67
Sutherland	9	0·67
Zetland	12	0·65
Peebles	9	0·65
Moray & Nairn	35	0·61
Ross & Cromarty	36	0·61
Aberdeen	85	0·60
Inverness	34	0·60
Clackmannan	23	0·58
Orkney	11	0·55
Bute	9	0·53
Kirkcudbright	15	0·50
E. Lothian	25	0·49
Stirling	62	0·49
Angus	37	0·48
Fife	107	0·48
Banff	23	0·45
Ayr	105	0·43
Roxburgh & Selkirk	27	0·41
Caithness	10	0·41
W. Lothian	38	0·41
Wigtown	12	0·40
Perth	35	0·39
Kincardine	9	0·33
Dumfries	19	0·32
Lanark	103	0·32
Berwick	7	0·29

districts in recent years, the high wages which could be earned after very little training must have exerted a powerful influence against delaying wage-earning for four or five years.

The extraction of the large burghs modifies the position of some of the counties (Table III) and so helps to explain some of the peculiarities shown in Table I. In particular, whilst Renfrew and Dunbarton *whole* counties contributed students at the rate of 0·54 and 0·68 per thousand respectively, the rates for the large burghs were very much lower, leaving those

for the "remainder" of the counties (i.e. small burghs and landward areas) 0·68 and 0·98. This high level is certainly a function of the social status of the population of these areas, dominated as they are by middle and upper-middle class suburban districts. The low status of Perthshire is not so readily explained, the rates for the whole county, the large burgh of Perth and for the "rest" of the county, being 0·38, 0·41 and 0·39 per thousand. In the case of Stirling, however, the extraction of the large burghs reveals a "rest of the county" area which sent only 0·49 students per thousand of the population, compared with 0·56 for the whole county.

Returning, finally, to the county Table (Table 1), and ignoring the counties which sent only small numbers of students to Scottish universities in 1956, it still seems most remarkable that, for example, Aberdeen city should produce almost twice as many students, in proportion to its population, as Glasgow, and that Dunbarton county should send almost twice as many as Perth and half as many again as Lanark or Glasgow city. One is driven to the conclusion that either some counties send far fewer students than they could, or that others send more than they should! If Glasgow, for example, had sent as many students per 1,000 of its population as were sent from Scotland as a whole, 130 more Glaswegians would have entered the university. Do the educational systems of the counties and cities vary so much in their abilities to produce students? Is attendance at a university to some extent a social custom, varying from district to district without rational explanation? Or could it be that the over-riding factor is the freedom, or otherwise, with which some authorities award grants and scholarships? The need for more people with university training is widely recognised. These figures suggest, though necessarily tentatively, that some Scottish counties are not contributing as many as they might, even at current standards. Further investigation, based on examination of records over several years, might yield valuable results, but the extraction of the statistics would be a heavy task. Is it too much to hope that the four universities might co-operate?

Thanks are also due to the Secretaries to the Courts of the four Universities, who made their records available, and to Miss C. B. Smith, M.A., who extracted the figures for Glasgow, Edinburgh and St. Andrews.

NOTES

[1] Moisley, H. A., "Glasgow's spheres of influence." In *The Glasgow Region*, 285-301. Glasgow 1958.

[2] The only previous Scottish study, known to author, is O'Dell, A. C. and Walton, K. ; "A note on the student population of Aberdeen University." *Aberdeen University Review*, No. 101 (1949) : 125-127.

[3] Statistics available for Aberdeen are for arbitrary regions, usually small groups of counties; student numbers for each county were distributed according to total population. The probable range of error is not large. Since this paper was drafted a geographical analysis of all students attending Glasgow University has become available; in general this confirms the validity of the sample.

[4] Here, and subsequently, the four cities are treated as counties.

[5] This is the quinquennial group most appropriate in age at October 1956.

ILLUSTRATIONS

All illustrations in this article were supplied by the author.

NAIDHEACHDAN MU SHÌDHICHEAN AS LOCH ABAR

Calum I. MacGhilleEathain

An dà shìdhiche mu dheireadh a chaidh fhaichinn anns an dùthaich seo 's ann an Clianaig am Bràigh Loch Abar a chaidh am faicinn.

Ailean MacDhomhnaill, 13/1/1951

'S ann an Clianaig a chunnaic iad an dà shìdhiche mu dheireadh a chaidh fhaicinn an Loch Abar. 'S e fear Mac Coinnich a chunnaic iad. 'S e mac do Mhac Coinnich a bha 'ga innseadh dhomh-sa. 'S ann anns na cnuic a tha na sìdhichean. Bidh iad ann gu deireadh an t-saoghail.

Ailean MacDhomhnaill, 22/2/1951

BOIREANNACH CAOL RUADH

Bha boireannach ann a seo agus bha i fuathasach fialaidh. 'S iomadh neach a thàinig a dh' iarraidh iasad oirre, gu sònruichte iasad mine. Thàinig boireannach caol, ruadh a staigh a' latha a bha seo agus i gu math coibhneil, bàidheil agus dh' iarr i gràinnean mine oirre.

"Ach cuiridh mi air ais a' mhin," thuirt i, "dar a théid Muileann na h-Anaid 'na theine. Gheibh sinn an toradh an uair sin," thuirt i.

Fhuair i a' mhin. Agus thàinig i air ais leatha latha na dhà agus labhair i na briathran:

"Chaidh a' muileann 'na theine agus shin agat a' mhin agat," thuirt i. "Agus na leig aon neach," thuirt i, "d'an chiste mhine agat agus chan fhaic thu grunn na ciste a feasd. Bidh min daonnan agat 's a' chistidh."

'S ann mar seo a bha. Thachair dh' an bhoireannach a bhith a mach latha. Na bu dé thug air a' nigheann air neo air boireannach eile a dhol d'an chistidh a thoirt deanntan mine as air son rud air chor cigin agus cha robh nì air thoiseach oirre ach cac eich. Cha robh aice ach seo a theilgeil a mach.

FAIRY STORIES FROM LOCHABER

Calum I. Maclean [*]

The two fairies last seen in this country were seen at Clianaig in Brae Lochaber.

> Allan MacDonell, 13/1/1951

It was at Clianaig they saw the last two fairies that were seen in Lochaber. It was a man named MacKenzie who saw them. It was a son of this MacKenzie who told me. The fairies are wont to be in the hillocks (F721.2).[1] They will be there till the end of the world.

> Allan MacDonell, 22/2/1951

A THIN, RED-HAIRED WOMAN

There was a woman in this district and she was very hospitable. Many came to her to ask for a loan, especially a loan of meal. A thin, red-haired woman came in this day and she was rather kind and friendly and she asked her for a handful of meal (F391.2).

"I shall return the meal," said she, "when the Mill of Annat goes on fire (F369.1). We shall get the produce then," said she.

She got the meal. And she came back with it a couple of days later and she spoke the following words:

"The mill went on fire and there is your meal," said she. "And let no one else," said she, "into your meal-chest and you will not see the bottom of the chest ever (F335.1). You will always have meal in the chest."

It did so happen. The woman chanced to be away from home one day. Whatever it was that caused the daughter or some other woman to go to the meal-chest to take out a handful of meal for some purpose or other, she found nothing before her there but horse-droppings (F348.0.1).[2] There was nothing

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Agus bha a' chiste mhine aice mar a bha i roimhe, cho tric falamh is a bha i làn.

<div align="right">Iain MacDhomhnaill, 21/1/1951</div>

FEAR A CHUNNTAIS NA SÌDHICHEAN

Bha an sluagh anns an dùthaich seo air an cuideachadh gu math tric leis na sìdhichean. Tha àite anns an dùthaich seo ris an abair iad an Ràth, thall am Brac-leitir. Agus bha duine a' fuireach ann ris an abradh iad Ailean Mór an Ràth agus iomadh duine air thoiseach air an am aig Ailean Mór an Ràth. Agus bha fear a' dol seachad aig Gearrlochaidh, dìreach mu choinncamh an Ràth: tha iad glé theann air a chéile ach gu bheil an abhainn a' ruith sìos eatorra, Abhainn Spèan. Bha oidhche bhriagha ghealach ann agus gu dé b' iongnadh leis ach an t-àite làn sìdhichean a' ruith air ais 's air adhart ag obair air an arbhar. Agus 's ann dar a rachadh càch mu thàmh air an oidhche, 's ann a bha à-san a' tighinn a mach a dh' obair. Agus thuirt e ris fhéi':

"Chuala mi iomradh riamh air nan cunntadh tu na sìdh-ichean nach fhaiceadh tu tuillidh iad. Nach fhiach mi ri sin a dhèanadh," thuirt e ris fhéi'.

Shuidh e agus bha e 'gan cunntas. Agus b'e sin an obair. Bha iad cho colta' ri chéile a chuile h-aon dhiubh a' ruith air ais 's air adhart. Is thuirt e:

"Is iomadh cunntas a rinn mi riamh air meanbhchruidh 's air crodh, air spréidh, agus an iomadh àite ach *bheat* seo na thachair riamh orm."

Chum e air cunntas gus an d' thàinig a dh' ionnsaigh ciad gu leth.

"Ma tà, chan 'eil mi ro chinnteach a bheil iad agam uile, ach 's e an t-aon rud a chuala mi, nam bitheadh iad air an cunntas ceart, nach bitheadh iad ri fhaicinn tuillidh."

Agus chum e air a thuras. Dar a thàinig a' sluagh a mach 's a' mhaduinn, b' iongnadh leotha a chuile sguab cho seasgair tioram air a chur air dòigh agus air a thughadh. Agus thug iad taing seachad: na bu có a rinn e, gur h-iad an sgioba a bha tapaidh. Agus cha deach na sìdhichean fhaicinn tuillidh. Agus fcumaidh, a' fear a chunnt iad, gun robh iad air an cunntas ceart. Mar a tha a' facal ag ràdha, "Ma chunntas e a dh' ionnsaigh a h-aon iad, chan fhaic thu a h-aon dhiubh tuillidh."

<div align="right">Iain MacDhomhnaill, 18/2/1951</div>

she could do except throw this out. And her meal-chest was as it had been before, as often empty as it was full.

<div align="right">John Macdonald, 21/1/1951</div>

A MAN WHO COUNTED THE FAIRIES

The folk in this country were often helped by the fairies (F346). There is a place in this district which they call the Ràth, over in Brackletter. And there was a man living there whom they called Big Allan of the Ràth, and many other people lived there before the time of Big Allan of the Ràth. And a certain man was passing by Gearrlochy, over opposite the Ràth; the two places are very close to one another except that the river runs down between them, the Spean river. It was a fine, moonlit night, and to his amazement the place was full of fairies who ran hither and thither as they harvested the corn (F455.6.8.1). And it was when other people went to rest at night that they came out to work (F348.8). And he said to himself:

"I have always heard it said that, if you counted the fairies (F381), you would not see them again. Should I not try to do that?" said he to himself.

He sat down and counted them. And that was some job. They were all so alike running to and fro. And he said:

"I have made many reckonings of sheep and of cattle, of herds, and I did so in many places but this has surpassed anything that I have ever come across."

He continued counting until he came to a hundred and fifty.

"Indeed, I am not sure that I have them all, but the one thing I did hear is that, if they were counted properly, they would not be seen again."

And he continued on his journey. When the folk came out in the morning, they were amazed to find every sheaf safe and dry, stacked and thatched. And they expressed their thanks: whoever did it, it was done by an agile team. And the fairies were not seen again. And it must have been that the person who counted them did count them properly. As the saying has it, "If he counts them to the exact figure, you will not see one of them again."

<div align="right">John Macdonald, 18/2/1951</div>

'S e 'n dòigh a bh' aca, chuala mi, air cunntas nan sìdhichean
—agus chan 'eil e fuathasach furasda a dhèanadh 'n uair a tha
iad cho dlùth ris na meanbhchuileagan a' leum feadh nan
cnoc—tha iad ag ràitinn:

A h-aon, a dhà, a trì, a ceithir, a còig;
A dhà, a ceithir, a sia, a h-ochd, a deich;
Trì, sia, a naoi, dhà dhiag, còig diag;
Ceithir, ochd, dhà dhiag, sia diag, fichead;
Còig, deich, còig diag, fichead, còig air fhichead;
Sia, a dhà dhiag, a h-ochd, ceithir air fhichead,
   deich air fhichead;
Seachd, ceithir diag, a h-aon air fhichead, ochd air fhichead,
   còig diag air fhichead;
Ochd, sia diag, ceithir air fhichead, dhà dhiag air fhichead,
   dà fhichead;
Naoi, ochd diag, seachd air fhichead, sia diag air fhichead,
   dà fhichead is a còig;
Deich, fichead, deich air fhichead, dà fhichead, leth-chiad;
A h-aon diag, dhà air fhichead, trì diag air fhichead, dà
   fhichead is a ceithir, leth-chiad is a còig;
A dhà dhiag, ceithir air fhichead, sia diag air fhichead, dà
   fhichead is a h-ochd, trì fichead.

Agus 's ann mar sin a bha iad 'gan cunntas. Agus nan
cunntaiseadh iad gun mhearachd—theag' gun d' runn mise
mearachd—ach nan cunntaiseadh iad gun mhearachd, chan
fhaiceadh iad sìdhiche tuillidh.

<div align="right">Iain MacDhomhnaill, 22/2/1951</div>

"OBAIR, OBAIR, FHEARCHAIR!"[3]

Bha fear ann ris an abradh iad Fearchar agus gu math tric
bha bruaillean glé mhór air a chur air agus dragh le sìdhichean
a bhiodh a' tighinn thar (sic) an robh e agus iad ag iarraidh
obair, obair, "Thoir dhuinn obair."

    "Falbh," thuirt[4] e riutha a' latha a bha seo, "agus tior-
maichibh an loch a tha gu h-àrd a sin."

    "Nì sinn sin."

    Dh' fhalbh iad. Agus an ath-latha, dar a chaidh e an àirde,
bha an loch tioram. Thàinig iad a rithist thar an robh e feasgar.
Thug e dhaibh obair air chor eigin eile agus rinn iad sin. Agus
ghabh e iongantas cho allamh agus a chuir iad crìoch air an
obair a bh' ann. Cha chreid mise nach ann a' spìonadh

This, I have heard, was the way they counted the fairies—and that is not easy to do when they leap about the hillocks as thick as the midges—they say:

One, two, three, four, five (Z71.3) (D1273.1.2.1.);
Two, four, six, eight, ten;
Three, six, nine, twelve, fifteen;
Four, eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty;
Five, ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five;
Six, twelve, eighteen, twenty-four, thirty;
Seven, fourteen, twenty-one, twenty-eight, thirty-five;
Eight, sixteen, twenty-four, thirty-two, forty;
Nine, eighteen, twenty-seven, thirty-six, forty-five;
Ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty;
Eleven, twenty-two, thirty-three, forty-four, fifty-five;
Twelve, twenty-four, thirty-six, forty-eight, sixty.

And it was in that way they counted them. And if they counted without a mistake—perhaps I have made a mistake—but if they counted without a mistake, they would not see a fairy again (F381).

John Macdonald, 22/2/1951

"WORK, WORK, FARQUHAR!"[3]

There was a man they called Farquhar and very often he was sorely troubled and vexed by fairies who came to him asking for work, work, "Give us work."

"Go," said he to them this day, "and empty the loch (H1097.1) that is up yonder."
"We will do that."
Away they went. And the following day, when he went up, the loch was dry. They came to him again in the evening. He gave them some other work and that they did. And he wondered how quickly they performed that task (H1090). I rather think that they were put to pluck the heather from the

fraoich a bha iad bharr a' mhonaidh. Agus tha a' monadh gorm gus an latha an diugh. Cha d' fhàs fraoch riamh air. Agus a sin:

"Tha iad a' cur dragh glé mhór orm," thuirt e ris a' bhean. " Agus bidh iad a màireach cho dona is a bha iad riamh, a' cur dragh orm ag iarraidh obair." "Had!" thuirt a' bhean, "nach toir thu orra sìoman a dhèanadh de'n ghaineamhaich a tha a sìos air a' chladach. Dh' fhairtlich e air an Donas fhéin sìoman a dhèanadh do'n ghaineamhaich, ach dh' iarr e moll agus gun dèanadh e e. Chan fhaigheadh e moll agus mar sin dh' fhairtlich air. Abair sin riutha."

Thàinig iad an ath-fheasgar a dh' iarraidh obair.

"Falbh a sìos agus dèanaibh sìoman de'n ghaineamhaich a tha shìos air a' chladach."

Dh' fhalbh iad. Thug iad treis ag obair sin ach cha robh a' chùis a' dol leotha. Thill iad air ais. Thuirt iad gun a dh' fhairtlich sin orra a dhèanadh ach na faigheadh iad innear eich, mar a their iad ann am facal ciùin, laghach, sgàinteach each. Agus mar sin cha d' fhuair.

"Chan fhaigh sibh sin. Agus dèanaibh sìoman dheth a réir an ordugh a fhuair sibh. Agus mar a dèan, na faiceam tuillidh an rathad seo sibh."

Agus dh' fhairtlich sin orra agus fhuair am bodach cuidhte 's na sìdhichean. Agus bha Fearchar glé thoilichte. Mar a thuirt mi ruibh, cha d' fhàs fraoch riamh air a' bheinn an deadhaidh na sìdhichean a tarrainn. Agus 's e té dhiubh sin Beinn Dóbhrain. Tha i gorm gus an latha an diugh. Agus 's iomadh facal a thuirt Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir m'a déidhinn, ma dhéidhinn Beinn Dóbhrain:

> "'S i bu bhòidhche liom—
> Monadh fada réidh,
> Coille a faighte féidh,
> 'S soileireach an treud
> Bhios an còmhnuidh ann."
>
> Iain MacDhomhnaill, 18/2/1951

CAILLEACH A THACHAIR RI SEALGAIREAN

Dh' fhalbh dà òganach turas agus iad air fonn anabharrach math agus iad ag ràdha riutha fhéin, "Thogainn fonn air lorg an fhéidh." Ach dar a thàinig a' feasgar, thàinig cur is cathadh a bha fuathasach. Agus 's e coltas call a b' ann. Agus bha iad shuas ann an Coire Chlamhraidh is an cur a' tighinn gu trom

moor. And the moor is green to this day. No heather grew on it ever since. And then—

"They are troubling me very much," said he to his wife. "And to-morrow they will be as bad as ever, troubling me by asking for work."

"Tut!" said the wife (J155.4), "why do you not ask them to make a rope out of the sand (H1021.1) that is down on the shore? The Evil One himself failed (K211) to make a rope of the sand, but he asked for chaff [5] in order to make it. He could not get chaff and so failed. Tell them that."

The following evening they came to ask for work.

"Go down and make a rope of the sand that is down on the shore."

Away they went. They were engaged in that work for some time but did not succeed. They came back. They said they had failed but if only they got horse-dung, as they say—to use a gentle, polite word—the *sgàinteach* of horses. And that they did not get.

"You will not get that. And make a rope of it according to the directions you have been given. And if you do not, do not let me see you around here any more."

And they failed to perform that task and the old man got rid of the fairies (F381.11). And Farquhar was very pleased. As I have told you, no heather ever grew on the mountain when the fairies had cut it. And one of these mountains is Ben Dorain. It is green to this very day. And many words has Duncan Bàn MacIntyre said about it, about Ben Dorain:

> "To me it is most beautiful:
> The wide, smooth hill,
> A forest wherein deer are found.
> Bright is the throng
> That is wont to be there."
>
> John Macdonald, 18/2/1951

A HAG WHO MET HUNTERS

Two youths went away one time and they were in high spirits and said to themselves, "I'd sing merrily on the track of the deer." But when evening fell, they were caught in a terrible blizzard. And it seemed that they would perish. And they were up in Coire Chlamhraidh [6] and the snowfall was envelop-

orra agus coltas call. Bha iad a' dol a staigh do'n a chuile h-àite a bha iad a' smaointinn a faigheadh iad fasgadh ach cha robh fasgadh ann. Thàinig a seo fialtas glé bheag agus beilghe air an tìde. Chunnaic iad solust glé bheag air thoiseach orra is rinn iad dìreach air an t-solust. Agus chunnaic iad air gròbadh a bh' air an dorust cailleach cho grànda is a chunnaic iad riamh 'na suidhe taobh an teine agus ceirtle shnàth aice agus i a' cur snaidhmeannan air an t-snàth thall 's a bhos.

"Saoil an téid sinn a staigh?" thuirt an darna fear ris an fhear eile. "Théid, o'n is e an call a bhios ann. Grànda is mar a tha i, théid sinn a staigh."

Dar a chaidh iad dlùth air an dorust, thuirt a' chailleach:

"Thigibh a staigh, 'illean. Bha dùil agam ruibh fad an fheasgair."

Chaidh iad a staigh agus fhuair iad biadh bhuaipe agus chuir i a chadal iad. Cha robh iad a' faotainn fois uamhasach math ach a' cuimhneachadh air gnùis na cailliche. Dh' éirich iad 's a' mhaduinn agus fhuair iad am biadh maduinne bhuaipe. Agus dh' fhalbh iad.

"Innsidh mi dé an turas a ghabhas sibh," thuirt a' chailleach. "Gabhaidh sibh a mach am Bealach Odhar agus gheibh sibh ann a sin lorg an dòbhrain. Agus leanaidh sibh an dòbhran gus an ruig sibh am beul-àtha, agus theag' gun dèan e feum dhuibh."

'S ann mar seo a bha. Ràinig iad am Bealach Odhar is fhuair iad lorg an dòbhrain. Agus bha e a' falbh gu math athaiseach leis cho domhainn is a bha a' sneachda. Dhlùthaich iad air dar a bha e a' dol 'un an aisidh. Agus b'e sin an t-aiseadh a bha cunnartach, am beul-àtha seo a dhol seachad air leis an tuil a bh' ann. Chaidh e a nunn do'n uisge, an dòbhran. Is dar a chaidh, thàinig, sìth is fialtas air an uisge. Agus dh' fhalbh an t-uisge gu cunbhalach réidh is fhuair iad seachad gun dragh. Chaidh iad seachad crioman agus chunnaic iad féidh gu h-àrd air an t-sliabh. B'e seo am miann, gun toireadh iad fiadh dhachaidh. Chaidh iad an àirde agus dh' fhiach iad air an fhiadh bu bhriagha a bha 'na measg agus thuit e. Chaidh iad an àirde. Is 'n uair a chaidh iad an àirde thar an robh e, cha robh aca ach an t-seiche ann a sin is e air fheannadh cho math is a chunnaic iad riamh. Is cha robh sgial air a' chlosach.

"O, ma tà, cha téid sinn na's fhaide as deadhaidh nam fiadh. Agus nì sinn air an taigh, mar a dh' iarr a' chailleach."

Agus 's ann mar sin a bha. Rinn iad air an taigh. Agus rinn

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ing them rapidly and they were in danger of death. They went into every cranny in which they thought they would find shelter but there was no shelter. Then there came a very slight calm and lull in the storm. They saw a very dim light before them and they made straight for the light. And through the door, which was slightly ajar, they saw a hag (F234.2.1) as ugly as they had ever seen sitting by the fire holding a ball of wool (D1184.1) and knotting the thread here and there.

"Do you think we ought to go in?" said the one to the other. "We will, otherwise we shall be lost. Ugly as she is, we will go in."

When they approached the door, the hag said:

"Come in, lads. I have been expecting you all evening."

They went in and received food from her and she put them to sleep. They were not able to rest very well because they thought of the hag's appearance. They arose in the morning and got their breakfast from her. And they went away.

"I shall tell you the route you will take (F347)," said the hag. You will go out through the Bealach Odhar and there you will find the track of the otter (F240). And you will follow the otter until you reach the ford, and perhaps that will serve you well."

That is what happened. They reached the Bealach Odhar and they found the track of the otter. And it was moving very slowly because of the depth of the snow. They came closer to it as it approached the crossing. And that was the crossing that was really dangerous—the fording of this stream owing to the heavy spate. The otter went into the water. And when it went in, the water became calm and placid. And the water flowed on evenly and smoothly (D2141.0.8.1) and they got across without trouble. Then went on a little way and they saw deer above them on the moor. It was their wish to bring a deer home. They went up and aimed at the finest deer amongst them and it fell. Up they went. And when they went up to the place where it was, there was nothing before them there but the hide and it had been skinned as cleanly as they had ever seen. And there was no trace of the carcase (Q552.3.4).

"Oh, now that this is the case, we will go no farther in pursuit of the deer. And we will set off for home, as the hag desired."

And that was what they did. They made straight for home.

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an athair sogan glé mhór riutha 'n uair a chunnaic e iad a' tighinn.

"Is mi tha toilichte gun d' thàine sibh," thuirt e. "Bha mi an dùil gun robh sibh air 'ur call, an oidhche stoirmeil a bh' ann."

Dh' innis iad a chuile car dha, mar a chuir iad dhiubh is mar a bha a' chailleach agus an dóbhran is a' fiadh.

"Na cuireadh a cùram na bruaillean oirbh nach d' fhuair sibh a' fiadh. 'S e a bha a' cur a' chaimir inntinn orm nach robh sibh a' tighinn dachaidh. Agus biodh am fiadh a' dol an rathad a thoilicheas e."

Agus thuirt e:

"'S e a' chailleach a bha seo a fhuair a' chlosach. Na bheannaich sì'-se am biadh 'n uair a fhuair sibh bho'n chaillich e?"

"O, cha do bheannaich!"

"'S ann mar sin a tha na sìdhichean air am beathachadh le teachd-an-tìr, am biadh nach téid a bheannachadh 's iad a tha a' faotainn a thoradh. Agus 's ann mar sin a bha a' chailleach; 's i fhuair a' chlosach. Agus sìth do'n tì a dh' fhalbhas! Chan e a dh' fhoghnadh. Gabhadh e an rathad. Tha mi toilichte gun d' thàine sibh péin dhachaidh agus gun d' fhuair sibh sàbhailte cuidhte 's a' chailleach."

Iain MacDhomhnaill, 18/2/1951

NOTES

[1] Motif-numbers according to Stith Thompson (1955-8).
[2] The same motif occurs in a story from Benbecula. See Maclean 1957:46.
[3] For a shorter variant of this story (Aa.-Th. 1174) see Campbell 1900:96-7. For other references to the motif H1021; 1 see Bolte-Polívka; 2 (1915): 513; 3 (1918:16). In the archives of the School of Scottish Studies there are three other variants, from Acharacle, Benbecula and Raasay.
[4] In the main I have adhered to normal spelling and have not indicated the change of medial and final c to chc nor marked glide vowels as in e.g. cunabhalach nor the intrusive s as in e.g. thuirst. The change of final s to st I have indicated, e.g. solust, dorust. All these features are fairly regular in the narrators' dialect. It will be noted too that there are rare words in the text, e.g. aiseadh, beilghe, caimir inntinn, fialtas, gròbadh, sgàinteach.
[5] This is another motif, H1021.2.
[6] Below and to the east of Stob Choire Chlaurigh (Ordnance Survey spelling) in the Ben Nevis range.
[7] The informants are (a) the late Allan MacDonell, a native of Bunroy, Brae Lochaber. He died (aged 86) in January 1954. (b) John Macdonald, Aonachan (Highbridge), Lochaber. John Macdonald was born

And their father was greatly delighted when he saw them coming.

"I am indeed pleased that you have come," said he. "I had thought that you were lost because the night was so stormy."

They told him all that happened, what they themselves did and about the hag, the otter and the deer.

"Let it neither vex nor worry you that you did not get the deer. What was causing me anxiety was that you yourselves did not arrive home. And let the deer go the way it chooses."

And he said:

"It was the hag who got the carcase. Did you ask for a blessing of food (F382.3) when you received it from the hag?"

"Oh, we did not."

"That is the way the fairies acquire the livelihood that sustains them; it is they who get the substance of the food that is not blessed. And so it was with the hag; it was she who got the carcase. And peace be with the being that is gone! That alone would not be enough. Let it go its way. I am glad that you yourselves have come home and that you got out of the clutches of the hag."

John Macdonald,[7] 18/2/1951

at Aonachan on 15th October 1876. He was a railwayman from the age of 13 to 65. He is at present employed as a road-mender by the Inverness-shire County Council. Over 600 *Sagen* and other material were recorded from this man. He still (22/10/1959) has more to record.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

A. NOTES ON SCOTTISH PLACE-NAMES

13. *Some Early Name-Forms of the Stirlingshire* Carron

Of the six Scottish rivers bearing the name *Carron*—there are two in Ross-shire, and one each in Banffshire, Kincardineshire, Stirlingshire and Dumfriesshire—five are very sparsely documented; in one or two cases there appears to be no written evidence for these names before the seventeenth century. The exception is the Stirlingshire river of this name. Rising in the Lennox Hills and flowing into the Firth of Forth at Grangemouth, its geographical position on the border between Highlands and Lowlands, between Pictland and Anglian territory, as well as its proximity to the Scottish capital have contributed to the comparatively frequent appearance of this name in early documents.

The Register of the Great Seal alone has numerous entries referring to this river of which it will suffice to mention those occurring before 1600: *Carroune*, *Carroun* Robert I, *Caroun* 1450, *Carroun* 1539, *Carrone* 1542, *Carroun* (2) 1544, *Carron* 1552, *Carroun* 1553, *Carrone* 1565, *Carron* 1598. Though these entries are fairly late when compared with, let us say, English evidence for rivers of comparable size and importance, they represent a much better documentation than is available for the majority of Scottish water-courses.

We are, however, even more fortunate with regard to the Stirlingshire *Carron*, for although it is not mentioned in classical sources—and very few Scottish names are—there is a number of name-forms a good deal earlier than those quoted above, including one from the Registrum Episcopati Glasguensis of *c.* 1200, one from the Morton Chartulary of the time of Alexander II (1214-49), and two or three from " foreign " sources, i.e. English and Irish ones. The first of these, *Caroun*, poses no problem and can be left undiscussed in this context; the second, *Strathkawan*, is best examined in connection with the Irish sources; and it is the "foreign" references to our name which are to concern us in this note.

As these early forms are of great value in the interpretation not only of our Stirlingshire *Carron* but also of the five other instances of this name in Scotland for which documentary

evidence is so much poorer, their correct dating and proper assessment is of considerable importance, and the following paragraphs are to deal with this particular aspect of our material. These forms have all been discussed before by other scholars, and this note is partly intended for the critical examination of their statements and conclusions.

(a) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: *Cære*

We shall first look at an early English reference to our name, quoted by Johnston (1892:57; 1903:68; 1934:127), with slight variations in the wording, as " prob. O.E. Cron. 710 Caere". The identification of *Cære* with *Carron* goes back to Skene who (1867:LXXXI note 2; and 1886:270) compares the entry in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 710, " . . . And þam ylcan geare feaht Beorhtfrið ealdorman wið Pehtas betwux Hæfe and Cære, . . ." (Classen-Harmer 1926:13), with the corresponding reference in the Irish Annals of Tigernach—in this case for 711— "Strages Pictorum in campo Manand ab Saxonis . . .", and takes the plain of Manann[1] to be situated between the Stirlingshire *Carron* and the Linlithgow *Avon*. Plummer, whose judgment is normally very sound, accepts this identification in preference to others (1899:36; cf. also pp. 345 and 389 of his Index); but even as late as 1926, Classen and Harmer whose "List of Names of Places and People" to their edition of one manuscript of the Chronicle had been checked by Mawer, place question-marks against R. Carron for *Cære* and R. Avon for *Hæfe* (1926:142 and 145, respectively). The slight reluctance in various scholars' minds to regard this identification with a good deal of certainty, probably stems from the fact that not a single one of the many English *Avons* shows an early form in which the original *-ona*-suffix has dropped out. On the other hand, this is not a decisive argument against Skene and Plummer, and until some better proposal is put forward, we shall regard the *Cære* of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle as referring to our Stirlingshire *Carron*.

The telescopic style necessary for a dictionary of place-names, such as Johnston's, sometimes raises certain problems, however. In all other instances, his dates refer to the year in which the relevant manuscripts were actually written. In the case of a quotation from a chronicle, on the other hand, the date of the year in which the incident referred to occurred,

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is given. Now, none of the manuscripts extant of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle goes back to the beginning of the eighth century, the earliest entries in the earliest manuscript (A; cf. Plummer 1899:XXVII note 2) dating from about the year 900. This means that the actual source of Johnston's quotation is by no means contemporary and that he should at least have given the date of the manuscript in brackets after the original date.

This brings us to two further points: (1) What is the date of the manuscript(s) in which our reference occurs, and (2) was this entry for 710 A.D. ever contemporary, i.e. did it ever form part of the seventh and eighth century notes of which Anderson speaks (1922:XXIV)? As to the first question, one look at Thorpe's parallel edition of the six main manuscripts of the Chronicle (Thorpe 1861:69-71) would have shown Johnston that the Carron and the Avon are only mentioned in two of them, the entry in D (British Museum, Cotton MS. Tiberius B. IV) being *betwux Hæfe 7 Cære*, and the one in E (Bodleian MS. Laud 636), *betwix Hæfe 7 Cære*. Quite apart from the fact that it would have been important to note that our names appear in the dative case, and not in the nominative, their occurrence in two manuscripts to the exclusion of all others would certainly have been worthy of note, especially as these two MSS. are by no means the earliest we possess.

What is the significance of this situation? Without going into details, this is the essential information: D, itself a late compilation, is a copy of some other manuscript, with the earliest hands dating from about 1100, perhaps (Plummer 1899:XXXIV; Classen-Harmer 1926:XII), and E's first hand goes up to 1121 and seems to have been written at that time (Plummer 1899:XXXV; Classen-Harmer 1926:XI). E, although running closely parallel to D from the beginning to 890 inclusive, is by no means a transcript of D, however, but both are based on common originals (Plummer 1899: LXIV, LXI, and LXII). The first idea that comes to one's mind is that a later annotator added this passage about the locality in which the battle took place, to the originals of D and E, at a much later date. In that case, the entry could not possibly be contemporary or chronologically near to the event in 710, and Johnston's date would be completely unjustified.

The answer to our question (2) above may, however, not be as negative as would appear at a first glance. We can get

one step farther when we ask whether anything is known about the source of these additions to the annal 710 in D and E. Plummer (1899:LXVIII) has shown that one of the resemblances of D and E is "the expansion of many of the annals derived from Bede by the substitution of matter taken from the text of H.E. [Historia Ecclesiastica], for the brief chronological notices of the epitome which Bede appended to that work, H.E. V.24". He thinks that this enlargement of the Chronicle by means of the text of Bede took place in some northern monastery, probably Ripon; he is further of the opinion that this northern recension extended a copy of the Chronicle reaching up to 892, which had been sent to Ripon and subsequently travelled southwards again. According to him (1899:LXI note), the annal for 710 is one of the many entries affected by this expansion, which means that here we have an early twelfth century copy of a passage dating from 731 (Plummer 1896:CLI).

Our part of the annal, however, cannot be traced to either Bede's text or his chronological summary in Book V, chapter 24, and Plummer ascribes our addition tentatively to a group of northern annals (1899: LXVIII note 6), based on the Latin Northumbrian Annals embodied in Simeon of Durham and Roger of Hoveden. The extension of these annals may be said to have taken place in Ripon not earlier than the middle of the tenth century, because of a reference to Ripon in 948 (ms. D). Our passage incidentally also passed into Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum* of 1125-30 where it appears as *inter Heve et Cere* (Arnold 1879:111). The entry in Johnston, under *Carron*, should therefore read: *Cære* (dat.) *c.* 950 (1100) Anglo-Saxon Chronicle D, A.D. 710. This, although slightly more space-consuming, would be much more accurate and satisfactory than the present entry. Of course, the original may be earlier but too little is known about the northern source to give a certain date.

(b) Nennius or Irish Nennius: *Carun*

In the third edition of Johnston's *Place-Names of Scotland* (1934:127), the entry discussed above is followed by a reference to the so-called *Irish Nennius* in which a form *Carun* is supposed to be found. Unfortunately this reference, which would have given us a most welcome early example of our name, does not exist. The passage to which, for reasons which will become clear

in the next few paragraphs, he is obviously referring, reads like this (van Hamel 1932:31-2):

"... is e ainm an claide sin la Bretnu Guaul. 7 rofor-congair clod aili do denum a n-agaid Gaedeal 7 Cruithnech . . ."

This roughly corresponds to the Latin

"... vocatur Britannico sermone Guaul. Propterea iussit fieri inter [Brittones et] Pictos et Scottos . . ."

The main point is that there is no reference to the River Carron after the name *Guaul*. Johnston may have misunderstood either of two statements in this connection. In 1869, Robertson wrote: "The work called Nennius (in the tenth chapter), written A.D. 796, and finished in 858, also mentions the Carron" (Robertson 1869:140). If this were true as it stands, this would again supply us with the very desirable eighth to ninth century form of our river-name, but again an investigation into the genesis of the manuscripts of this work proves such a hope to be unfounded. A passage referring to the River Carron is contained in only two manuscripts, both of them thirteenth century ones (Mommsen 1898:165). In one, Cantabrigiensis collegii corporis Christi u. 139, it appears as an annotation in the margin; in the other, Cantabrigiensis Bibl. publ. Ff. I 27, it has been incorporated in the text. Diack (1924:143) quotes this passage in a different context, but although he chides the annotator for his "absurd explanation" and his poor "qualifications in the etymological field", he does not make it clear that the annotator's comments are thirteenth century additions. This is the second statement which may have mislead Johnston although, of course, both Mommsen's edition of *Nennius* (1898) and Van Hamel's edition of the *Irish Nennius* (1932) would have been available for checking in time for the third edition of his dictionary (1934).

The passage in question has been inserted after the word *Guaul* and is basically meant to be a comment on this name. The part of it which is of interest to us here, reads like this (with all its etymological imperfections):

"... Carutius postea imperator reedificavit et VII castellis munivit inter utraque ostia domumque rotundam politis lapidibus super ripam fluminis Carun, quod a suo nomine nomen accepit, fornica in voctoriae memoriam erigens construxit".

It belongs to the thirteenth century, not to the eighth or ninth, and is either contemporary with, or younger than, the *Caroun* of the Episcopal Register of Glasgow (see p. 96), and not 400 years older.

(c) Annals of Ulster: *Sraith Cairinn*

Our third problem is of a slightly different nature. It concerns a note in Skene's *Celtic Scotland* (1886: 250 note 35), dealing with events in which Domnall Breac was slain in Strathcarron in A.D. 641. The battle and Domnall Breac's death are registered by a number of Irish annals, in some of them twice under different years; and it appears that Reeves was the first to link the various spellings in those annals with our river-valley, in his edition of Adamnan's *Life of St Columba* (Reeves 1857:202 note). Though taken from O'Connor's imperfect version of 1812, Skene's quotation from the *Annals of Ulster* is practically identical with the transcription in Hennessy's later and more trustworthy edition (1887:104), but unfortunately he quotes the less convincing MS. Bodleian, Rawlinson B 489, which has *in bello Sraith Cairinn*, instead of the alternative MS. Trinity College Dublin, H.I. 8, with its *in bello sraith Cairuin* (see Hennessy loc. cit.; Anderson 1922:167 note 1). The first manuscript is, indeed, a close copy of the second down to the middle of the eleventh century, and *Cairinn* for *Cairuin* (-*uin* is the genitive ending; the nominative would end in -*un* or -*on*) is obviously an error—or a "correction" —on the part of the transcriber.[2] Skene knew the original and quoted it as an alternative in an earlier work (1867: 348). The *Annals of Ulster* were, as we have them, compiled at the end of the fifth century, but the language, of the Irish entries at least, is contemporary from the end of the seventh century onwards (Ó Máille 1910: 5-6).

Skene's second quotation is from the *Annals of Tigernach*, in respect of the same event: *in cath Srathacauin*, and he concludes from this that "the upper part of the Vale of the Carron . . . is called Strathcarron, but it also bore the name of Strathcawin" (1886:250 note 35). In support of this conclusion, he draws attention to a spelling *Strathkawan* in the Morton Chartulary (Morton 1853:XXXIV), which occurs in a thirteenth century charter dating from the reign of Alexander II. The writer is not in a position to assess the correctness of this spelling as he has not seen the original, but even if it were correct it would hardly be sufficient

evidence for the second name suggested by Skene for Strath-carron, a name which so closely resembles the first that a scribal error seems to be the much more likely explanation. Skene would have done better to turn to the second entry in Tigernach in which the battle is mentioned. In Stokes' edition (1896:209) this reads: *i cath sratha Carun*, with a note adding that the MS. has *carn* for *Carun*. Skene quotes this annal too (1867:72), but does not deduce from it the obvious implication that the other spelling had to be emended to *Ca[r]uin*. Stokes (1896:186) is quite justified in doing so. The one and only MS. in which these annals have survived is a fourteenth century one (McNeill 1914:39); the section containing our entries appears to be a somewhat abridged version of an Old Irish Chronicle whose language was retro-spective up to 712, and afterwards contemporary (McNeill 1914: 80 and 89).

It remains to add in passing that our annal and name are also to be found in two further Irish Annals, the so-called *Chronicum Scotorum* and the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*. The former, a sevententh century compilation containing an inaccurate abridgement of Tigernach's Annals or a copy of Tigernach's source, has *in bello Stratha Caruin* for 640 (Hennessy 1866:86), and *i ccath Stratha Carun* for 682 (*ibid.*: 108). The latter, an English translation of 1627, of a work now lost, mentions under 681 *the battle of Strathkaron*, followed by *Srait cormhaich* (Murphy 1896: 110). In addition, Skene (1867:131 and XLVII-XLVIII) prints the fourteenth century version of a *Cronica Regum Scottorum* to which he ascribes the original date 1165. This contains the reference *apud Carrun*.

Although many of these Irish Annals are interconnected or dependent upon each other, the variants they offer in the spelling of our *Carron* are of considerable interest to the interpreter of the name, particularly so as, ultimately, they seem to contain some fairly early material. The consistent spelling with one *-r-*, which links up with the English and early Scottish evidence, may have some bearing on the etymology of the name.

NOTES

[1] This is the genitive; the nominative—which is not recorded—would have been *Manu* in Old Irish. I am indebted, for this information and other helpful suggestions, to Professor K. H. Jackson who very kindly read the typescript.

[2] Since this journal went to press, the writer has had an opportunity of checking the reading of H. I. 8 in the manuscript room of Trinity College Dublin. Although not entirely unambiguous, it appears to be indeed *Cairuin*, in spite of the difficulties this provides.

[3] The writer has also been able to examine the original of this entry in MS. F. 3. 19, Trinity College Dublin. The Irish entry looks like a later addition in the same hand. The transcriptions from the Chronicum Scotorum (T.C.D., H.I. 18) were also found to be correct.

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<div align="right">W. F. H. NICOLAISEN</div>

B. OTHER NOTES

Book Reviews

Scotland Past and Present. By J. M. Reid. Oxford University
Press. 1959. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Reid's comprehensive survey of Scotland in 200 pages
is an outstanding achievement. The first chapter, "A view of
Scotland," assembles the primary historical and geographical
data, and it is followed by chapters on industry, agriculture
and fisheries, the church, education, the law, government and
"Arts and voices." The book concludes with a twelve-page
chronological table and a five-page bibliography.

The facts which are so abundantly and lucidly set forth in
the book make it admirably suited for the enlightenment of
the English and other races furth of Scotland. To informed
Scotsmen it may present no new facts, but it should stimulate
their thinking, for although the author writes as one who is
proud of many features in Scottish life and institutions, he is
unhesitatingly critical when criticism is called for, and he
expresses his opinions with candour and conviction.

Mr. Reid is properly sceptical about the modern cult of
clans and tartans, and with all his evident regard for the Church
of Scotland he admits that the presbyterian system facilitated
schism and secession. His principal complaints, however, are
directed against the changes in administration which have
superseded a "practical and active local democracy" in burgh
and parish by "a system of Welfare controlled from afar",

and against current educational policy, which has lost faith in the old Scottish values and is doing much to break up the life of rural communities and to increase rural depopulation. But Scottish traditions (which are so often also continental traditions, as distinct from the insular traditions of England) have been set aside also in building and town planning, while Scottish requirements in communications have been largely lost sight of with the centralisation of the railway system and the neglect of sea transport. The "drift to the south" between the two world wars had many aspects, and Mr. Reid points out especially how increased taxation drained capital from Scotland.

It may be accidental, but nearly all of Mr. Reid's strictures focus on two features in modern life—growing centralisation and the extension of governmental activity. Scottish industry, he observes, had flourished and grown under *laissez-faire*, and nationalisation has been no remedy for economic ills: the miners, he notes, have been more restive under the Coal Board than "in the last, depressed days of private ownership". But there is little enough prospect that the clock will be put back, and it is not at all clear that a separate Scottish legislature, which could hardly have a strong anti-Socialist complexion, would improve matters.

The historical information contained in the book reproduces a few—not many—of those hoary errors which the professional historians never succeed in extinguishing: the bull acknowledging the Scottish Church's independence of England is assigned to 1188; the office of superintendent is said to have been "avowedly temporary"; and the seventeenth century attempts to set up parish schools are said to have been "defeated". Mr. Reid has set one of his readers guessing with his statement that of the medieval bishops' sees "three are not towns at all": Iona and Lismore, yes, but which is the third? And Mr. Reid does not explain how the Church of Scotland's freedom to frame its own government and discipline can be a reality as long as the sovereign is pledged to maintain them as they were in 1707.

GORDON DONALDSON

The Ballad of Heer Halewijn, its forms and variations in Western Europe. By Holger Olof Nygard. The University of Tennessee Press. 1958.

"Of all ballads this has perhaps obtained the widest

circulation." Thus Francis James Child in opening his unusually extensive discussion of *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight*, which is the rather unfortunate name which has adhered to the English version of the *Sir Halewyn* legend. In Scotland we know it as *May Colvin*. Why this story with its countless variations and far-reaching ramifications should have been—as it apparently has been—the best-known tale in all European folklore in itself raises curious questionings. With its optional and varying alternatives, frills and readings, it is a ballad of endless variety, in part due as in all ballad traditions to the intrusion of elements drawn from elsewhere. But the core is invariable. A sinister knight by magical song has the dangerous gift of compelling maidens to follow him. When he gets his victim into the depths of the forest, he hangs her on a tree, alongside her predecessors. In this country and in France we prefer to have them drowned. In Denmark Ulver digs a grave. Sometimes the victim is offered a choice in the manner of death. In the original stark form, seen at its best in Sir Halewyn, the Dutch-Flemish version, the story is concerned with the maiden who by her craft and courage turns the tables against the villain and escapes the fate prepared for her.

Mr. Holger Nygard has written a quite extraordinary book. He has not indeed wandered as far afield as Poland, but for Western Europe he has taken the Halewyn tale in all its innumerable variations, and has studied it, in his own words, as "an excellent laboratory sample of ballad tradition". In an introductory chapter Mr. Nygard deals with many questions of method and of sources, and ends with the wise suggestion that "a certain scepticism is a salutary thing." Above all it may be suggested that a measure of scepticism is a useful quality when confronted with the question of what is a variant. Anyone with a bad memory can produce a variant at a moment's notice. We are in danger of forgetting how much of our ballad literature derives from printed material and broadsheets, much of it of comparatively recent date; editors and compilers, not unlike the original ballad-mongers, have not unnaturally been anxious to give their readers what they regarded as a good story, and have taken liberties accordingly. With his eye on Peter Buchan, Mr. Nygard wisely speaks of the ballad as "in great part a literary text which relapses into oral tradition at every other turn."

The number of "variants" listed by Mr. Nygard is somewhat overwhelming. Of the three main Germanic forms there are no

fewer than seventy-five (pp. 66-70). For Great Britain he records fourteen variants "on the short count"; but on what he calls "the long count," the number rises to ninety-four. After his initial chapter dealing with general questions of folklore and ballad-scholarship, Mr. Nygard's plan is to proceed by way of "linguistic areas." This means that there is a chapter on the ballad in Dutch, German and Flemish, followed by one on the ballad in Scandinavia, followed by one on its appearance in French (not forgetting French Canada), and lastly one in Great Britain. In each of these chapters Mr. Nygard subjects all his material to the most rigorous analysis; the story is taken in its successive stages, and the finest of combs is applied in order to catalogue the differences and to trace how the differences arose.

In recording astonishment that so intensive and exhaustive a comparative study should have been successfully completed, the only possible criticism (and it is perhaps rather a churlish one) is that the author has done his work too conscientiously and too thoroughly! This, quite candidly, is not a book to be read with unmixed enjoyment. There is too much of it! It is full of interesting points and suggestions, but few will be able to face up to page after page of symbols and lengthy lists setting out the results of the author's assiduous winnowings of all the relevant variants. It is all too much of a struggle! Interest revives in the last, and regrettably short, chapter dealing with the conclusions on the whole matter. Here we get a general view which explains much, and which is entirely satisfying. There can scarcely be any doubt that the Dutch-Flemish version (which gives its name to the whole tradition) is incomparably the finest of all the ballads in this enormous proliferation. But what it means is more obscure. Probably we should not be far wrong in regarding Halewyn as "the embodiment of demonic evil" (the phrase comes from Mr. Nygard in an earlier chapter); and the King's daughter who rides forth with a song in her heart and on her lips defeats this supernatural devilry by her courage and resourcefulness, and returns home a triumphant heroine, loudly blowing her trumpet at her father's gate. But thereafter as the ballad moves from country to country, degeneration sets in on both sides. The tale is rationalised by the elimination of the supernatural elements—after all a decapitated head does not talk! Halewyn becomes an unscrupulous thief and a robber, inciting his victim to steal from her father, and murdering her for her fine clothes and her

jewels. Or they become lovers of a kind, with a long courtship behind them. And there is also degeneration on the side of the woman whose heroism evaporates. In the German versions where the three cries for help play an increasingly important part, she is no longer the self-reliant heroine. When the brother does not arrive in time, she does not even triumph over evil. And when we come to Scotland and our own May Colvin or Collean, so far from returning in triumph, she is afraid to go home and meet her father! Indeed she tries to bribe the talking parrot not to give her away. This is indeed a sad falling-off!

Mr. Nygard has indeed written an amazing book, and in the course of his winnowing, sifting and tabulating this vast mass of ballad literature, he raises quite an army of interesting hares, which cannot even be glanced at here. But let the reader who would venture on this work of monumental industry be sure not merely that his French and German are in order (which is not too much to ask!); he should also brush up his Dutch and his Danish, his Norwegian and his Swedish. Even then he will probably find to his regret that he has to skim the short section which takes him to Iceland.

ALEXANDER GRAY

John Maitland of Thirlestane. By Maurice Lee, Jr. Princeton University Press. London: Oxford University Press. 1959. 314 pp. 48s.

In recent years the interest of American historians has turned increasingly towards fields other than their own, with the result that the history of Scotland has received a great deal of attention from this quarter and many valuable contributions have appeared for which the Scottish historian is duly grateful.

Dr. Maurice Lee is no newcomer to this field, having several years ago published a full length study of James Stewart, Earl of Moray. As his most recent contribution to the history of Scotland, Dr. Lee has now written a life of John Maitland of Thirlestane who from 1584 until 1595 guided the destiny of Scotland, in the first instance as Secretary, a post which he held, as had his more famous elder brother—Maitland of Lethington, until 1591, while from 1587 until his death in 1595 he ruled also as Chancellor, his acceptance of this office

being in Dr. Lee's opinion "a political mistake of the first order."

The political and religious unrest and intrigue which surrounded James VI and his Chancellor in these years is closely analysed and Thirlestane's efforts on behalf of his royal master are carefully scrutinised, the thesis being postulated throughout the work that much of the success enjoyed by James VI during this period can be attributed to Maitland's policy. Certainly by the end of his life, the Chancellor had steered the King through many dangers from both church and baronage while the creation of a reasonably effective administrative machine had done much to reduce the indispensability of the hereditary nobility. Conciliation had momentarily appeased the Church and while the King evidently looked upon this measure as a necessary evil to be remedied as soon as possible, Maitland appears to have believed that such an ecclesiastical compromise as had been effected, could endure the test of time.

The period is notable in many other respects. Steps were taken to improve the efficiency of the Court of Session while strenuous efforts were made to ensure that the course of justice was not impeded. The "erection" of temporal lordships went far to attach support to the crown, which was further strengthened by the admission to Parliament of shire representatives. In all these movements Dr. Lee sees the hand of Thirlestane leading his royal master "by the nose", and while this interpretation is open to some modification, there can be little doubt that Maitland's efforts in these directions cannot be ignored.

In the past, a general criticism levelled against similar works of scholarship, emanating from historians outwith Scotland, has been that they have relied so heavily upon secondary and printed sources that an impartial assessment of the available evidence has not always been made. No criticism can be levelled against Dr. Lee in this respect as he has made extensive use of manuscript sources from the Scottish Record Office and other repositories.

Nevertheless, it may be felt that the author has relied too heavily upon the opinions of others in his portrayal of the historical background which provides the canvas against which the achievements of Maitland must be measured. The uncritical citation of works which are in themselves not completely satisfactory does lead the author into making certain

assertions which are not completely accurate, and this in itself must leave some doubt as to the ultimate value of conclusions based upon such evidence.

More than once, Dr. Lee unhesitatingly accepts the traditional viewpoint of Andrew Lang concerning the relationship between the Church and the Earl of Morton, who is represented as a despoiler of the revenues of the Church while in fact the Regent was but pursuing a policy which had been successfully carried out for many years. A less serious assertion, but nevertheless an inaccurate one, is the acceptance of the view that religious institutions to which parish churches were annexed "made their own arrangements for the performance of the spiritual offices of the parish", although in practice such arrangements were normally controlled by vicarage settlements made with approval of the bishop.

Such judgments, although they must be borne in mind, do not however alter the essential purpose of this volume, which is to study the statecraft of Maitland of Thirlestane, and in this respect one cannot but praise the treatment accorded to this subject. Maitland's personal ambitions and political astuteness, both of which show in his attempts to strengthen the power of the crown, are all skilfully traced, although, as is the case in so many biographical studies, the reader does occasionally feel that the individual is being allowed to fill a disproportionate amount of a picture in which he played but a part.

Maitland, as Dr. Lee does appreciate, if at the same time not fully accepting, could only work within the framework of royal approval and his most enduring successes are therefore to be found where the aims of master and servant were one, this being particularly evident in the political sphere in which the Chancellor laboured, with the King's approval, to build up an official class as a counter to an over powerful nobility. It must be remembered, however, that in his pursuit of this policy Maitland was merely building upon foundations which others had already laid, and carrying towards fruition a system towards which successive Stewart monarchs had been groping for many years.

The one new factor to be considered in the second half of the sixteenth century was the attitude of the Church which in the first half of the century had been the firm ally of the established regime. The Reformation had sundered this alliance and once more the Church had become a force to be reckoned

with. Nevertheless, by the end of Maitland's life the Church had come to realise that a compromise between itself and the State must be accepted and that the ideas of Andrew Melville on ecclesiastical independence could not be tolerated. The solution adopted at the end of the sixteenth century was one in which Presbyterian government, if not ecclesiastical freedom, was tolerated and this solution appears to have been pleasing to most moderates, including Maitland, although not to James VI himself. Such a compromise obviously did not please the extreme Presbyterians either, although it is interesting to note that such a solution to the problem of Church-State relations, might well, without its Presbyterian implications, have been acceptable to Knox whose views in this matter cannot be equated, as they are by Dr. Lee, with Melville's famous dictum on the two kingdoms, since in the eyes of Knox, Church and State were one.

It is when dealing with the Church that this study tends to be slightly unsatisfactory. Knox may have felt it desirable that all the property of the old Church should pass to the new, but he never laid claim to this as such, the monastic temporalities being tacitly relinquished to the nobility. The mistaken view taken of the policy of the Regent Morton has already been noted while the repetition of the idea that the Highlands remained predominantly Catholic does not always stand up to examination. It may be superficially true in the areas controlled by the Catholic earls, but the complete failure of a possible counter-Reformation attests to the fact that if vast areas of the Highlands had not become Protestant, they were at least indifferent to both old and new faiths.

If the question of the Church was the "one major matter of domestic policy" in which James VI did alter the line laid down by his adviser, it does not necessarily follow that the King was in error in this matter. Maitland had shown that some compromise could be reached with the Church, it was James who saw in the restoration of episcopacy his only method of controlling the Church and even the State itself, and the correctness of his decision in this matter may best be judged by the partial collapse of royal power which followed the abolition of episcopacy in 1689.

It would seem therefore that from the point of view of political expediency, it was James, rather than Maitland, who showed true wisdom in this matter. Episcopacy may not have been popular but only a small minority seemed to have

fervently opposed its reintroduction. The Act of Annexation and the Act of 1592 establishing Presbyterianism, both of which were prompted by Maitland, raised as many problems as they solved, one of the most serious being that no permanent endowment as yet existed by which the Church might be maintained, and while Dr. Lee appears to feel that James VI did not want the Church to have the teinds, it is perhaps nearer the mark to say that while the exclusion of the teinds from the Act of Annexation appears to have recognised the claim of the Church to the teinds, nothing was done to implement this because no practical solution to the problem presented itself.

On constitutional matters the policy of Maitland and that of the King was much closer, and while much of the credit in this respect may be given to the Chancellor, it should not be forgotten that this identity of interest makes it difficult to apportion credit to one or the other. On certain points of detail, minor slips do occur however. The Act of 1428 by which James I attempted to introduce shire representatives into Parliament, not only appears by a misprint as an Act of 1528, but is treated as a measure which in its provision for the election of representatives, gradually withered, while in fact it was simply inoperative, and lairds who continued to attend did so under their traditional rights. The Act of 1587, which did eventually effect this, is moreover, not very satisfactorily analysed and while, as Dr. Lee points out, Maitland was undoubtedly attempting to conciliate the Kirk at this period, it does not mean that the frequent attempts which had been made to stress the authority of King and Parliament over all other assemblies had been completely abandoned. Maitland's motives in this respect were certainly financial and the creation of a body of support amongst the lairds, but both these factors appear to be complementary to the initial design of strengthening Parliament at the expense of the General Assembly, while the regularisation of the laird's constitutional position was essential if the King was to use Parliament to further his own political ends.

Such blemishes as this book possesses are trivial, however, when compared with its merits, and more studies of this type are urgently required for a fuller understanding of the history of Scotland. While this is an admirable study, the overall reservation must, however, be made that while in this work it is the figure of Maitland which appears to dominate the

scene, the ultimate conclusion must remain that the actual creator of the "Stewart Despotism in Scotland" was in the final instance James VI himself who saw what his Chancellor failed to observe, that if all was not to be lost, the Church, as well as the nobility, must be bridled rather than conciliated.

<div align="right">IAN B. COWAN</div>

Pitcastle, a Cruck-Framed House in Northern Perthshire

This building seems worth placing on record because it differs in one important respect from other examples of cruck-framed houses that have so far been noted in Scotland (cf. published material cited in Dunbar 1959). Moreover, the house is now uninhabited and is falling into decay, so that many of its more notable structural features seem likely to disappear within the next few years. The chief interest of the building, which is probably of seventeenth-century date (*infra*), lies in the fact that it was evidently erected as the residence of a small laird and therefore stands in a class apart from other cruck-framed buildings in Scotland, the surviving examples of which are invariably no more than cottages, small farms or outbuildings.

The "old laird's house", as it is sometimes called, now roofless and derelict, stands behind the farmhouse of Pitcastle about 2½ miles S.E. of Pitlochry (NN/973554). It runs roughly north and south and measures about 53 feet by about 23 feet 9 inches over walls that vary in thickness from 3 feet 6 inches to 4 feet 1 inch, and rise to a height of two storeys. The masonry is of rubble, set in mud mortar, and the roof was thatched. The original windows were evidently unglazed and consisted of heavy, slatted, wooden frames, which were bonded into the masonry of the jambs; only one frame now remains *in situ*, the remainder being represented by socket holes only. The existing example (Pl. VII, fig. 2) has a daylight of 1 foot 5 inches by 11 inches and was originally provided with three vertical slats; subsequently it appears to have been adapted for glazing. The house has been open to the weather for some years and many of its internal fittings and minor structural features have already disappeared. In compiling the present account therefore, free use has been made of an earlier description of the building which was written by the late J. H. Dixon,

F.S.A. SCOT. (1925:143-5), more than thirty years ago, when the house was more or less intact.

The main entrance-doorway, which is in the west wall, has chamfered arrises, and behind the checks there is a socket for a sliding draw-bar; the door itself was nail-studded and was provided with a triangular peep-hole. The doorway gives access to the larger of the two main divisions that comprise the ground floor (Pl. VII, fig. 1). This apartment, which occupies the north part of the house, was latterly subdivided by timber partitions to form a kitchen and a parlour. Both rooms were reached from a passage running along the west wall, and the partition between the kitchen and the parlour is said to have been decorated with a "painted arcade" (Dixon 1925:144). The northernmost room, which was the kitchen, has a large fireplace with a wooden lintel in the gable wall, and on either side of the fireplace there is a cupboard. The parlour has a large fireplace in the south wall and a deep cupboard in the east wall. The parlour fireplace, however, is plainly an insertion and this suggests that the subdivision just described is secondary, and that in the original arrangement the north division of the house contained a single large room only, serving both as kitchen and parlour. The south division of the house, which is separated from the remaining portion by a substantial stone partition, contains a small apartment having a single window but no fireplace. This room is said to have been the laird's office or private study.

The plan of the first floor (see p. 115) follows that of the ground floor. A forestair against the west wall rises to an entrance doorway which gives access to the north division of the house. At one time this has evidently contained two rooms for there are fireplaces both in the north and in the south walls; but, as on the floor below, the fireplace in the south wall is an insertion, and it seems likely therefore that in the original arrangement there was a single large apartment only, forming a common sleeping room. There is no communication between the two divisions of the building at this level, and the small room that occupies the south end of the house is reached by a stone stair opening off the south jamb of the main entrance-doorway. This apartment, which enjoyed considerably privacy, was presumably the laird's own bedroom; there is a fireplace in the gable wall.

It is difficult to estimate the age of the building, but the chamfered arrises of the jambs of the main entrance-doorway

PLATE VI
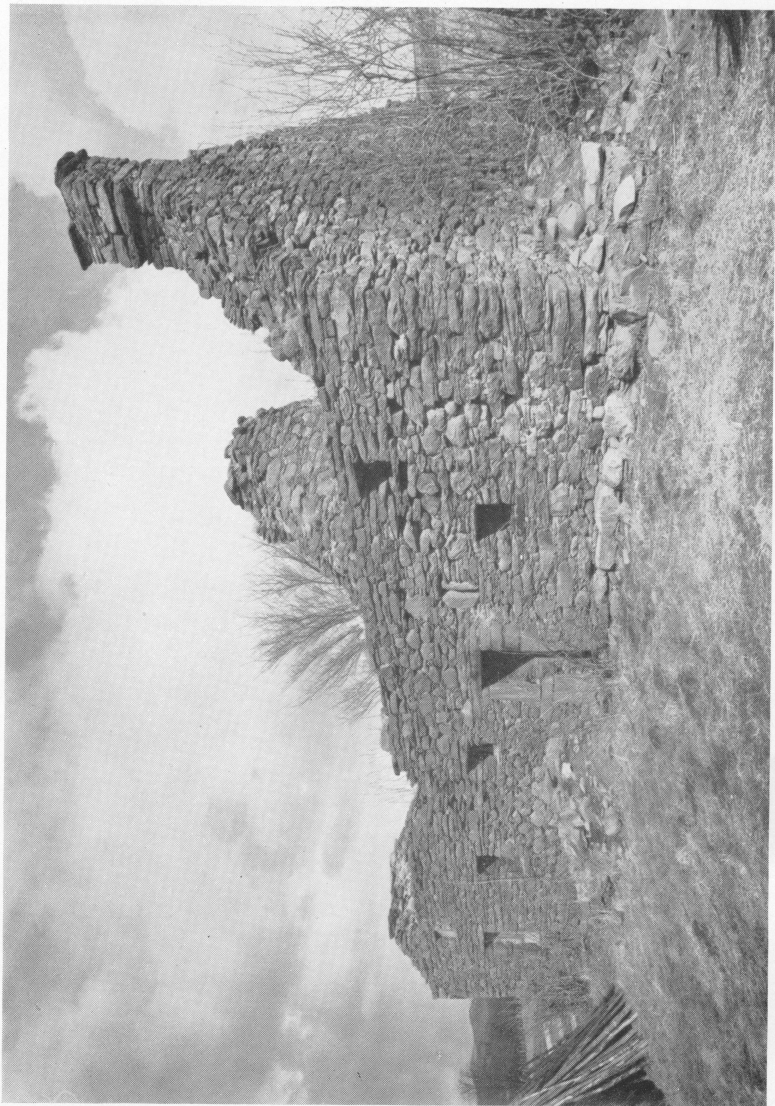
Pitcastle, Perthshire: from the south. The cruck-framed residence of a small laird.
(For this, and Plate VII, see pp. 113-16).

PLATE VII

FIG. 1—Pitcastle, Perthshire: the interior.
Note vertical slot for wooden cruck-blade (left), parlour fireplace (lower centre),
doorway to the laird's office, and corner stair. Entrance on right.
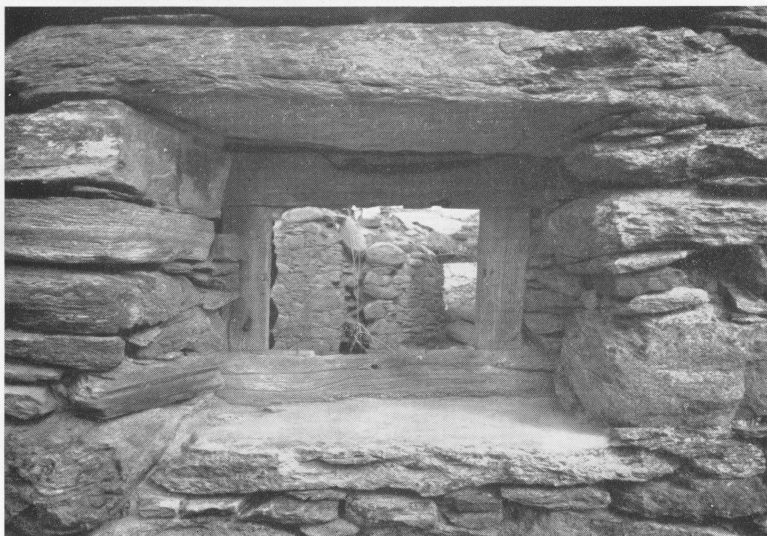
FIG. 2—Pitcastle, Perthshire: detail of window.
Note (inside) the vertical slot for one of the cruck-blades of the timber
framework of the house.

CRUCKS

KITCHEN

PARLOUR

OFFICE

PASSAGE

Up

Up

GROUND FLOOR

BEDROOMS

BEDROOM

Dn

Dn

FIRST FLOOR

⬛ ORIGINAL WORK

▨ LATER WORK

PITCASTLE

20   15   10   5   0   5 FEET
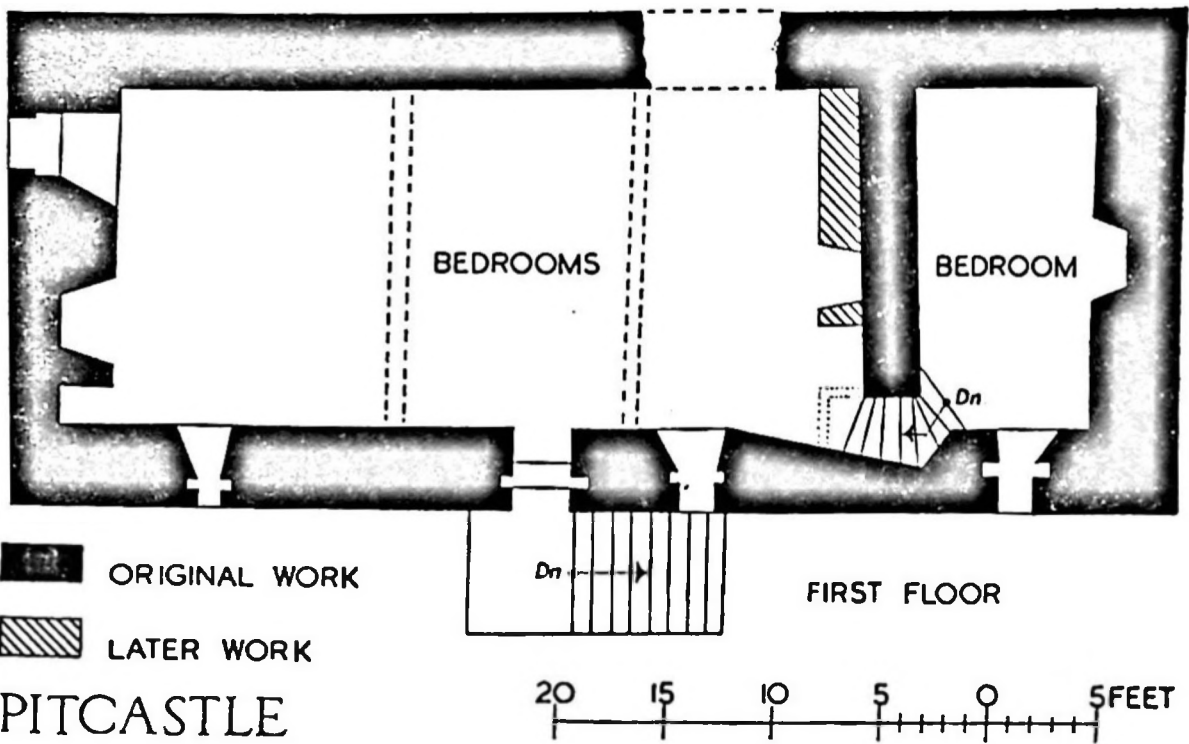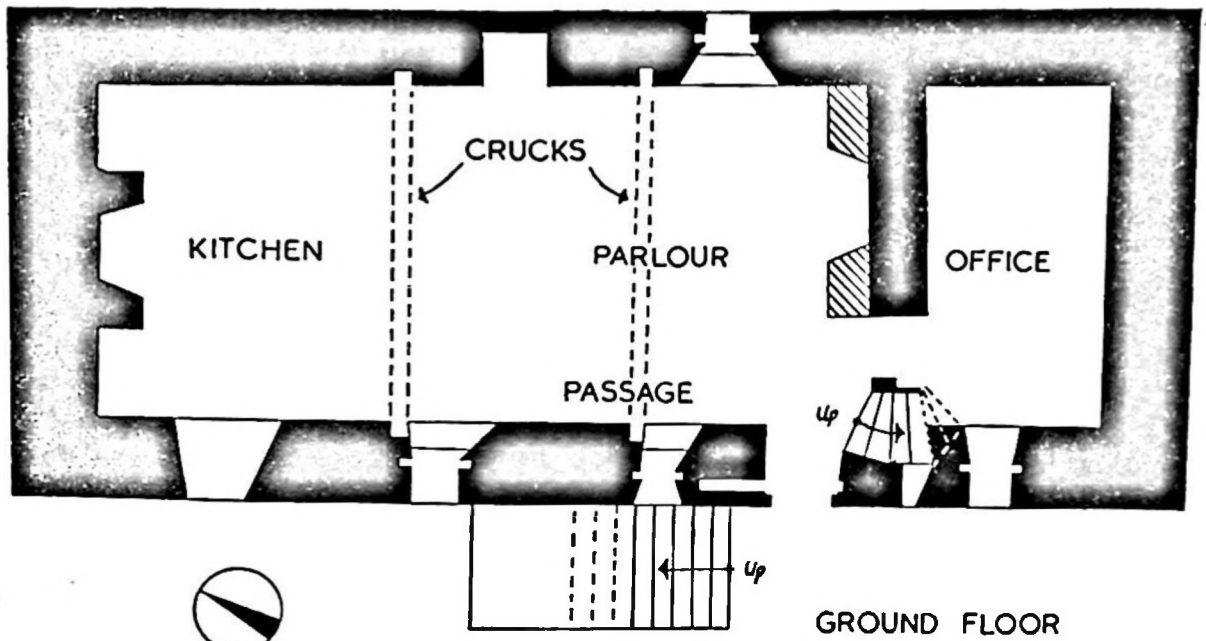
Pitcastle, Perthshire: plan of ground and first floors.
Note wall-slots for the timber framework of the house, which comprised
two pairs of cruck trusses.

are typical of the seventeenth century, and all the other features noted above are consistent with a date in this period. The lands of Pitcastle were at this time in the possession of the Robertsons of Tenandry (cf. Robertson 1860:64-5), who held them of the Earls of Atholl, but it is uncertain who was responsible for the erection of the "old laird's house".

The north division of the house originally incorporated two pairs of cruck trusses, the northernmost pair at one time framing the partition that separated the kitchen from the parlour. Only a fragment of one blade now remains *in situ*, the position of the other trusses being marked by slots in the walls. The remaining blade is rectangular in section measuring about 10 inches by 8 inches at base; it rises vertically from just above ground level to a height of 6 feet, that is to say to about first-floor level, at which point it begins to curve inwards. The upper portion of the blade is missing and consequently it is impossible to determine either the manner in which the crucks met at the ridge or the disposition of tie-beams and collars. The remaining truss shows no traces of peg-holes such as would suggest that an upper member had been scarfed to it (cf. the examples quoted by Walton 1957:155-62), but so much of the blade is missing that it is impossible to be certain on this point. The ridge appears to have been set at a height of about 18 feet above ground level.

By virtue of the fact that it bears the whole weight of the roof, the cruck framework is particularly suitable for use in buildings the walls of which are made of flimsy materials such as sods or wattle and daub. No doubt structures of this sort were once common in Scotland, but few remain to-day, and Pitcastle is again of interest because it demonstrates in an extreme form a characteristic common to the great majority of cruck-framed buildings that now exist in Scotland, namely the incorporation of a timber framework within stone walls. Local building traditions must surely have been very strong if they could cause the builders of Pitcastle to select and fashion crucks, only to set them within substantial stone walls that were perfectly capable of bearing the weight of a normal coupled roof.

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JOHN DUNBAR

Tools for Making Ropes

While studying salmon net fishing on the River Tweed in
1958 I was shown portable tools for rope making. The gear,
referred to as "the teels" [tilz], was stowed in the net-loft of a
shiel belonging to the Berwick Salmon Fisheries Company.
Mr. Tom Elliott, foreman at Low Bells Shiel, and his crew
kindly demonstrated the use of the teels: I wish to thank them,
and the Directors of the Company, for very generous help
throughout my investigations.

The teels are designed for the manufacture of three-stranded
rope, which used to be made from old and unserviceable fishing
nets. Two processes are involved: firstly, twisting the three
strands; secondly, laying them into the completed rope.

The first teel (Fig. 1) consists of a cogged iron wheel,
rotated by a cranked handle, and geared to three smaller
wheels each of which turns a hook. This specimen had lost
its wooden framework, in which it should stand about 3 feet
6 inches high.

About one yard of net is gathered onto each hook of the
teel. Three men then take the lengths of net and walk them
backwards, holding them well off the ground, until they are
drawn taut. The teel is then rotated in order to twist these
lines into strands (Pl. VIII, fig. 1). When the strands have
been twisted they are then all attached to the second teel.
This (Fig. 2) is similar to the first except that there is only one
small wheel and hook. The framework of the second teel is
mounted on wheels and should have a footboard projecting at
the back: it had broken off this specimen.

The next part of the operation is to lay the rope against
the lay of the strands by rotating the second teel. A wooden
"tap" [tap] is used to impart a smooth twist and even tension
during this process: for description of another device used for

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this purpose see Fenton (1959:104), and (1959:105) where his informant mentions another type more akin to that at present under discussion.

The tap is a truncated conical wedge: this specimen ranges in diameter from 3 inches to 6 inches, is 8½ inches long, and is fitted with a transverse handle 12½ inches long. It has three equidistant grooves cut down the sides to take the strands of

FIG. I
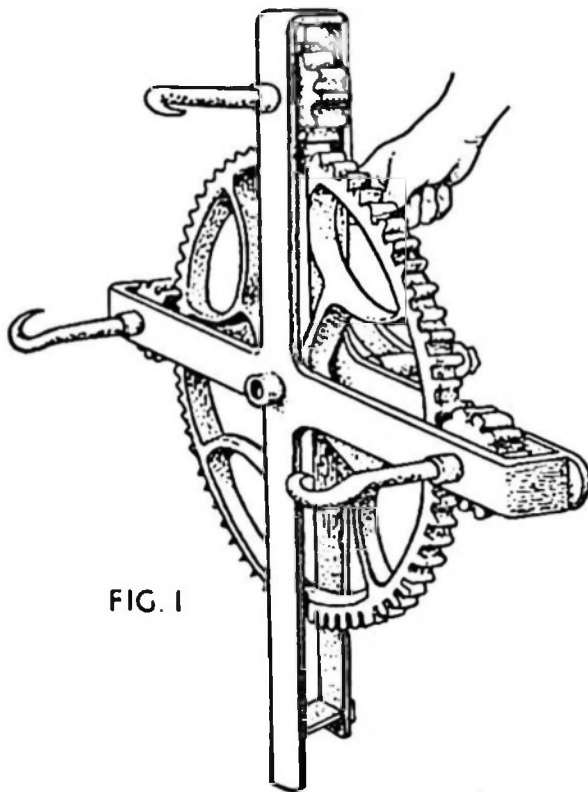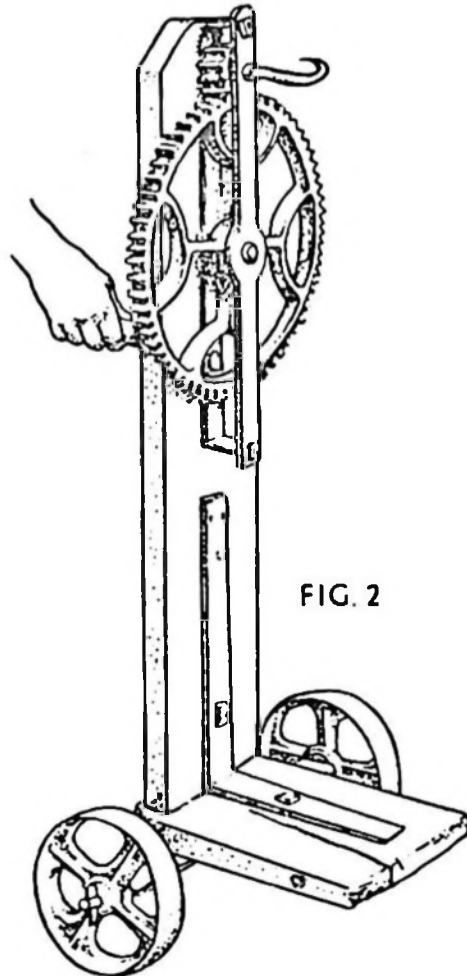
FIG. 2

rope, and is inserted between the strands with its narrower end as close as possible to the second teel. As this teel is rotated the tap is moved along towards the first teel, paying out the three-stranded rope behind it. During this process the second teel, with its operator standing on the footboard, travels towards the first teel to allow for the loss of length through twisting. When the tap is up against the first teel it is removed, the ends of the completed rope are whipped, and the rope is cut from the teels (see Pl. VIII, fig. 2).

The quality of rope made by this process is not, of course, very good, and the life of the rope (which depends on the state of the condemned nets) is short in comparison with the manilla

PLATE VIII

FIG. 1—Twisting the strands (see p. 117).

FIG. 2—Moving the tap towards the first teel, as the rope is laid (see p. 118).

lines used to-day. In the conditions prevailing before the First World War, however, it was economically worthwhile making bolt-ropes for the nets in this way. A proverbial sense of thrift was also doubtless satisfied. Mr. Elliott last made ropes from old nets in 1913.

The word "teels" is not reported with this meaning in any dictionary or glossary known to me. This long-vowel form appears to be the local pronunciation of "tools" among the sea-fishermen along the coast north and south of the mouth of the Tweed. The word has been given a specialised meaning by the river-fishermen who apply it to their rope-making gear.

I should be interested to learn of any other examples of this (or similar) portable rope-making apparatus elsewhere in Great Britain, and particularly what the apparatus is called. Scottish sources known to me afford no intermediate technical stages between the thraw cruik or wimble and the heavy machinery in permanent rope-walks. Photographs of a heavy jack, resembling the second teel but having four hooks, and of "tops", from the Rope and Twine Manufactory at Wribbenhall in Worcestershire, are to be found in Jobson (1953:160), a source to which my attention has been drawn by Mr. B. R. S. Megaw.

The Heibergske Samlingar contain two portable Norwegian tools, both constructed of wood, which Konservator Svein L. Vold was kind enough to show me: one is a wooden-cogged tool similar in type to the second Tweedside teel; in the other Norwegian tool the main wheel is formed as a pulley and drives four small bobbins, each bearing a hook, by means of a loop of cord. Examples of similar tools from Sweden and Denmark are illustrated in Sayce (1939: Pl. XXIX, fig. a, and Pl. XXV, fig. c).

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ILLUSTRATIONS

Photographs: S. F. Sanderson, 1958.

STEWART F. SANDERSON

A Symposium on Material Culture Research, 1959

An informal meeting of people professionally engaged in research on the Material Culture of the British Isles was held at the School of Scottish Studies, 9th-12th September 1959. The Symposium was attended by the research staff of the School and some of their colleagues, including members of the Department of Prehistoric Archæology and of the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, as well as by the following representatives: From *England:* Mr. Andrew Jewell and Mr. J. G. Jenkins (University of Reading Museum of English Rural Life); from *Ireland:* Mr. A. T. Lucas (National Museum of Ireland), Mr. Kevin Danaher (Irish Folklore Commission), Professor Estyn Evans (Committee on Ulster Folklife and Traditions), and Mr. George B. Thompson (Ulster Folk Museum); from the *Isle of Man:* Mr. A. M. Cubbon (Manx Museum); from *Wales:* Dr. Iorwerth Peate and Mr. Vincent Phillips (Welsh Folk Museum).

Discussions, which principally concerned academic aspects of Material Culture studies in the British Isles, with emphasis on scope and methods of research, began with a review by Dr. Peate of "The Problems of Folklife Research" followed by Mr. Jenkins on "Fieldwork and Documentation". The relationship to Folklife Research of Archæology and Agricultural History were discussed by Mr. Charles Thomas and Mr. Jewell respectively; while Mr. Stuart Maxwell considered "The Museum's part in Folklife Studies". The work of the School of Scottish Studies and its Material Culture section was reviewed by the Director, Mr. Megaw, and Dr. Whitaker respectively, and at the conclusion of the meeting some of the results of two local surveys recently undertaken by the School were described—St. Kilda, by Dr. Whitaker, and Smearisary (Moidart), by Mr. Megaw and Mr. Maclean.

Many important points were raised in the course of subsequent discussions, in which the principal speakers were Mr. Lucas, Mr. Danaher, Professor Evans, Mr. Thompson and Dr. Peate himself. This was probably the first meeting of the kind to be held in the British Isles, and there was general agreement that it had not only served a useful purpose, but that it should, if possible, be followed by others.

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This work is a supplement to the Scottish History Society's *Contribution to the Bibliography of Scottish Topography* published in 1917. The arrangement followed is the same as the original although a somewhat more detailed subject classification has been adopted in Part II. The contents of the following transactions and Proceedings have been included: *The Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, The New and Third Spalding Clubs, The Old Edinburgh Club, The Orkney Antiquarian Society, The Scottish Church History Society, The Scottish Ecclesiological Society, The Scottish History Society, The Scottish Record Society, The Scottish Text Society,* and *The Stair Society.*

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SCOTTISH STUDIES

VOLUME 4 : PART 2

*

The Editor regrets that, due to the loss in transmission of two copies of the typescript, it is not possible to include in this issue the second article on the island of St. Kilda (promised in Part 1) in which Prof. Ian Whitaker was to have dealt with ethnographical aspects of St. Kildan life.

Calum I. Maclean

The Late Calum I. Maclean

Dr. C. I. Maclean, Senior Research Fellow in the School of Scottish Studies, who died in South Uist in his forty-fifth year on 16th August 1960, was, according to one well qualified to judge, "the best equipped and most successful collector of all time of Scottish Gaelic tradition".*

Born on 6th September 1915, Calum Iain Maclean was the third son of the late Malcolm Maclean, the tailor of Raasay, and Christina Nicolson, a native of Braes in Skye. Both Nicolsons and Macleans were keenly interested in oral lore and literature, and both produced men who enjoyed a reputation for song making. The family proved exceptionally gifted, two brothers becoming doctors, and two secondary school headmasters—one of these being Somhairle Mac Gilleathain, widely regarded as the finest Scots-Gaelic poet since the eighteenth century.

While at Portree Secondary School, Calum Maclean became deeply attracted to the study of the Gaelic language and literature and, after distinguishing himself in W. J. Watson's Celtic class in successive years at Edinburgh University (1935-1937), he graduated in 1939 with first-class Honours in Celtic under J. Carmichael Watson. Awarded the McCaig and Macpherson Scholarships, he continued in Dublin his studies in Old Irish, under Osborn Bergin, and in Mediæval and Modern Welsh under J. Lloyd-Jones.

While studying in Ireland Maclean soon became interested in its folklore, inspired (according to his own account) mainly by the influence and writings of Douglas Hyde and, having acquired particular skill in the modern Irish of the Connaught Gaeltacht, he was appointed by Professor Delargy as full-time collector in that area for the Irish Folklore Commission. He soon proved to be the ideal collector of oral tradition and, when the Commission extended its work on Gaelic folklore to Scotland in 1946, Maclean was the obvious choice for the task. Within little more than four years he had assembled, in Barra, South Uist and Benbecula, the largest collection of folk-tales yet made

* Professor J. H. Delargy, Honorary Director of the Irish Folklore Commission, in a letter of 20.8.60.

in Scotland—only to be compared with that of J. F. Campbell of Islay.

Meanwhile Maclean's old University planned to set up in Edinburgh an archive of the oral traditions of all parts of Scotland as a central feature of a new research institute, the School of Scottish Studies, and with characteristic generosity Professor Delargy not only released Maclean for this purpose but also (among other things) deposited in the School a complete microfilm copy of the eighteen MS volumes of Hebridean material which Maclean had assembled during his work for the Irish Folklore Commission.

With Maclean's appointment at New Year, 1951, the School of Scottish Studies may be said to have begun, and during the next nine and a half years he gave himself unsparingly to the great work of recording the traditional tales, customs and beliefs of his own countrymen. It has been estimated that the enormous Gaelic collection he made during that time amounts to nearly a hundred miles of tape; but his constant warning was that this was very far from being enough. Realising the urgency of gathering any comparable material remaining in the non-Gaelic regions of Scotland, he made extensive recordings in Shetland, and some also in the Borders, but he was only too well aware of the impossibility of attempting single-handed anything like adequate coverage over wide areas of the country. The labour and often great personal hardship involved could only have been borne by one passionately devoted to what he regarded as a patriotic duty. The very first recordings he made for the School included no less than 524 Gaelic tales from a roadman encountered (as he afterwards recalled) "in the dead of winter, and Lochaber lay white and deep in snow". The last were made, literally, on his death bed in South Uist. Of the physical difficulties of his last years (especially acute since the loss of his left arm in 1957) he rarely spoke, but somehow still contrived with indomitable courage and good humour to travel great distances, often on foot and carrying a portable tape-recorder, collecting a wide range of valuable material much of which would otherwise have been lost for ever.

The full significance and range of the oral material preserved as a result of Calum Maclean's work in Scotland will only become apparent after years of study, but already Scandinavian and other scholars who have had access to it have expressed their admiration for the skill and care displayed in the recording no less than the intrinsic value of the material.

The unique combination of his inherited gifts, training and experience, lends particular weight to his own final conclusion that, for richness in oral tradition, no area of these islands—not excepting even the west of Ireland—can compare with South Uist. It was entirely characteristic of him, however, that, always appreciating the necessity for a systematic, "geographical" approach to cultural studies, he devoted years of his life to the far more difficult task of seeking out and recording the comparable material so widely dispersed in the mainland areas of the country, much of it (as he said recently) "as fine as anywhere in Scotland, but, to collect it properly and in time, not one but a whole team of collectors is necessary".

Because so much of Maclean's life was spent in recording, and the concomitant heavy labour of transcription and indexing—the School's index system is based on the translation made by him in 1952 of the Uppsala system—he had little time for publication, and an important research project he began eight years ago was interrupted by his illness. Nevertheless he contributed important articles and reviews to many journals, Scandinavian and German as well as British and Irish. His book on *The Highlands* (Batsford 1959) is almost unique among general books on this subject, not only by reason of its width of knowledge, but also because it presents Highland history and the contemporary scene uncompromisingly from the point of view of a Gaelic-speaking Highlander—it is the Scots *Gaidhealtachd* as seen from within.

He lived long enough to hear a few weeks before his death that the University of St. Francis Xavier, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, had decided to confer upon him the degree of LL.D., *honoris causa*, in recognition of his work for the preservation of Gaelic oral tradition.

Innumerable friends throughout Scotland, and folklore scholars in many lands, will mourn with us the loss of Calum Maclean, a man whose heritage and life's work were indissolubly united, and whose earnest purpose it was, not only to record, but also to cherish and safeguard the traditions of his own people.

<div style="text-align: right">B. R. S. M.</div>

Calum Iain Mac Ghille Eathain

nach maireann

Chan 'eil duine a bha eòlach air Calum Iain Mac Ghille Eathain, M.A., nach bì 'g a chaoidh's g a ionndrainn. Tha aobhar aca air, oir bha e 'n a dhuine càirdeil, ceanalta, anns nach robh mórchuis no uaill, agus e an còmhnuidh làn spòrs agus fearas-chuideachd.

Rinn e obair mhór fad cheithir-bliadhna-deug a' cruinn-eachadh na bha aig seanchaidhean ri aithris de sgeulachdan agus eachdraidh an dùthcha, cho cinnteach ri òrain Ghàidhlig, ceòl pìoba, agus ceòl fìdhle.

Mar tha e fhein ag innse anns an iris Chuimrich, *Gwerin* 1 (1956-57), is ann airson Cumann Béaloideas Eireann a thòisich e air an obair so, agus cho luath 's a sguir an Cogadh Mór mu dheireadh, chaidh e do Bharraidh, far an d'fhuirich e cóig mìosan. An ath bhliadhna chaidh e do Bheinn-na-Faodhla, agus an deidh sin do Pheighinn-nan-aoirean, an Uibhist-a'-chinn-a-deas, far an robh an seanchaidh iomraiteach, Donnchadh Clachair; ach cho luath 's a chuir Oil-thigh Dhunéideann Sgoil-oilean na h-Albann air chois, thainig Calum do Dhunéideann, agus cha do lasaich air a saothair tuille fhad 's a bha an cothrom aige.

Bha ealain air leth aige airson na h-oibreach so. Ge b'e air bith ceàrna a thaghail e, bha eòlas an t-sàr sgoileir aige air eachdraidh an àite, agus cha b'fhada gus an d'fhuair e lorg air seanchaidhean agus seinneadairean, ma bha iad idir ann.

Tha naidheachd éibhinn aige anns an leabhar eireachdail a thainig a mach an uiridh *The Highlands* (Batsford 1959) air a' cheàrd, Alasdair MacPhàdruig, a lorg e o chionn cóig bliadhna ann an àite ris an canar Tomaich, eadar A' Mhana-chainn, an siorramachd Inbhirnis, agus Am Blàr Dubh, an siorramachd Rois. Cho luath 's a chuala an ceàrd gur h-ann a Ratharsaidh a bha e, thionndaidh e le feirg air Calum Iain. An e mac do'n ghreusaiche a bha aige? Cha b'e: is ann a bha athair Chaluim 'n a thàillear. Chaidh còrdadh a dheanamh eatorra, agus chuala Calum Iain ùirsgeulan gu leòir aig a' cheàrd. Is i té dhiubh, "Am Ministear agus an Claban" (Aarne-Thompson 470) a chaidh fhoillseachadh anns a' chiad

àireamh de'n iris, *Scottish Studies,* a tha an sgoil a' toirt a mach dà uair 's a' bhliadhna.

Bha Calum Iain grinn, snasail 'n a sgrìobhadh, agus anns na h-uile rud a ghabh e os laimh. Is e an dòigh-sgrìobhaidh a bha aige na litrichean a chur sios air leth anns na facail, mar gu'm bitheadh iad air an clò-bhualadh. Bha eòlas sgoileir aige air a' Ghàidhlig Eirionnaich, agus, air uairean, is e litreachadh Eirionnach a chleachdadh e: "leanbh" an àite "leanabh", agus "Dia-" airson "Di-" ann an làithean na seachdaine.

Chan e a mhàin gu robh Calum Mac Ghille Eathain measail 'n a dhùthaich fhein agus thall an Eirinn. Bha meas mór air ann an dùthchannan eile, gu h-àraid am measg sgoilearan aig am bheil tlachd ann an cleachdaidhean an dùthcha agus ann am béul-aithris an t-sluaigh.

A. D.

THREE MEN OF ISLAY

J. H. Delargy [*]

Among the "Patrick Kennedy (1801-1873) Papers" in the Irish Folklore Commission are six letters written to Kennedy by Campbell of Islay, four from Niddry Lodge, Kensington, under the dates March 23 and 27 and May 21 and 24, 1867, and two of the same year sent to him from Braemore, Loch Broom, Ross-shire (September 10) and Dingwall (September 17). They refer in the main to a review of a book of Kennedy's, probably his well-known *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* (London 1866).

In addition to these letters, the Kennedy papers include the photograph here reproduced (Pl. IX) which three years later, in 1870, Campbell of Islay sent with his compliments to his Irish admirer.

Although the photograph has appeared before in a touching obituary of Hector MacLean by Professor Donald Mackinnon (1893:105), the editor of *Scottish Studies* has urged me to re-publish it from the copy in the Irish Folklore Commisson and to add a commentary. I wish to stress that the following notes make no pretence to be exhaustive, my concern being solely to add a stone from Ireland to the cairn of memory of John Francis Campbell of Islay (1822-1885) and of his fellow Islay men, Hector MacLean (1818-1893) and Lachlan MacNeill (1788-?) who deserve also to be remembered in this year which marks the centenary of the *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*.

The persons in the photograph (l. to r.) are Lachlan MacNeill, shoemaker, Paisley, John Francis Campbell, and Hector MacLean, Islay men all three. The photograph was taken in Paisley, 17 August 1870. The occasion is commemorated in Campbell of Islay's diary for that year (N.L.S. 50.2.2; Ms. xvi of the Campbell of Islay Mss.) as follows:

August 17, 1870. Went from Glasgow to Paisley, and to No. 5 Maxwellton Street to Lachlan MacNeill, shoemaker . . . Found (him) and Hector (MacLean) installed in a small public, both

[*] Professor of Irish Folklore, University College, Dublin; Hon. Director of the Irish Folklore Commission.

rather screwed, Hector the worse. They have been at the tale of O'Kane's Leg for about a week, and Hector has made about 62 sheets of Gaelic ×4=248, say about 260 pages of foolscap. The old fellow (Lachlan MacNeill) used to play the fiddle in Islay House . . . The story of O'Kane's Leg he learned as a child from Angus the Grim, [Gruamach] an old carter, who used to tell him stories while they drove in the cart . . . Asked him if he knew many (tales) and told a beast fable as a bait. Got in return a long version of the Dragon Myth of which made short notes.

My friend, the late J. G. McKay, the editor of two volumes of the Campbell *nachlass* (McKay 1940 and 1960), to whom I owe a transcript of Campbell's diary for 1870, adds at this point in his transcript the following footnote:

On the back of the sheet containing this paragraph is an amusing pen and ink sketch by Islay, showing himself much be-whiskered and wrapped in a plaid, lying on the ground at his ease face downwards, kicking his feet in the air, smoking a cigarette, and writing with a quill. Sitting around him are various nondescript figures, also smoking, from the recitation of one of whom Islay is apparently jotting down a tale. Below this is a photo showing Islay, MacNeill and MacLean seated at a table. Hector certainly looks screwed, and he is presumably taking down from MacNeill's recitation, the story of O'Kane's Leg.

A summary follows, made by Campbell from MacNeill, of a tale which he entitles "The Dragon Myth".[1] Further notes on tales made by Campbell as he listened to MacNeill in the Paisley "public" are on pp. 56-58 of the Ms. and then comes this note on the old storyteller:

Here the old man went off upon his own history and sorrows. How a son with taper fingers growing thick and strong up to the arm (*sic*), tall and stately, became a soldier and a fiddler, and a piper, how he was given gifts and was mistaken for the pipe major by a prince who sent him a cigar at Gibraltar. How he went to the Crimea and came home, how he caught cold and was spoiled by a doctor, how he came back (?) *Sèimh* [mild] and as dependable as [when] he went, and worked with his old Father and Mother at their trade till he died. How the wife was a good wife to him and kept the house and the children till she fell on a jaunt to the hill near Paisley, and hurt her leg so that she could not hobble, but had to sit propped in bed with pillows for many a long and weary day. How another son died, and he (the old man) was left cobbling shoes but content. But he would like to end his days in Islay where he began his life, that he would. After a good deal of such talk, asked

him if he had any objection to my paying his wife a visit. Went to the wife and gave her a tip, a sovereign for old acquaintance' sake. Carried off the scribe and the narrator to a photographer, and got two negatives made. Shook hands and parted.

Hector is to finish the tale of O'Kane's Leg,[2] and pay the old chap for his work, and meet me at Dunoon when he has done.

This is a very interesting old fellow, a gentleman in his manners, a good, sober-looking, clean decent old man. If he has time to think over his old stories, he has enough to fill a good-sized volume; of that I am now sure from my own observation. Came back to Glasgow, dined and wrote this while smoking two cigars, the stories from the notes made at the time, and the rest from fresh memory. Stopped at 7½. J. F. Campbell.[3]

Sgeulachd Cois' O'Céin is one of the longest folk-tales recorded in Europe. It is a *rahmengeschichte* or frame-story, i.e. stories within a story, a well-known literary device of which outstanding examples are the Hitōpadéśa, the Kathāsaritsāgara, the Pañchatantra, the Decameron, etc. At the end of the tale Hector MacLean appended the following note (Henderson 1907:262), and how glad he must have been—experto crede!—when, after many days of writing, he had come to the end of an apparently endless tale!

Narrated to me by Lachlin MacNeill, shoemaker, Paisley, who in his boyhood learned it from his father. His father, he says, learned it from a person of the name of Angus Brown, who lived in the neighbourhood of Islay House, and who is quoted as authority for many other stories told in Islay. MacNeill was born at Creagan nam peighinnean, in the parish of Kilarrow, Islay, in the year 1788, on the 28th of May, and is now accordingly aged 82 years. The story was written down from his recitation in Paisley, and is now correctly transcribed (Signed): Hector MacLean, Ballygrant, January 7th, 1871.

J. G. McKay on p. 34 of his transcript of Islay's 1870 diary has the following note:

Lachlan MacNeill also recited tales Nos. 376-386 preserved in Islay's Ms. (English), Vol. xiii, and mentioned *West Highland Tales* iv, (1862) 433; 2 edit. iv, 399.

And there I must leave Lachlan MacNeill, the Islay *seanchaidhe*, who in his day must have been one of the best storytellers in Western Christendom. What he and his fellows gave to Campbell and his collectors was but a tiny fragment of an ancient legacy of Gaelic oral tradition, all of which would

PLATE IX

Three Men of Islay.

have gone without a record save for Iain Og Ile. He too still awaits a biographer to keep green his memory. He was a very gallant Highland gentleman, as was also the man who of all most revered his memory, and who spent his life in studying and in preparing for publication the hundreds of tales still unpublished which after Campbell's death in 1885 passed into the keeping of the National Library of Scotland. His name was J. G. McKay. He was my friend, and I have known few whom I respected more. His name will always be associated with that of John Francis Campbell. They were alike in many ways. He died on 28 February 1942. Requiescat! Of his many publications, mainly editions of tales from the Campbell *nachlass*, the two volumes of his *More West Highland Tales* (McKay 1940 and 1960) will serve to keep alive his memory.

Of Campbell of Islay himself these words of his friend W. R. S. Ralston of the British Museum, translator of Afanasiev's *Russian Folk Tales* (London 1873) and *The Songs of the Russian People* (London 1872), deserve to be here recorded. On hearing of Campbell's death in Cannes, 17 February 1885, Ralston wrote in his obituary notice (Athenaeum 1:250):

A vigorous and well-cultivated intellect, a sturdy and independent character, and a true and tender heart combined to render him a man worthy of unusual regard and esteem.

The entry on Campbell in the *Dictionary of National Biography* is inadequate and requires revision. But no fitting testimony can be furnished in the absence of a thorough and competent biography of Campbell, who, to my mind, was one of the most remarkable Scots of the nineteenth century.

When Campbell of Islay began to gather material for his remarkable *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* he looked around for men who could write Gaelic competently and whom he could trust to record the tales accurately. Campbell was a pioneer, and as such was misunderstood and his enterprise held to scorn by those of whom there is now no memory. He was stubborn and determined, knew what he wanted, and was unperturbed by fools and scoffers. He was a man of means, and was prepared to requite accordingly not only the collectors in his employment, but the old people in the Highlands and Islands upon whose support the whole project depended. The storytellers were there in abundance—more than a small army of collectors armed, not with tape-recorders, but with quill pens and ink-horns, could cope with. There were then (1859)

some hundreds of thousands of tales and songs in Gaelic to be recorded, and the only man to undertake the work of saving a few hundred of these was Iain Og Ile. And people laughed at him and thought the poor "bodach" a foolish body. He was, on the contrary, a learned man of an original turn of mind, as his books and papers testify, interested in the world around him, and, above all, interested in people. He was gregarious, fond of company, of a dram and a chat, and was apparently

To Hector Mac Lean.

from his friend,

J. F. Campbell

POPULAR TALES

OF

THE WEST HIGHLANDS

Hector MacLean's copies of the first two volumes of the *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* were presented to the School of Scottish Studies in 1955 by Miss M. McLachlan, Ballygrant, Islay. J. F. Campbell's inscription on the fly-leaf of Volume I is here reproduced.

as much at home at a society wedding (such as that of the Marquis of Lorne, his cousin, described in his diary) as on a visit to a tinkers' encampment (also recorded in his daybook). But, apart from people, he studied such things as Geology and Meteorology, and wrote books about these subjects such as *Frost and Fire; Natural Engines, Tool-marks and Chips, etc.* (Edinburgh 1865) and *My Circular Notes. Extracts from Journals, letters sent home, geological and other notes written while travelling westwards round the world from July 6, 1874 to July 1875* (London 1876). He had, as

we say at home in the Glens of Antrim—across the sea-road from Islay—a "loose foot"; he travelled widely and kept an account of his experiences wherever he went from Iceland to Indonesia. His still unpublished diaries are of great importance to the student of the folk-tale, and Campbell's descriptions of storytellers and of storytelling, together with those of his friend Alexander Carmichael in the introduction to Vol. 1 of *Carmina Gadelica*, are of outstanding merit, giving us a fascinating picture of a lost world and a forgotten people, the crofters and fishermen of the Highlands and the Outer Isles, witty, intelligent, open-handed and big-hearted, who have had few equals anywhere or at any time.

We turn now to the last of the Islay triumvirate in the photograph, Hector MacLean. Campbell's main difficulty was not that of scarcity of material, but of suitable collectors. It is a difficulty not unknown to the present writer. He found close to hand in Islay his former tutor and companion, Hector MacLean.[4] MacLean was born in Islay in January 1818, four years before Campbell, and had as his teacher the remarkable Neil McAlpine, the author of a Gaelic grammar and dictionary.[5] "As companion and tutor" to Campbell of Islay he attended the University of Edinburgh for several sessions, but on his father's death took up an appointment as teacher in Ballygrant School, Islay, and lived with his mother and sister at a little roadside inn between Bridgend and Portaskaig, where he remained until he retired in 1872. MacLean contributed the Essay on Gaelic Poetry to the fourth volume of the *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* (1862:160-215), and he is also remembered for his *Ultonian Hero Ballads*.[6] But it is as a collector of Gaelic oral tradition that he will be remembered best, and rightly so, for he was the most outstanding of the three collectors employed by Campbell who gathered the bulk of the material in the *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* and *More West Highland Tales* 1 and 2, and the still greater body of Mss. yet unpublished in the National Library of Scotland: the others were John Dewar and Hector Urquhart.[7]

Mackinnon, who knew Hector MacLean well and held him in high regard, points out in his obituary that though: "it may be said that while to Mr. Campbell is due the credit of originality, mapping out and publishing the great work, i.e. *Popular Tales of the West Highlands*, the preparation of no small portion of the material was the task of his able and willing coadjutor.[8]

"It was in connection with the publication of *The Tales of the West Highlands* that Mr. MacLean's name became known to Gaelic scholars. Thirty-five years ago there was no man in Scotland, I should say, so well fitted to edit such a work as he. Mr. Campbell describes him at this time as a man "who has worked at Gaelic books and traditions, and studied that language, and has taught himself to read half a dozen more, in which he reads poetry, besides acquiring the whole of Euclid and the differential calculus, and a good many 'ologies' to boot—a man who thinks for himself, and is free from national prejudice at all events". And Mackinnon concludes: "Altogether a man of many gifts, and of great individuality of character; esteemed and admired by those who knew him best for the solid work he was able to do in the unfavourable circumstances in which his lot was cast; and also because of their abiding belief that with fitting environment, Mr. MacLean would have become no mean force in the literature and science of his generation".

There were no tape-recorders a century ago, and the amenities of life now taken for granted were unknown to MacLean who in the face of hardship carried out unflinchingly the congenial task which he had undertaken for his friend, Iain Og. Let us then, a century later, remember with respect and affection the three men of Islay, Iain Og Ile, Hector MacLean and Lachlan MacNeill, and the other men and women who gave Campbell and Carmichael and their collectors and correspondents of their best, and thus saved for Scotland and for the world one of the finest collections of folk-tales and tradition in Europe, which but for them would have been lost.

NOTES

[1] For this see George Henderson, *The Celtic Dragon Myth* (Edinburgh 1911) xiv; and Reidar Th. Christiansen, *Studies in Irish and Scandinavian Folktales* (Copenhagen 1959) 33-80; reference to Henderson's book *ibid.* 77, footnote 2.

[2] The story, known in Irish as *Leighes coise Chéin*, "The Leeching of Cian's Leg", was published from B. Mus. Ms. Egerton 1781 by Standish Hayes O'Grady in *Silva Gadelica* 1 (1892) 296ff.; English translation *ibid.* 2 (1892) 332ff. Notes on tale by Robin Flower, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum* 2:541; and by T. F. O'Rahilly, *Gadelica* 1:281; J. G. McKay, *More West Highland Tales* 1:72. The oral version recorded from Lachlan MacNeill (N.L.S. 50.2.3) and upon the transcription of which Hector MacLean was busy in the Paisley "public" when his employer, Campbell of Islay, dropped in to see him as related

above, was published by the Rev. Dr. George Henderson (1907: 179-265, the Gaelic text—there is no translation—occupying pp. 189-262). See English summary by Alfred Nutt, *Folklore* 1:373, based on that of Campbell.

3 See also Henderson (1907:188), quoting from Campbell's diary notes of 22 March 1871.

4 The reader is referred to Mackinnon's obituary of MacLean (Mackinnon 1893) to which I am indebted for these notes on this most interesting Islayman.

5 Neil McAlpine: *The Argyleshire Pronouncing Gaelic Dictionary, to which is prefixed a concise but most comprehensive Gaelic Grammar* (Edinburgh 1832). For further details see Donald MacLean, *Typographia Scoto-Gadelica* (Edinburgh 1915) 171-173.

6 MacLean, Hector, *Ultonian Hero-Ballads Collected in the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. From the year 1516, and at successive periods till 1870 . . .* Glasgow 1892.

Dedicated to John Crawford Graham, Esquire, Lagavullin, Islay . . . "a warm friend of the late John F. Campbell of Islay". . .

The preface was written at Ballygrant, Islay 1892.

7 Hector MacLean translated many tales collected by John Dewar and others for the Marquis of Lorne. See *Adventures in Legend, being the last historic legends of the Western Highlands, by the Marquis of Lorne K.T.* Westminster n.d.

8 J. G. McKay (1940:185 footnote) says of MacLean that "he was one of Islay's most careful collectors, though given to moralising on the tales he collected. However, he only did this in notes which he tagged on to the ends of the tales." For two examples of these strange corollaries of MacLean's see McKay 1940:208 and 276.

Campbell was suspicious of MacLean pruning his stories when writing them. For this see MacLean's reply in McKay 1940:184.

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50.2.2.   National Library of Scotland. Ms. xvi of the Campbell o Islay Collection.
50.2.3.   National Library of Scotland. Ms. xvii of the Campbell of Islay Collection.

ANIMAL TREATMENT IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SCOTLAND

Thomas Davidson [*]

The history of veterinary medicine as a discipline separate and distinct from human medicine rightly begins in the period from the late eighteenth century to the formation of the various veterinary schools at London in 1791 and Edinburgh in 1823. It was not until the foundation of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in 1844 that the profession received formal recognition.

Before this the history of veterinary medicine cannot be separated from medical folklore, when the care and treatment of animals was almost entirely in the hands of farriers and horsemen, gipsies and wisemen using traditionally sanctioned forms of folk-cures and remedies.

Up until the middle of the eighteenth century the methods of most husbandmen and the customs of the country folk were but little removed from those of mediæval society. And although in the practices of a small but growing number there could be detected glimpses of a better and more rational understanding of rural conditions and events, the majority of the country folk still firmly believed in the supernatural. The immediate result of this primitive outlook and agricultural practice was that famines, widespread epidemics and murrains, which included various cattle diseases, were a common feature in animal husbandry.

The last seven years of King William's reign 1695-1702, the "dear years" of Scottish farming, were seven consecutive seasons of disastrous weather conditions when the harvests completely failed. This was followed, after a brief cycle of good years under Queen Anne by another harvest failure in 1709 which again produced famine. In the Hebrides during the whole of the eighteenth century, it has been estimated that one in every fourth crop was almost a complete failure (Handley 1953:13, 34).

* Research physicist; author of *Rowan Tree and Red Thread*, and of papers on various folklore subjects.

Such recurring cycles of "need years", i.e. years of food shortage and near famine, brought with them disease and epidemic outbreaks which were a constant and menacing burden at a time when animal care and breeding at its best was vitiated by dirt, ignorance and superstition. Ordinary safeguards, sanitation and prophylaxis were almost unknown and veterinary knowledge was of the most elementary kind.

In these circumstances, and under conditions where all rational conceptions of the causes of sickness and disease were absent, it is not difficult to see how easily the farmer, the cow-man and the stock-breeder came to be persuaded that these sicknesses and epidemics were the work of evil spirits.

An examination of the many forms of folk-cures and treatment which made up the stock of veterinary practice shows that they can be divided broadly into charm cures and amuletic cures. The distinction, however, lay not so much in the material of the cure, but in the method by which it was applied. The word charm, Latin *carmen*, means the chanting of a verse supposed to possess magical power, i.e. a spell. It has, however, a secondary significance denoting material things credited with magical properties, worn on or in close association with the object which it is designed to protect. The amulet belongs to this secondary classification of the physical charm. The words charm and amulet have thus a very wide connotation, and although they do not permit of a simple and rigid definition, it is sufficient, without qualification, to define them as follows. A charm operates indirectly and is usually expendable, while an amulet is permanent and operates directly, usually by contact.

The materials of the charm-cures covered a wide range and included remedies and prescriptions in the form of chants, pagan and christianised-pagan prayers; herbal remedies and natural elements such as salt, water and soot; and some cures derived from the belief in magical transfer. The active elements in amuletic cures were made up of natural objects, holed stones, rock crystal and coloured pebbles, and manufactured objects such as coins, ornamental pendants, prehistoric artefacts and various combinations of wool, wood and thread (Pls. X-XII).

Pagan and christianised-pagan chants, invocations and designed prayers used as curative and prophylactic charms

appear from their distribution to be concentrated mainly in the north of Scotland. Some of these were simple chants, others were complicated and lengthened by the inclusion of restricting conditions regarding time and place and also by the use of additional presumed active elements such as special water, herbs and plants.

Three representative examples will illustrate this point. The first is a simple chant in the form of a degenerate prayer (Mackenzie 1895:76), the second is a christianised version of a magical (sympathetic) rite (Henderson 1911:28), and the third is a simple prayer degenerated by the inclusion of various amuletic objects and restrictive practices (Carmichael 1928: 42-3). All three were used to cure disease in cattle attributed to witchcraft and the evil eye. In the first the following was chanted:

> A foot in the sea, a foot on land
> Another foot in his boat
> For worm for swelling
> For red sickness, for colic
> For colic that is in thy belly
> For that rock over there
> A rugged crag that there is there
> > (Name of beast)
> Health to thee, O beast!

In the second case the procedure was rather more complicated. Whenever a cow calved the calf was immediately removed before drawing milk from the cow. Milk was then drawn from four teats into a bottle, the cow-doctor so doing kneeling on one knee saying:

> "May God bless these cattle folds this I am asking in the name of God, nor am I asking but for mine own."

The bottle was then tightly corked and hidden in a safe place and provided this bottle remained hidden and intact, the quality of the milk would remain unimpaired.

The third example, a cure for cattle and horses suffering from the ill effects of the evil eye, was handed down from male to female, from female to male and was efficacious only when thus transmitted.

Before pronouncing it over the sick animal, the "cow-doctor" bails water from a stream in the name of the Holy Trinity, into a wooden ladle. The water must come from a

stream over which the living and dead pass, and in no case is the ladle of metal. A gold wedding ring, a piece of gold, silver and copper are put in the ladle. The sign of the cross is then made, and a rhyme, the last few lines of which are quoted below, was repeated in a slow recitative manner:

> The evil eye
> Whether it be on man or on beast
> On horse or on cow
> Be thou in thy full health this night
> (Name of animal)
> In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
>
> AMEN

Some of the consecrated water was then given as a draught, and some was sprinkled over the head and back bone of the beast. In the case of a cow, the horns and the area between the horns were carefully anointed. Occasionally a woollen thread generally of the natural colour of the animal was tied round the tail. The remnant of the water, no drop of which must have reached the ground, was poured over the threshold flagstone. The skilled "cow doctor" apparently could distinguish whether it was a man or woman who had caused the sickness—if a man, the copper adhered to the bottom of the upturned ladle; if a woman, only the silver and gold adhered.

Simple recipes consisted of a confusion of magical herbs, common herbs and substances used magically, that is, in association with odd scraps of formulæ to be used at certain times and under certain limiting conditions. For example, in Orkney distemper was cured by a certain herb "callit melefour" (? *merefow*, milfoil), but it had to be plucked between the thumb and mid-finger while reciting *"In Nomine Patris, Filii et Spiritus Sancti"* (Dalyell 1834:22). And in Craignish, a cow-doctor always gathered his herbs—pearlwort, fig and moonwort on St. Swithins day, and made his concoctions with one foot in the chimney crook. The herbs had to be plucked not cut (Campbell 1902:12).

Rather more complex still were the limiting conditions associated with the use of the herb *mŏan* or *mothan* as a prophylactic amulet. This herb, said to be either the thyme-leaved sandwort or bog-violet, was found only on the top of a cliff or mountain where no animal had fed or trod. It had to be collected on a Sunday. Three tufts were selected, one was called by the name of the Father, another that of the Son and

the remaining tuft to be called by the name of the Holy Ghost.
The finder then plucked the tufts and recited:

> I will pull the *Möan*
> The herb blessed by the Domnach
> So long as I preserve the *Möan*
> There lives not on earth
> One who will take my cows' milk from me.

The three tufts were then wrapped in cloth, taken home and attached to the cow (Mackenzie 1895:32).

The most frequently recurring ingredients, or what may be termed active elements, in a great many of these recipes were urine, salt and soot. In parts of Scotland special virtues were attached to stale urine. Kept mainly for the purpose of scouring blankets and cloth it was also used until late into the century to cure and ward off disease. There were several ways in which it was applied but the most common method was to dip a wisp of straw in it, and sprinkle the animal, or draw the straw across its mouth.

Salt was in regular use for a variety of cures. In the Western Isles, for example, it was measured out with a thimble painted blue in the inside, into a cloth. Water poured through it into a bottle was then given as a drench to diseased cattle (Maclagan 1902:96). In South Uist, the cure for lumps or growths on horses was to cut into the lump and apply salt and water pickle so strong that a potato would float on it, to the open wound for several days (Shaw 1955:51). Rather similar, but for an unspecified complaint, Kintyre wisemen cured cows by giving them as a drench water, collected in three parts in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost from a March burn, in which salt divided up in the same way had been dissolved. Some of the water was also poured into the cows' ears and over their backs (Maclagan 1902:176).

The Arran cure for ailing horses where the illness was thought to be brought on by the evil eye used soot. In one particular case a farmer at Whiting Bay was given three balls of soot wrapped in paper with the strict injunction not to expose the contents to the air or light until ready to use. The soot was mixed in water, and the mixture sprinkled over the horse, while its name was repeated three times. Some was put into each ear and the remainder mixed in with its food (Maclagan 1902:188).

The belief that disease could be transferred to or from an

object is very ancient and had a wide distribution. Transfer rites may take one of two main forms, transfer of a disease from an animal to an inanimate object such as water, stone or earth, and from one animal to another, occasionally through the agency of charm amulets. It was a commonly accepted belief among farmers all over Scotland that cattle ailments of every kind could be carried away and left on another farmer's land. The belief assumed such proportions in the northern counties that the Synod of Aberdeen in 1659 recommended "all ministers within the province to speak against charming, heathenish customs in cutting off the heads of beasts and carrying them from one Laird's land to another" (Stuart 1846: 250).

In Caithness, for example, to cure the *heastie*, a virulent form of distemper among cattle, a portion of the diseased beast was secretly transported from the owner's ground to the ground of a neighbour. The cattle of the latter sickened, while those of the former recovered (Dalyell 1834:108).

A blood disorder in black cattle known throughout Mull as the *black spauld* was thought curable by burying alive the first cow to be infected and driving the rest of the herd backwards and forwards over the pit (Ramsay 1888:446); and further south in the lowlands of Scotland *routing evill* or madness to which oxen were particularly susceptible, was cured by taking "one quick ox with one catt, and one grit quantitie of salt" and burying the ox and cat alive with the salt in a deep hole, so that "the rest of the guidis might be fred of the sickness or disease" (Sharpe 1884:99).

The same principle underlies the treatment in the north of Scotland for paralysis of the spine in sheep, cows and horses. This was thought to be caused by the grass mouse, the *lucha sith*, or fairy mouse, running across the animal when it was lying down. The cure was to trail a mouse, dead or alive, across the loins and spine of the animal in the name of the Trinity. The mouse was then buried (Carmichael 1928:323).

There were of course a great number of variations on this simple idea. In Lewis liver disease in cows was cured by placing a black cock between the legs of the sick cow, and in this position splitting open the bird's back and removing its heart. While the fowl was still gasping some water in which the heart had been dipped was forced down the cow's throat (MacPhail 1895:55-6). A calf's heart stuck with pins (Pl. XI, fig. 1) was found at Dalkeith (1812) in what had once been a

cow-house. According to the records, an unspecified disease, thought to be due to witchcraft, had broken out and spread among the cattle. To arrest the disease, the heart of one of the diseased beasts was taken out, stuck with pins, roasted and buried near the rest of the herd (Skene 1831:300).

This heart amulet is particularly interesting because it possessed the power of transference, and at the same time the enhanced virtue of punishing the witch supposedly responsible for the incidence of the disease.

Animal sacrifice was yet another variant on the transfer ritual. Throughout the British Isles animals were and have been until comparatively recent times sacrificed by farmers to avert and cure cattle disease. Now sacrifice, unlike the other elements of charm and amuletic cures, could not be ignored by the church; it would not be dissociated from a recognition of the divine nature of the power in whose honour it took place. And it was because of this feature more than any other that the full might and authority of the church was brought to bear in an effort to put it down as a sacrifice to the devil. For this reason it is not surprising that there should be now but few direct and evident survivals. The *modus operandi* followed the same general pattern for transfer cures except that, instead of burying one of the diseased animals, one of the prime and healthy beasts might be killed and buried, or buried alive.

Rock crystal balls, naturally perforated pebbles, worn, grooved and odd-shaped stones of unusual colour represent, because of their greater or more common availability, the amulet with the widest distribution. Although there appears to have been very little colour discrimination in the use of such stones, special significance seems to have been attached to the white or opaque variety.

Edward Lhwyd, keeper of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, in a letter written in 1699 from Linlithgow, records that in Scotland "they have the *Ombriæ pellucidæ*, which are crystal balls or depressed ovals, which were held in great esteem for curing cattle; and some on May Day put them into a Tub of Water, and besprinkled all their cattle with the water to prevent being Elf-struck, bewitched, etc." (Lhwyd 1719:99). A fairly common name in the highlands of Scotland for a rock crystal ball used as an amulet was *Leug Loug* or *Leigheagan*, and in a letter to the Rev. Robert Woodrow, quoted by Dalyell, the Scottish historian, it is defined as "*Leig*. Being a great pice of the clearest of cristall, in forme ane halfe ovall, near to the

PLATE X
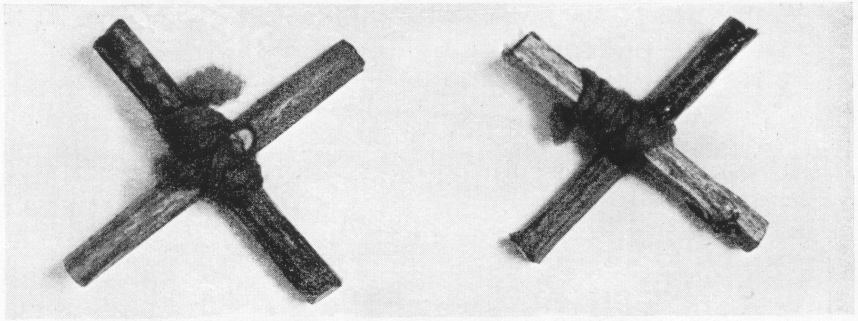
FIG. 1.—Rowantree Crosses from Corgarff, Aberdeenshire.
Bound with red thread (knotless) these were tied to animals or suspended over
byre-doors to keep the cattle free from disease.
Specimens in Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.
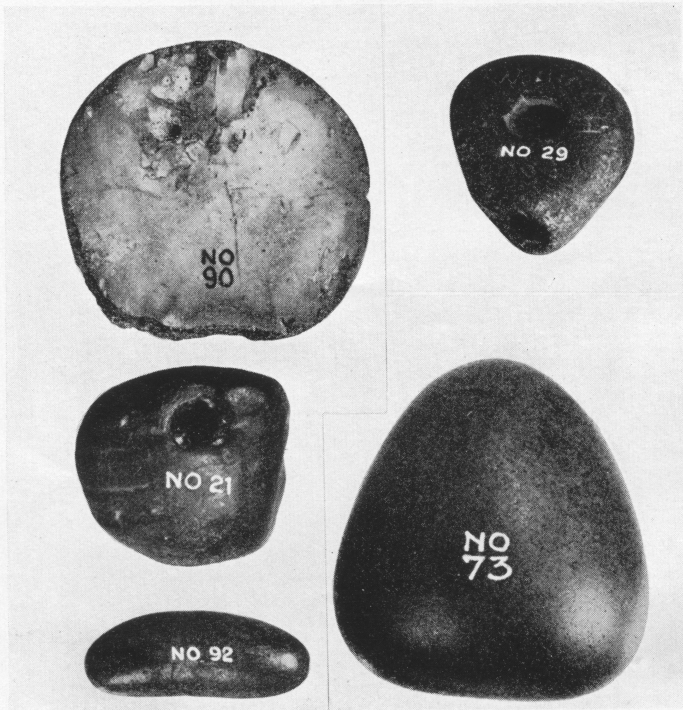
FIG. 2.—Stone Amulets.
No. 90.   Disc of yellow flint, 2¾ inches diameter.   Found in a cow-byre
in Slains, Aberdeenshire.
No. 29.   Small pebble, 2 holes partly artificial, inscribed William H. Scott
found in a cow-byre in Dumfriesshire.
No. 21.   Small pebble hung in a cow-byre at Cumbernauld, Dunbartonshire.
No. 73.   Dark red heart-shaped pebble from Whalsay, Shetland.
No. 92.   Pebble of mottled serpentine from Ollaberry, Shetland.

These were all used as curative amulets for cattle ailments and to recover
milk abstracted from cows by means of witchcraft.
Specimens in National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Edinburgh.

PLATE XI
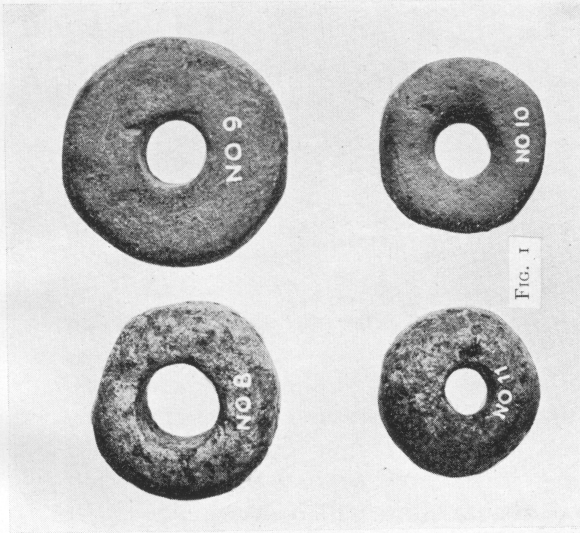
Fig. 1.—Spindle-whorl amulets or Adder-stones from Lewis.
They were used there as curative amulets
in the cure of snake-bitten cattle.
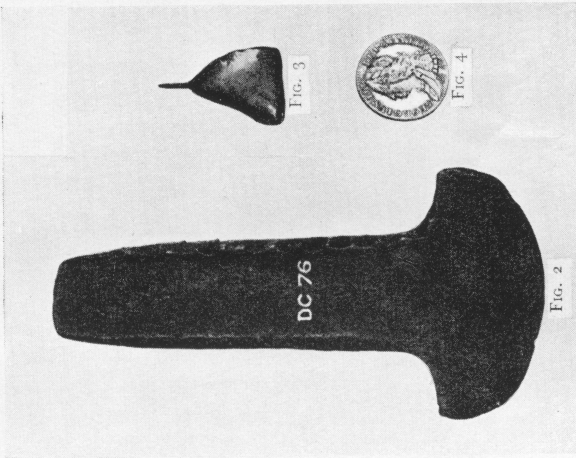
Fig. 2.—Bronze Age axe from Perth.
Found in a cow-byre where it had been used to
preserve the cows' milk yield.

Fig. 3.—Elf-arrow Amulet inscribed *saighead shith*.
Typical example of a neolithic flint arrow-head mounted for
suspension in water. This medicated water was used to cure
various cattle ailments, preserve milk and preserve the milk yield.

Fig. 4.—Silver 6d. George III from Pitsligo.
The amulet was put into the milk cog on first milking
after calving, to preserve the milk.

Specimens in National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland, Edinburgh.

PLATE XII

Fig.—2. McLean Loug amulet from Ross of Mull.
Ridged rock crystal $1 \times 1\frac{3}{4}$ inches mounted for
suspension in water.

By permission of Major Colin McVean.

Fig. 1.—Heart amulet from Dalkeith, Midlothian.
Specimen in National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland,
Edinburgh.

bigness of a littel hen eage: but I find it being of great use for peple that hes coues, being good for many diseases, they sik great monies for it, as forty punds Scots" (Dalyell 1834:679-80).

An oval water-worn pebble of crystal formerly kept over the lintel of the byre door at Cachladhu croft near St. Fillans, Perthshire, was thought to protect the cattle from all kinds of unspecified diseases. In addition to using the stone, the animal had to be given, as a drench, water from a stream over which crossed the living and dead. Into this water was placed one or two pieces of silver money "in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (Black 1892-3:454).

The *Clach-na-Brataich* or "Stone of the Standard", an unmounted ball of rock crystal 1¾ inches in diameter, has been in the possession of the clan Donnachaidh since the year 1315. A manuscript written about 1777, states that "it is still looked upon in the Highlands as very Precious on account of the Virtues they ascribe to it, for the cure of diseases in Man and Beasts, particularly for stopping the progress of an unaccountable mortality amongst cattle. People came frequently from places at a great distance to get water in which it had dipt for various purposes". The last occasion on which it was used appears to have been sometime between 1823 and 1830, when it was dipped with great ceremony by the chief of the clan, in a large china bowl filled with water from a "fairy well", after which the water was distributed to a number of farmers for medicinal purposes (Simpson 1860-2:219-20; Paton 1886-7: 235).

In Inveraray, in 1702, cylindrical white stones, called bats-stones, because they "heall horses of the worms they call bats", were boiled in water and the infusion given to horses suffering from intestinal worms (Dalyell 1834:152). Two stones of coarse dark basalt known as the *Clach Spotach*, or "Spotted Stone", and the *Clach Ruadh*, or "Red Stone" enjoyed a certain amount of fame in the north of Scotland as animal cures. The first was used "for rubbing horses suffering from stoppage of the urine" and the other "for rubbing the udders of cows when hardened and inflamed by disease" (Black 1892-3:450-1). In South Uist the *ruaidhe*—a rash causing swelling of the udder and retention of the milk, was cured by rubbing the swollen teat with a stone from a march burn (Mackenzie 1895:54-5). In other districts the stone was taken from a burn over which the living passed and the dead were carried.

As a rule, where these stones are used as cure amulets, they

are either dipped in water, and the water given as a drench to the animals, or the affected part of the animal, or sometimes the whole animal, is rubbed with the stone.

Water obtained from a stream over which the living passed and the dead were carried was known as "dead-water", and the belief in its medicinal virtues persisted up to the beginning of the present century. William Macpherson, of Bogamore, was advised to give his ailing stock a drench of it, but it had to be collected in a "three girdit cog", in the evening and in complete silence (McPherson 1929:253-4). Its use in association with a wide variety of charm cures was regulated by many diverse conditions which differed from one district to another. Three conditions, however, appear to be common. In the first instance it must be taken from a stream over which the living and dead pass, from a south running stream or from a fairy well. In the second instance the water must be brought unspoken. The bearer must keep silent, and not infrequently there was the further condition that none must speak to him or her. To ensure that this condition was satisfied there is evidence to show that on occasions the bearer took a companion with him. Thirdly any surplus water must be got rid of in such a way that no animal could be infected by coming into contact with it. Usually it was returned to the stream from which it was taken or any fast running stream, so that its powers would quickly be dispersed.

The use of fire and smoke was frequently resorted to both as a preventive and antidote to cattle disease. Fires were made on Mid-Summer Eve and Hallow Eve when animals were made to pass through the smoke to be rid of disease. In the event of violent epidemics, however, a special fire ritual known as "raising needfire" was carried out. Indeed the practice became so commonplace that various Scottish presbyteries issued general rules for the apprehension of offenders. The earliest record is for Grange (Banffshire) where the Minister regretted that in February 1644 there was "neid fyre" raised for the curing of cattle (Stuart 1843:51). As late as 1850 needfires were still being raised in Dallas as a cure for murrain (Gordon Cumming 1883:194).

The ritual itself followed a fairly well defined pattern. In Moray, for example, on the outbreak of a particularly contagious disease the following ceremony was carried out. First, all fires were extinguished in the surrounding district. Then "fire was forced with a wheel or by rubbing a piece of dry

wood upon another, and therewith burn juniper in the stalls of the cattle that the smoke may purify the air about them; they likewise boil juniper in water which they sprinkle upon the cattle. This done the fires in the houses were rekindled from the forced fire" (Shaw 1775:248).

By association, manufactured objects of almost every description were thought to have magical powers and were used quite indiscriminately as curative and prophylactic amulets. Prehistoric artefacts such as neolithic flint arrow-heads were constantly being turned up in the soil and to account for the similarity in their shape and size it was thought that they were thunderbolts or missiles of the gods and as such were believed to possess magical powers. This belief was, in fact, extended to include practically all prehistoric artefacts. Inscribed charms on paper, ornamental brooches and pendants, coins, wood and stones were all used singly and in various combinations.

The *Clach Bhuaidh* or "Powerful Stone", a crystal ball five and a half inches in diameter mounted in silver, belonging to . Archibald Campbell of Glenlyon, was used for curing diseased animals. The pendant was dipped in water, but the water had to be carried to the amulet, and, to make more certain that the water was sufficiently medicinal and effective, the stone, during the process, had to be held in the hand of the laird. The water was then given as a drench (Black 1892-3:441).

A similar but slightly smaller amulet, the *Clach Dearg* or "Stone of Ardvoirlich", is a ball of rock crystal mounted in a setting of four silver bands, with a ring at the top for suspension. The belief in its virtues as a cure for diseased cattle continued well into the latter half of the nineteenth century, and as in the case of the *Clach Bhuaidh*, farmers came from widely different parts of the countryside to get supplies of water in which the amulet had been dipped. Various conditions, however, had to be observed by those who wished to benefit by its healing powers. The person who came for it had to draw the water himself and bring it into the house of Ardvoirlich in a vessel into which the stone was to be dipped. A bottle was then filled and carried away, but during its transport home it must not touch the ground nor be taken into any house by the way, otherwise its magical virtues would disappear. If a visit had to be paid, then the bottle was carefully left outside (Simpson 1860-1:220-1).

The Keppoch Amulet, a crystal oval attached to a silver

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chain, was used in a similar way except that while the stone was being dipped in the water, a Gaelic incantation invoking St. Bridget was pronounced over the sick animal (Black 1892-3:442). The reference here to the Celtic Bride or Bridget, derives from the well *Tobar Bhride* (Bridget's Well) near Keppoch from which the water into which the amulet was dipped had to be taken. St. Bridget was one of the seven saints specially invoked for the protection of sheep and cattle and she is often depicted in Christian art holding a cow, standing by a barn or with milk pails; one of her titles was "Christ's milkmaid".

Probably the most widely known and celebrated lithic amulet used in the cure of disease was the Lee-stone or Lee-penny. The amulet consists of a heart-shaped red pebble of carnelian agate set in an Edward IV silver groat. When it was used for healing purposes, a vessel was filled with water, the stone was drawn once round the vessel and then dipped three times in the water. For curing cattle it was "put into the end of a cloven stick, and washen in a tub full of water, and given to cattle to drink infallibly cures almost all manner of of diseases". People, it is reported, "came from all airts of the kingdom with deseased beasts". During the reign of Charles I it achieved a triumph. It was loaned to the corporation of Newcastle, on surety of £6000, to cure a cattle plague which was sweeping through the area. The plague abated, and the corporation offered to forfeit the bond to keep the stone. The offer, however, was rejected.

About the middle of the seventeenth century, the Reformed Protestant Church of Scotland with the full weight of her authority zealously endeavoured, as the English Church had long before done, to extirpate all "heathenism" and superstitious practices which were carried out with various spells and stones. They left, however, other equally superstitious practices quite untouched. Thus, while they threatened the seventh son of a woman with the "paine of Kirk censure" for curing the "cruelles" (scrofulous tumours and ulcers) by touching them, they still allowed the reigning monarch this power (Charles II alone touched 100,000 such patients). The Synod of Aberdeen showed a similar discrimination over the Lee-stone when a complaint was lodged against Sir James Lockhart, "anent the superstitious using of ane stone, set in silver, for the curing of diseased cattle". But its power over cattle was so universally believed in and resorted to as an everyday practice by "husbandmen of the best sort" that the

Synod judged it expedient to exempt it from the anathema attached to various other superstitious practices (Simpson 1860-1:222-4).

Lengths of wool, thread and yarn in different compositions, combinations and colours, possessed more or less the same magical virtues. Known as "wresting threads" and "spraining strings", they were made up from single threads and multiple-ply yarns of various lengths. Red was the predominant colour, but often a thread of the same colour as the animal to be treated, was chosen. Where the treatment was for sprains and bone fractures, knots, either three, seven or nine, were tied in the middle and ends.

One method of making these strings has recently been described by a practitioner in Beauly (Inverness-shire).[1] "The spraining string consists of six equal strands of wool. Their length varies according to where you want to put the string round. Do not break. And you put a knot at each end, and one in the middle". While preparing the wool for this purpose, one should reverently mutter the words: "Jesus went on horseback; and He sprained His foot. He said: 'Bone to bone, Flesh to flesh. Sinew to Sinew. Blood to blood', And His flesh was made whole".

There was a marked uniformity in the way in which the thread was applied. It was tied to, wound round or laid on the animal while the cow-doctor intoned a prayer or "rhymed incantation". During the entire operation the thread was not allowed to touch the ground, the knots were cast on the thread in silence, and the thumb and forefinger must not be used. The traditional reason given for this is that with them Eve plucked the fruit and so they are not blessed.

The rationale of such beliefs and customs is fairly simple. They depend upon the notion of sympathetic magic in its lowest stages of conception, namely, similarity and imitation. To the primitive mind the reality of spirits seemed so clear that all natural phenomena were interpreted in terms related to their motives. The use of magic and semi-religious ritual may, therefore, be regarded as a primitive experiment designed to control these spirits by sympathetic magic.

The fundamental rule of all magical reasoning is that casual connection in thought is analogous to causative connection in fact. Like suggests like by the mere association of ideas, so that like influencing like produces analogous effects in practice. This is not remarkable, for exact coincidence would be very

powerful in producing and stimulating belief in the association on events and their repetition. By a further extension of this reasoning, the part suggests the whole, thus giving rise to the idea of a sympathy or identity existing between an original or any part and its image or substitute.

Sickness and disease could, therefore, be cured by transferring it from the afflicted beast to an animate or inanimate object by bringing the two into contact. Spraining threads, strings and wool were tied round or laid on the animal. In this way the disease was transferred to the threads which were removed and destroyed. Burying or burning were the obvious and convenient means of destroying the threads, but any method which assured rapid disintegration could be used, as, for example, casting into running water.

For bone fractures knots were cast on the thread to simulate the knitting or tying together of the bone. Similarly, a limb, heart or other part of a diseased animal was buried or burnt, so that the disease would waste away and eventually die out of the rest of the herd as the thread, limb or heart decayed and disintegrated. The supernatural virtues of stones and other amulets were conveyed via the agency of the water in which they were immersed, by sprinkling the animal or by direct contact by tying the amulet to the beast or in water given as a drench.

The original rituals were probably simple imitative rites, pagan chants and the use of amulets whose power lay in their shape, colour and association. By the time of the mediæval period cumulative tradition, the adoptive and sanctioning action of the Christian church had imparted a certain air of authenticity to them. Invocation of Christ and the Saints was substituted for the invocation of spirits; hence we find pagan and christianised remedies and recipes, Saints relics (i.e. St. Fillan's Crozier for cattle)[2] and amulets in the form of the cross, being used side by side with equal credulity.

During the next few centuries these rituals and recipes acquired a degree of sophistication, due mainly to the pseudo-scientific interpretation of natural and supernatural phenomena culminating in the Doctrine of Signatures which reached its climax in the late seventeenth century.

The charms and amulets with their associated ritual as we find them in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries represent the detritus of the early magical beliefs. Their real significance had been forgotten so that their continuance into the eighteenth century was traditionally sanctioned by usage

fostered firstly by the incredulity of people only too willing to accept any form of relief, no matter how absurd or superstitious; and secondly by the need for the local wise-man or cow-doctor to maintain his position against the advancing front of rationalism and veterinary knowledge.

To do this he developed the charm cure in two ways: the first by using ingredients such as herbs and water which by wide experience and observation had been found medicinal; secondly by investing the cure with an aura of mystery by the use of meaningless chants, snatches of degenerate prayers, lengthening and increasing the number of presumed active elements, and introducing conditions to be fulfilled, so minute and exigent, as to make the satisfying of them almost impossible. Failure of a cure, therefore, could readily be attributed, not to any lack of skill or knowledge on the part of the "cow-doctor", but to the omission of some particular detail outside his direct control.

In view of this, there may be a tendency rightly to dismiss the old "cow-doctor" and his methods of curing and healing. Before we do so, let us look again at treatments prescribed by "cow-doctors" in Scotland, England and Ireland. These show that in spite of the superstitions and absurd features in them they contain a substantial element of rationalism, indeed a high degree of primitive reasoning based on long and acute observation.

In Scotland, the *connach*, a disease prevalent among cattle, was thought to be due to the cattle feeding where the connach worm had crawled. The prescription was to sprinkle the cattle or make them drink an infusion of the leaves and twigs of a tree in which one of these worms plugged up in an auger hole had been left to perish. In England, a similar cure was used for paralysis caused by a shrew mouse crawling over an animal's limbs. And precisely the same remedy was used in Ireland where murrain was attributed to a sting on the mouth from the larvæ of a particular species of moth. In all three cures we see the reasoning that led to early inoculation and eventually to vaccine treatment.

NOTES

[1] Private communication from Mr. Alasdair Alpin Macgregor. London 1956.

"Mrs. Fraser living at Beauly, in Inverness-shire, assured Alasdair Alpin Macgregor recently that she is adept at ensuring a cure for man

or beast by the application of what is known in Celtic Scotland as the spraining string, many of which her mother made and applied efficaciously. Her grandfather, who, incidentally, was well-known in that locality in his day on account of his ability to render harmless the Evil Eye, was also expert in curing by this method."

[2] Stevenson, R. B. K. *List of Charms in the National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland.* Prepared for the International Conference on Celtic Folklore, Stornoway, October 1953.

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A Collection of

RIDDLES FROM SHETLAND

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and

Stewart F. Sanderson†

In the month of August 1954 one of the co-authors of this article went to Shetland to collect material for the archives of the School of Scottish Studies. The School was thus enabled to establish direct contact for the first time with the Shetland Folk Society, which had been in existence since 1942 and which had done invaluable work in stimulating an interest in folk life and traditions among the people of Shetland. In Shetland to-day there is more widespread interest in folk-tradition than anywhere in Scotland. To this the influence of the Shetland Folk Society has contributed in no small measure.

Chief among the Shetlanders who helped the work of the School's representative was Dr. T. M. Y. Manson, Editor of the *Shetland News*. During the course of a conversation with him the suggestion was made that his newspaper should sponsor a competition for the best collection of Shetland guddicks, or riddles, especially riddles from oral rather than printed sources. Dr. Manson immediately welcomed the idea, and the following collection was the ultimate result. In all there were 17 entrants, and the prizes were donated by the School of Scottish Studies.[1] The original Mss. were lent to the School so that typescript copies could be made, and were later returned to Shetland and finally presented to the Shetland Folk Society.

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In preparing this collection of riddles for publication we have been confronted with various problems. The collection contains much new material not available to Archer Taylor when he compiled his *English Riddles from Oral Tradition* (1951); indeed, about one-third of the collection (if variants are included) falls into this category. Of these riddles, many are paralleled in Scandinavian, and particularly Norwegian, collections, as one might expect from Shetland's history. Again, the collection contains many examples of conundrums, Biblical and learned riddles, clever-question types, and other enigmatical material supplementary to the "true" riddles to which Taylor confined his attention. Finally, there is a linguistic problem to be faced. The contributors to this collection write sometimes in literary English and more often in dialect; but each uses his own orthographic conventions, not always consistently even within a single text, to represent the phonetic values of his own, or his neighbours', speech. All these factors have influenced the editorial principles to be adopted.

PROBLEMS OF CLASSIFICATION

The new material falls into two main categories. There are, firstly, those "true" riddles which were not available when Taylor undertook his magnificent survey of the field of traditional riddles in the English-speaking world (Taylor 1951). Secondly, there are the other types of riddle, for which a system of classification must be devised.

Clearly, the "true" riddles should be classified according to the principles of conceptual comparison laid down in Taylor's pioneering study, and new material should be inserted into this framework. Difficulties arise, however, in allocating numbers to new material; and Taylor's publication, with its closed system of numbers, should be revised eventually. In view of the detailed comparative study of riddles in other languages provided in his commentary, the revision might take account of a contingent problem which is conspicuously revealed in an archive such as that of the School of Scottish Studies, which contains material both in Scots or Scottish-English, and in Scottish Gaelic. For instance, the well-known riddles in which an egg is described as a house with no windows, nos. 1132-1138 in Taylor's study of riddles in English (1951), are to be found as nos. 326-327 in Hull and Taylor's study of riddles in Irish (1955). The archivist has to decide whether examples of riddles in the two language groups are to be

registered together under the same numbers, as a convenient aid to comparative study, or separately. A possible solution would be to retain, and supplement where necessary (see e.g. no. 23 of our collection), the main headings listed in the Analytical Table (Taylor 1951:xiii-xxxi), and to devise a new system of sub-dividing the examples under each heading, perhaps by a decimal system analogous to that used in Stith Thompson's *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature*. Since new collections are to be expected from Scotland, as from other countries, it is, however, perhaps too soon to attempt a detailed classification system of this kind.

In printing this collection of riddles we have therefore numbered the items consecutively, adding references to Taylor (1951) on the right-hand margin of the page, and inserting new material where it would fall according to the principles of classification formulated by him. Three examples may suffice to illustrate our method.

The first riddle in the collection is a version of the Scots bell riddle, of which Taylor cites two versions numbered 4a and 4b. The figure 4 is to be found in the right-hand margin, while the riddle is listed as no. 1 in our collection.

Turning to nos. 23 and 24 of our collection, we find the comparison of smoke to a living creature that goes out but never comes in (no. 23), and of a stream to a living creature that runs but cannot walk (no. 24). Taylor's nos. 128-130, *Goes to a Named Spot without Moving*, are represented by no. 22 of our collection. Taylor's nos. 133-135, *Goes Out and In*, are not represented (but cf. our nos. 28-32, Taylor's 205-207). We assume that if our no. 23 had been available to him he would have had a category *Goes Out, Does Not Go In* after his nos. 133-135, and we print it next. Taylor's no. 143, *Runs, Does not Run Up*, is likewise not represented in our collection, but we assume that if our no. 24 had been available he would have had a category *Runs, Does not Walk* before passing to his nos. 144 et seq. We therefore print our no. 24 before passing to our nos. 25-27, which are examples of Taylor's no. 166.

The other kinds of enigmatical material have been arranged under various headings, following in the main the categories in Hull and Taylor (1955) and Alver (1956). These headings are, *Witty Questions and Conundrums*, *Naming-Riddles* (after Alver), *Learned Riddles* (including Biblical riddles), *Arithmetical Riddles*, *Alphabet Riddles* and *Punning Riddles*. The collection, like all collections of riddles from oral tradition, includes also seventeen

items of the *Erotic Scene* category (Taylor's nos. 1739-1749): the texts, which we do not publish here, are lodged in the archives of the School of Scottish Studies.

TEXTS AND REFERENCES

The texts of the riddles are printed as written by the contributors to the collection apart from a few instances in which a word or letter has obviously been omitted inadvertently. All emendations supplied by us are in square brackets. Difficult dialect words are glossed after each text.[2]

Significant variants are printed as separate items, but the material has been condensed in two ways. Where the same riddle was collected in standard English and equivalent dialect, only one text is published, the two texts being regarded as identical since we are concerned here with the folkloristic aspect of the collection rather than the linguistic. Secondly, minor variants are indicated by a device which may be illustrated by reference to no. 81. The following two texts were collected:

(a) *A baird a' flesh in a mooth a' horn | Sic a baste wis never born.*— *A cock.*

(b) *A baerd o' flesh, a mooth o' horn | Sic a craetir wis never born.*— *A cock.*

The first text appears in print here, with the following note: "Two versions; b *sic a craetir*."

References to parallels in printed sources relating to Scotland are listed, in chronological order of publication, after each text: e.g. in no. 1, Gregor 81; Findlay 58 refers to examples cited on pages 81 and 58 of the authors' works listed in the bibliography at the end of the article. The references are not exhaustive but cover the main collections of Scottish material.

SOME FEATURES OF THE COLLECTION

These riddles, culled in the islands which so long formed a part of the Norwegian dominion overseas, reflect their Shetland provenance in various ways.

The traditional features of Shetland folk life, and the material culture in particular, emerge in many riddles. Nos. 43-46, for example, are riddles about the spinning-wheel; 119 and 226 about wool cards; 69-74 about the quern; 47 and 65 the water-mill. The interior of the house also supplies objects

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around which the riddler can build his enigmatical metaphors: the hook and chain (no. 219) and the old-fashioned cooking-pot which swung from them appear in the collection (nos. 112-115). So too does a reference to the shuttered box-bed (no. 102, *Stumpie stood at my bed door*), while nos. 240 and 241 refer to carrying peats home in the traditional type of basket.

Norway appears in no. 60 with its striking image of the sea, while in no. 121 the unfettered wind roars across the North Sea to Norrowa's land. There are other features, too, which reveal the Scandinavian affinities of the collection: these include the typically Scandinavian formula of nos. 19 and 20 (Taylor 1951:701, note 125); the many parallels to be found in Norwegian collections, in particular the largely unpublished Mss. of the Norsk Folkeminnesamling and the Torleiv Hannaas Collection in the University of Bergen, to which Mr. Brynjulf Alver introduced one of the co-authors of this article; and the Swedish parallels for no. 39 (von Sydow 1915:66) and no. 266 (Geijer and Campbell 1930:39).

In other ways too the collection has interesting features. In no. 4 it supplies another instance of the generally known comparison of a cabbage to a man standing on one leg, of which the only English language version in Taylor (1951) was collected in Bermuda. Nos. 58 and 59 supply two solutions to a riddle cited by Chambers with the answer lacking, while no. 144 does the same for a riddle for which Saxby quotes no answer. Furthermore, in practising the traditional entertainment of "laying up guddicks" (Saxby 1932:68), the contributors to this collection have added much riddle material not hitherto collected in the language-group which we may broadly call English.

These additions to our knowledge of the resources and affinities of riddles in English are net gains. But an assessment of the general state of tradition must also take into account the cases where informants appear not to have understood the riddles or to have given corrupt or half-remembered texts. To cite a few examples, in no. 37 "flies" should probably read "runs"; nos. 45 and 46 show doubts about the number of fingers used in spinning; in no. 75 the solution "pigs" is supplied, perhaps inadvertently, for "mill-stones"; in no. 92 "skiff" should read "staff"; and in no. 105d the snow-goddess has probably been confused with a well-known Scottish football team. Linguistically too there is much uncertainty, not only in matters of orthography: "calved" in no. 114 is a false and

meaningless anglicisation of "caaed" =drove, beat; in no. 139 "peer" =?poor should probably read "peerie" =small; and in no. 166 "shaped laek a triangle" is almost certainly an attempt to supply "crookit in a tangle" or some such phrase. It is also symptomatic of the state of tradition that in a few instances one doubts whether the texts are properly speaking to be considered as riddles, e.g. no. 301, a "veesik . . . softly crooned to a melancholy tune, and with hands stretched upwards and outward in earnest beseeching" (Saxby 1932:59). But there is an enigmatical quality in this as in such other instances as nos. 102, 302, and 303-304; and some of the informants have seen no distinctions between these, modern or literary riddles, and the older traditional material.

We have therefore thought it right to print the collection as it stands, drawing attention to some of the problems it poses, and leaving a fuller critical study until such time as new and exhaustive collections of riddles have been garnered from all parts of Scotland. Not the least important aspect of this Shetland collection is the promise it gives for future harvests.

1. *Hinghin high, crying sair, | He's da heid bit wants*   4
    da hair.—Church bell.
    He's=Has.   Gregor 81; Findlay 58.

2. *I hae eyes in I hae nane, | I hae joints withoot a*
    been, | I hae a face withoot a fetter | Bit I discern
    every critter.—A mirror.
    Been=bone; *fetter*=feature. Four examples, of which one lacks the first two lines.

3. *I have an eye, I have none, | I have a leg without a*
    bone, | I have a face without a feature | Yet I dis-
    cern every creature. — A telescope.

4. *What is it dat staands on wan leg we its hert in its*   32
    head? — A kale stock.
    Two examples.

5. *What gangs upo' four legs in da morning, twa legs*   47
    at noon, and three legs at night? — Man (crawling,
    walking, and walking on stick).
    Two examples. A. Nicolson 20.

6. *Doon in yon meadow sits in stands | Six feet in twa*   cf. 55
    hands. — Wife milking a cow.
    S.S.S.R.L. 804.13.

7. *Doon ida müdow, sits an staands | Eight feet an*   55
    fower haands, | Lichts an livers lives tree. | Guess
    dis guddik an dan you'll see. — Woman, accom-
    panied by a little girl, milking a cow.
    Tree=three.

8. *Doon i'da meadow sits and staunds | Eight feet and*   cf. 55
    fower hands, | Twa lookers | Two crookers | Twa   and
    upstaunders | And a flap tae flap awa da flees. — A   1481-
    woman and child and a cow.   1489

9. *Twa hengen, fower gengen | An twa lyin in press.*   cf. 57
    — The Virgin Mary sitting on the ass on her way
    to Bethlehem before Jesus was born.

10. *Fower feet rinnin, twa feet hingin, | Six feet lying*   cf. 57
    in press. — Woman with child riding on a mare in
    foal.

11. *Ten taes, hunder nails, not a fit bit ene. — Thistle.* cf. 58
    Fit=foot.

12. *As I went to my faither's feast, | I met a grumbly*   cf. 58-60
    guest, | 10 taes, 300 nails, an no a leg bit een. — A
    thistle.
    Cf. Chambers 110; Gregor 80.

13. *Three feet up cauld an dead, | Twa feet doon flesh*   67
    in bluid, | Da head o' da livin i the mooth o' da
    dead. — An old man with a kettle on his head.
    Chambers 113; cf. Firth 135, *The head o' the*
    living in the mooth o' the dead | If thoo guesses this
    thoo'll get butter wi' thee bread.

14. *Twa legs a' flesh an bluid, | Tree legs as cauld a[s]* cf. 67
    lead, | Da head o' da livin' a' da mooth o' da dead. |
    Guess my guddick or I'll shut de dead. — A man
    carrying a kettle on his head.
    Shut=shoot.

15. *Long legs and short thighs, | Peerie head and no*   79
    eyes. — A pair of tongs.
    Peerie=little. Gregor 80.

16. *Lang legs crookit thighs, | Sma' head an nae eyes.*   79
    — Fire tongs.
    Four examples. J. Nicolson 92.

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17. *Lang leegs, no thighs, | Sma' head, an' no eyes. —*   cf. 79,
    Teengs.   80
    Firth 135.

18. *Lang legs, nae knees, | Round feet like bawbees. —*   cf. 79,
    Fire tongs. Bressay.   80
    Two examples.

19. *What is it dat gengs and gengs but never wins ta da*   cf. 125-
    door? — The clock.   126
    Two examples. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2

20. *What gengs aa day bit never wins ta da door? —*   cf. 125-
    The clock.   127
    Two examples.

21. *Aye rinnin, bit never wins ony farder. — The burn.*

22. *What gengs fae here ta Lerook and never moves? —*   128-130
    The road.
    Lerook=Lerwick.

23. *What gengs oot, but never comes in? — Smoke.*

24. *Whit rins but canna walk? — A burn.*

25. *Whin I geng I geng atween twa woods, | Whin I*   166
    come I come atween twa watters. — Going to the well
    with two dafficks.
    Dafficks=wooden pails. Five examples. Gregor
    82; A. Nicolson 42.

26. *Whin I guid fae da hoose I guid atween twa wids, |*   166
    Whin I cam back I cam atween twa watters. —
    Going to the well with two wooden pails or daffiks.
    Two examples.

27. *I gude oot atween twa wids | An' I cam back atween*   166
    twa waters — Person fetching water in wooden
    dafficks.
    Four examples. Spence 184, Saxby 68.

28. *Oot a hol in in a hol | Trailing a' hits guts ahint*   cf. 133-
    hit. — Needle and thread.   135,
    Two examples. A. Nicolson 48.   205-207

29. *Oot a hole, an' in a hole, | Trailin' a' its guts eftir*
    it. — A needle and thread.
    Seven examples. J. Nicolson 91.

30. *Out a hole and in a hole | And all its guts trailing.* *— A needle and thread.*

31. *Oot a höl and in a höl dreggin aa its innards efter it.* *— A needle.*
Two examples.

32. *Oot a door an' in a door dregin' its guts ahint it. —* *Needle and thread.*

33. *Atween twa hills I heard a roar, | I looked aroond* *and saw it no more. — Wind.*

cf. 229-232

34. *Aye aetin' an' never fu'. — A horse.*

cf. 237

35. *What is it that sleeps a' day an' wakes a' night?* *— A pair of shoes, the eyelets being closed with laces* *during the day and open at night when unlaced.*

cf. 254, 255

36. *Rins fastest wi hits leg broken. — A hedder cow.*
Hedder cow=branch of heather.
Four examples. Firth 134, *rins best*; A. Nicolson 34.

37. *What is it that flies fastest when its leg is broken? —* *A heather kow.*

38. *What has no feet, but wears shoes? — The horse.*

39. *Hookiti, krookiti, whaar rins du? | Clippit-tail* *every year, why spoörs du? — Conversation between* *the meadow and the burn. The meadow calls the burn* *hookiti krookiti because of its twists and turns. The* *burn replies and calls the meadow clippit-tail because* *it is mown every year.*
Spoörs=asks. Nine examples. Spence 184, *foo runs du?*; Firth 134, *whit wants thoo?*; J. Nicolson 89.

40. *Alkie palikie foo rins do? | Clippet tail every year* *foo spuirs do? — Corn.*

41. *I lay de up a guddick, guess him if do can | He rins* *aboot da world, wi ten heads on. — A thorn.*

42. *What has many een but canna see? — Potato.*

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43. *I hae a eye I canna see | I hae twa herts in my body |* *Every time I turn aboot | My guts dey ay come* *turning oot. — A spinning wheel.*

44. *I have one heart in my bodie | I have one eye but cannot see | I have three legs but cannot walk | I make a noise but cannot talk. — A spinning wheel.*

45. *I hae an ee but canna see, | I hae twa herts in my body, | I hae four maids at my command, | I hae three legs bit no a haand, | I rin as fast as ony mill | And yit me feet ir standing still. — A spinning wheel.*

46. *I hae a ee, bit I canna see, — I hae twa herts in my boady, | I hae tree feet ithoot a haand, | I hae five maids at my command, | An whidder I be in ir oot | Mi guts ir alwis mi withoot. — A spinning wheel.*
cf. Spence 183.

47. *As I cam doon trow yonder hill | I heard a rumble root, | Aye she rushed in aye she roared | In aye she ran aboot. — A water mill.*

48. *Hogie, bogie oot a dyke, hogie, bogie in a dyke | If doo touches hogie bogie, hogie bogie will bite dee. — A nettle.*   342
Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Simpkins 306.

49. *Hogie-bogie oot a decks | Hogie-bogie in a decks | If du touches hogie-bogie | Hogie-bogie'll bite de. — A thistle.*   342
Four examples, with *Hittie pittie, Heggie peggie, Haggie paggie.* J. Nicolson 90, *Haggie paggie.*

50. *Henkie Penkie oot a decks | Henkie Penkie in a decks | If do meets Henkie Penkie | Henkie Penkie'll bite de. — Barbed wire.*   342

51. *Born baneless, flees wingless, in sings till it dies. — Wind.*   cf. 365-366
Two examples.

52. *Peerie fool feaderless, noo come oot o' Paradise, | Sat upo da castle wa'. | By cam Lord Laandless, peshed him up haandless, | Red awa horseless. — Snowflakes.*   367-369
Peerie=little; *fool*=fowl.
Cf. Gregor 81; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

53. *Der cam a peerie white bird fae Paradise, | An sat on da mukkle haa wa. | By cam Lord Landless an sweepit him awa. — Snow followed by rain.*   367-369

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54. *White fool featherless new come oot o' paradise |* 367-369
Flying ower da mill dams, catch hit if do can. —
Snow.
Two examples; b *peerie foal featherless fleein' ower*;
Spence 184; *peerie fool . . . catch me if du be a*
man.

55. *Peerie fo'l fedderless | Came ower da mill dam |* 367-369
New come oot o' paradise | Guess what I am. — A
snowflake.

56. *Peerie fool feaderless, noo com oot o' Paradise, |* 367-369
Fleein' o'er da sea an laand, | Deein' in my haand.
— Snaw.
Two examples; b *fool fleein' fedderliss.*

57. *Fleein far but featherless | New come oot o' Para-* 367-369
dise, | Fleein ower da sea, an laund, deein imme
haund. — Snow.
Two examples. Saxby 68.

58. *Up i' yon haa | I heard a cock craw | A dead man* 378
seekin' a drink. — Door creaking and requiring
oiling.
Five examples; c *doon in yon haa.*
Chambers 109, *doon*, answer lacking; J.
Nicolson 92.

59. *Doon in yon ha' I heard a cock craw, | A deid man* 378
seekin' a drink. — A kettle boiling dry.
Chambers 109, answer lacking.

60. *The roaring bull o' Norrawa, he roars aa day and he* cf. 397
roars aa night, he roars about the marable stane, and
white milk he brings hame. — The sea.

61. *Da perrie broon bull wi ae horn, | Aets far mair dan* cf. 399-
a scroo o' corn. — A brown teapot. 400
Two examples; b *ates mair dan a hale screw o'*
corn.

62. *A mylke-white steed tied fast till his tree, | He gings*
mony a weary gaet, it he doesna laek ta be. — A
sailing ship.

63. *Bridled and saddled in tied ta her t[r?]ee | Money* cf. 419
days ride whaur her hert widna be. — A boat tied in
a noost.
Noost=boat-pen.

64. *What is it dat staands afore da bed gaping for your*   453
    banes? — Your smucks.
    Smucks=cloth slippers. Gregor 82.

65. *As I cam by yon peerie hoose door | I heard a njaarm*
    mute. | Aye it drank | And aye it drank, | An' aye
    it spat it oot. — The water mill grinding.
    Njaarm=cat.

66. *Shu sits at da fire we a taund at her tail, | In blows*
    laek da steamer comin in wo da mail. — Teapot.
    Taund=ember.

67. *Twa feet sat upo three feet. | In came fower feet and*   461
    took a fit fae twa feet. | Up got twa feet and hoved
    three feet efter fower feet and took a fit again. — A
    wife sitting sweein sheeps feet. Da dog taks wan; shu
    hoves da tree-legged stool efter him an gets da sheeps
    fit back again.
    Swee=to singe.

68. *As I cam ower da mires o lea | Fower an twenty*
    monsters cam shaestin me, | And hed I no been baith
    witty an we, | Da foremaist ane wid a grippit me.
    —A little mouse escapes being caught by the cat;
    and exaggerates.
    Shaestin=chasing.

69. *Da mair she gits, da mair she cries. | Da lesser she*   481
    gits da stiller she lies. — A hand-mill.

70. *Doon in yon meadow lies twa gaats, | Da mair dey*   481
    get da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey get da stiller dey
    lie. — The two millstones grinding.
    Gaats=pigs.
    Two examples.

71. *Twa grey gaats in yonder hoose did lie | Da mair*   481
    dey get da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey get, da stiller
    dey lie. — Millstones.
    Two examples. J. Nicolson 90.

72. *Twa graet goats lay in yon sty, | Da mair dey get,*   481
    da mair dey cry. | Da lesser dey get, da stillir dey lie.
    — The mill stenes.
    Goats i.e. *gauts*=pigs.
    Three examples. Firth 134, third line lacking.

73. *Twa grey grumpies, lyin' in a stye | Da mair dey aet,*   481
da mair dey cry, | Da lesser dey git, da stiller dey lie.
— The two millstones.
Two examples; b *Twa grey grices.* Spence 184,
lay in ae sty.

74. *Twa peerie gray grices lyin in a sty | Da mair dey*   481
gie dem da mair dey cry | Da lesser dey gie dem da
stiller dey lie. — Da mill-stanes.

75. *Twa grey gailties lying ida sty | Da mair dey get da*   481
mair dey sigh | Da less dey get da shurer dey die. —
Pigs [Millstones].

76. *A crii a white sheep, an a red ram in da middle. —*   498
The teeth and tongue.
Crii=pen.
Two examples.

77. *Twinty white horses upun a rid hill | Dere dey go,*   503
dere dey go, | Dere dey staand still. — Teeth
moving on tongue.
Two examples; b *fower an' twenty.*

78. *Twinty white horses upon a red hill | Gallopin,*   503
gallopin, in dan da staund still. — Eating with
your teeth.
Two examples; b *therty . . . yet dey stand still.*

79. *Auld mither twitchet haes only wan eye | In a lang*   533
tail it shu lets fly | Every time shu goes over a gap |
Shu laves a bit o her tail in a trap. — Sewing with
a needle.
Twitchet, twitsket=sullen, surly; *in*=and; *it*=
that.

80. *Hentle pentle bent his back | Tree times afore he*   539-542
spak | A beard o' flesh in a mooth o' horn | Sic a
man was never born. — A cock crowing.
cf. Chambers 109.

81. *A baird a' flesh in a mooth a' horn | Sic a baste wis*   539-542
never born. — A cock.
Two examples; b *sic a craetir.*

82. *My back is wid, my belly is wid, my sides is lined we*   553
leather, | A nose a brass and a hole on my back and
its very windy weather. — Bellows.
cf. Findlay 59.

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83. *My back is widden, my belly is widden | My sides is*   553
    guid tanned ledder. | My nose is brass it dey stuck
    ida ase | Am used in aa kinds o wadder. — Bellows.
    Ase=ash.

84. *Lang man legless cam tae da door staffless. "Guid*   562
    wife tak in your hens and duiks, for cats an' dogs I
    carena." — A worm.
    Five examples; e *fir cats in dugs hits needless.*
    Chambers 111; cf. Gregor 81; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

85. *High up in the air I was hung, |A hairy lass, an'*
    an iron tongue | Dumb to all that passes by | Touch
    my tail an' then I'll cry. — The kirk bell.

86. *There was an ancient prophet, his name no-one can*   cf. 585
    tell, | For he was in the garden before Adam fell, |
    Sin and adultery was a' as een ta him | Fir at da
    'our o' death he wis never reproved for sin. — A
    cock.
    cf. Chambers 112; Findlay 60.

87. *There was a man in Adam's race | His name I dare*   cf. 585
    not tell, | He was in the Ark with Noah | And
    Peter when they fell. | He wears a coat like Joseph's
    coat | A coat of many colours, | He wears a collar
    round his neck | And so does all his fellows. — A
    cock.

88. *Jenny wi' her white petticoat an' her red nose | Da*   607-631
    langer she stands da lesser she grows. — A candle.
    Four examples; c *white goon;* d *nettie cot an' her*
    white petticoat.
    A. Nicolson 44; J. Nicolson 89.

89. *What is it da langer hit lives, da shorter hit grows?*   625-631
    — A candle.

90. *A peerie short man wi a peerie red cott | A staff in his*   cf. 640
    haand, an a bane in his trott. — Fiddle and bow.
    Trott=throat.
    Two examples; b *peerie peerie . . . red red.*

91. *A peerie peerie man wae a red red coat, | A staff in*   cf. 640
    his haand an' a bane in his trot | Singin' Reedle
    im-a reedle-im-a rot tot tot. — A fiddle.

92. *Riddle me, riddle me, rot, tot, tot, | A wee wee man 640
wi a red red cot, | A skiff i his haand, an a stane i his
kooat, | Riddle me, riddle me, rot, tot, tot. — A
plum.*
cf. Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Findlay 58.

93. *I guid an' I kent na whar, I cam an I kent na foo, I
got da thing that I'll never forget, an cam a maiden
back. — A christening.*

94. *What maks strife an strife between twa kings | An cf. 674-
maks true lovers glad? — The pen.* 677

95. *Frae my midder dey took me young, | An' wi' a knife
dey cut me tongue, | An' made me spaek against me
will, | Sometimes guid, an' sometimes ill. — Quill
pen.*

96. *What gengs aboot da hoose a' day | An' he's at da 695
back o' da door at nicht. — A floor brush.*

97. *What is it dat wanders aroond da hoose aa day bit 695-699
never rins oot da door? — The broom sweeping the
floor.*

98. *Whin do gengs fae da hoose do gengs we di face ta cf. 722-
him | An whin do comes ta da hoose do comes wi de 724
back ta him. — A man rowin in a boat.*
Ten examples. Saxby 69.

99. *Wha ist it haes his face ti dee till he's oot i sight and cf. 722-
comes backleens haem agen? — A man rowing a boat 724
to the fishing and back again.*

100. *Virda field puts on his cap | Erisdale has a laugh at
dat. — Mist on the hill, none in the valley.*
cf. Chambers 374 for a similar weather-rhyme
from Galloway.

101. *Humpty Dumpty sat on da wall | Humpty Dumpty 738
had a great faa | A' da King's noblemen | Couldna
pit him tagether again. — Egg falling out of a nest.*
cf. Gregor 78.

102. *Stumpy stood at my bed door, an' stumpy got a fa' | 742
An' a' doctors in da laand couldna cure stumpy's fa'.
— A bottle.*

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103. *Puff puff ida auld mans pan. — A man smoking a pipe.*

104. *Fire water earth air | Every customer taks twa pair.*   796
— A set of horse shune.

105. *De Queen o' da Nort | She pluckit her geese | An sent da fedders doon ta Leith. — Snowflakes falling.*
Four examples; c *Cock o' da Nort,* d *Queen o' da Sooth.*
J. Nicolson 90. Cf. Chambers 184, *The men o' the East | Are pyking their geese | And sending their feathers here away, here away.*

106. *Peep, peep, | If da wattir is ever sae deep, | A'al win ower, an' a' me sheep. — The moon and stars.*
A'al = I'll.
Three examples. J. Nicolson 91.

107. *Hookitie, crookitie, rinnin' me lane | Cairdin' oo aff a mukle stane | Whirmin among da heddercowes | Chestin' masel' round da ferry knowes. — A mountain stream.*
Cairdin' oo = carding wool; *whirmin'* = twisting; *heddercowes* = heather stems; *chestin'* = chasing; *ferry knowes* = fairy hills.
Three examples. Saxby 69.

108. *Oot aboot in aboot, rinnin me lane, | Cairdin oo aff a muckle stane. | Whirmin amang da hedder cowes | Shaestin mesel roon da ferry knowes. — A hill burn.*

109. *As I cam' ower da Brig o' Dee | I met my sister*   805
Annie | I dang aff her head an' drank her bluid | An' left her body standin'. — Man drinking from a bottle.
Seven examples; b *pood aff. . . an sookit;* c *London Bridge . . . braik her kneck;* d *bottle brig . . . took aff.*—Bottle of wine; e *cam down trow yonder hill . . . cut her trot*—Wine; f *yon heathery hill . . . cutted her trot;* g *Brig o' Fitch . . . brook her neck*—Wine.
J. Nicolson 90; S.S.S.R.L. 795.2. Cf. Gregor 76, 77.

110. *Underneith water I lay | Neither drowned nor cast away | And by experience I can tell | Water made my belly swell. — A barrel.*   821-822

111. *Scratch me back in am naebody | Keep me clean in am everybody. — A mirror.*   826

112. *Reddie lays at blackie's tail an a' his guts wallops. — Kettle boiling.*   873
Five examples; c *Blackie's back;* d *likks at;* e *dings.*
J. Nicolson 91; cf. G.W.R. 53, *A reed bull fightin' at the [hin'-end] o' a black bull an' the black bull's guts rumlin'. — A pot boiling over the fire.*

113. *Redda caaing in blacka's boddam in aa his gutts walloping. — An iron kettle boiling on an open fire.*   873
Two examples; b *Riddie dings in.*

114. *Reida calved in Blacka's erse | and a' her guts wallowed. — A fire burning beneath a kettle.*   873

115. *Redi beats Blackie till aa his guts rumble. — Fire and boiling kettle.*   873

116. *Ten men in a den, an nane o' de[e]m ootmost. — Spokes of a wheel.*   cf. 906-916

117. *Doon in yon meadow lies a lump o' fat, | Four and twenty carpenters going at, going at, | Some wi' black and blue jackets, some wi' saft hats | I'll ca' de a wise man if do can guess me dat. — Honey bees.*   cf. 946-950

118. *Two auld grey men began ta fight whin da world began in dere fightin yet. — Da sea in da rocks.*

119. *Dey klure een anodder a day | An' lie in een [an] idders bosoms a' nicht. — Pair o' cairds.*   968
Klure=claw.
Spence 183; Firth 135.

120. *Himli, bumli, brook his baand | An' he set add ta Norroway's laand; | Da King an' aa his noblemen | Couldna bring Humli back again. — A storm.*
Add=out.
Two examples. J. Nicolson 92.

121. *Humblie bumblie brook his baand | An fled awa ta Norrowa laand. | Da King in a' his noble men | Couldna bring him back again. — Da wind.*
cf. Chambers 184, *Arthur o' Bower has broken his bands | And he's come roaring owre the lands | The King o' Scots and a' his power | Canna turn Arthur o' Bower.*

122. *Doon in the meadow, tink, tank, ten aboot four. — Wife milking a cow.*   978

123. *Tink, tank, under da bank | Ten upo fower. — Milking a cow.*   978

124. *Tank, tank, anunder a bank | Ten aboot fower. — Someone milking a cow.*   978
Four examples; c and d, *ten aboot fower* (bis). Spence 182, *twa in a bank.* Firth 135.

125. *Tink, tank, in a watery bank | Ten ipo four. — Milking a cow.*   978
Seven examples; g *hank tank.*
J. Nicolson 91.

126. *Hank tank feathery bank, ten aa pa four. — Someone milking a cow.*   978

127. *I sat in my love and drank out of my love | An my love she gave me light | A cup o' guid ale to any man | That reads my riddle right. — A man who made a chair from his sweetheart's bones, drank out of her skull, and made candles from her fat.*

128. *I sat i my love, an' I drank i my love, | An' my love she gave me light. | A pint o' wine to any man that reads my riddle richt. — Wood—chair, cup and firewood, all wood.*
cf. Chambers 108.

129. *He loved her, and she hated him | Yet, woman-like, sought after him. | Her success was his down-fall | For he died—crack. — A flea.*
Two examples; b *his overthrow.*

130. *I hae seven bridders a' da same age | An' four sisters quadruplets. | Ah'm da youngest een; I grow older an' dey dinna | An' yet I never o'ertak them. — The month of February.*

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131. *What is it that goes to the hills before its father is*   985
born? — Smoke from a fire.

132. *We ir twa bridders heavy burdens we bear | We dem*   991
we ir bitterly prest | We're foo aa day in empty at
night | When we geng ta rest. — Boots.

133. *Two brothers are we, heavy burdens we bear, |*   991
When night comes we go to bed empty and rest. — A
pair of shoes.
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

134. *Twa bridders we are | Great burdens we bear | A'*   991
day we're oppressed | An' at night we're at rest. —
A pair of boots.

135. *Twa bridders we are, heavy burdens we bear, |*   991
Sorely oppressed a' day an' empty whin we go tae
rest. — A pair of boots.

136. *Two brothers we are | Great burdens we bear | By*   991
which we are heavy oppressed |We work hard all
day | No food we deserve |And at night we go empty
to rest. — A pair of buits.

137. *Auld midder auld | Lives ida cauld | Brings oot her*   1021
young | Everyene withoot a tongue. — Tattie.

138. *Auld midder, auld, staunds i' da cauld, | An' brings*   1021
oot her bairns we eyes, bit nae tongue. — A potato.

139. *A lazy wife a hard wirkin man in 12 peer black*
bairns. — A clock.

140. *Da peerie lazy faider | Da lang hard wrocht midder*
| An' twelve black bairns. — A clock face.

141. *A lazy faider an' a wirkin' midder | An twall peerie*
bairns sittin' roond da floer. — A clock.

142. *A lang hard-wirkin midder, a peerie lazy faeder, an*
twal peerie black bairns on a clean washen flör. —
Minute and hour hands and the numbers on the face
of the clock.

143. *A hard working midder and a lazy auld fadder,*
twelve peerie black bairns in a hoose sweeped white.
— Face of a clock.

144. *Heddercow röt I grow | Birkin fit I staand | I redd*
a mare niver was foaled | An leddit da midder i mi
haand. — A boat.
Informant adds the following explanations for
each line: small beginning; the tree; sea waves;
Moder dy or mother wave.
Saxby 68, answer lacking.

145. *Down in a meadow I grew | An axe did me destroy |*   cf. 1059
Dead I was but quick I am | And now I sing for joy.
— A fiddle made from a tree.
Four examples; c *once dead I was, now live I am;*
d *I wing with joy.*
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

146. *What rows o'er da hoose, lack a hallo o' strae? —*
Reek.
Hallo=bundle of straw used as fodder.

147. *Whit is't it seeks its wye furt lack a halloo i strae?*
—"Reek" finding its way out from an open fire in the
centre of the floor, and twisting about like a bundle of
"treshen" corn.

148. *The flour of England, the fruit of Spain, | Met*   1096
together in a shour of rain. | Rowd in a napkin, tied
wi' a string. | Guess my riddle an' I'll gie you a ring.
— A plum pudding.
Rowd=rolled.
Two examples; b *Read di me riddle an du's get a*
ring. — A currant pudding.

149. *Da floor o' England and da fat o' Spain | Baith met*   1096
ta-gedder in a shooer o' rain, | Pitten in a pock tied
wi a string, | Read do me a riddle an' do sall get a
ring. — A dumpling.
Pock=bag.
Two examples; b *put in a bag . . . | Guess my*
guddick.

150. *The peeriest lom aboot da hoose | haes mair dan a*
hunder girds. — A reel of thread.
Lom=vessel, utensil.

151. *Da peeriest loum aboot da hoose | Hes maist girds*
aboot hit. — Reel of thread.
Two examples.

152. *A peerie ha hoose | Wi' neither door nor window. —*   1132
An egg.
Two examples; b *doors nor lums*. A. Nicolson 32.

153. *A peerie ha hoose | Foo o' meat | An' wi nedder doors*   1135
or windows. — An egg.
Two examples; b *peerie hoose*. J. Nicolson 91.

154. *A peerie white haa hoose, a' foo a meat, nae doors or*   1135
windows tae lat you in tae eat. — An egg.
cf. Gregor 79.

155. *Peerie hoose weel packit, | Nedder door nor window*   1135
at it. — An egg.

156. *A marable waa as white as milk | An lining ta it as*   1138
saft as silk | Aroond aboot it a fountain clear | And
in a ta da hert o it a golden pear. — An egg.

157. *A marble wall as white as milk | Inside of that is*   1138
lined with silk | Inside of that is a fountain clear |
And inside that a golden pear. — An egg.

158. *Wir neebir wife axed fir a lenn i my boddamless tub*   1173
ta pit her flesh in. — A wedding ring.

159. *Queen Elizabeth sent Queen Anne | A bottomless*   1173
barrel ta pit beef in. — A ring.

160. *Hummell-bummell boddomless hads a at incomes. —*
A skirt.
Twelve examples; *humbley bumbley; hum bum,*
etc.—*skirt or petticoat*. J. Nicolson 90.

161. *Black aboot spooting oot | Laeking ta be mair. —*
Rain.

162. *Wingle, wangle, in a tangle | If it wis even, hit wid*
rekk ta heevin. — Smoke from a chimney.
Rekk=reach. Four examples; b *winglety wangle;*
c and d, *If I was even*. J. Nicolson 92.

163. *Wingle, wangle like a tangle and reaches up sae*
high. — Smoke.

164. *Wingle wangle lik a tangle | If I was straight I'd*
rek tae da sky. — Smoke.
Two examples; b *crooke laek a tangle | if it was*
straight.

170

165. *Winglety ringlety crookit like a tangle | Takkin' its wey wi' never a jangle | Winglety ringlety if it wiz even | Hit could reach frae here to Heaven. — Smoke from a chimney.*
Three examples. Saxby 69.

166. *Wingelty, ringelty, shaep-ed laek a triangle, | Makkin mi wye wi money a kangle, | I belaeve it iv I wis even | I wid raech fae here ta heeven. — Reek coming out of the lum on a calm day.*

167. *What is it which dead men eat | If living men ate they would die? — Nothing.*

168. *As I went oot one morning in May | I found a thing in a cole o' hay | Hit wis neither fish, flesh, feather or bone | So I left it till hit could go alone. — An egg.*
Cole=haycock. Eight examples; d *in the face o' my hay*, e and f *fish flesh skin or bane*, g *bruskie or ben*, h *sinnoo or bane*. *Bruskie*=gristle. Spence 185.

169. *What is taen tae da table | Cut but never eaten? — Cards.*

170. *Peerier dan a moose, bigger dan a loose | Hit haes mair windows on it as a' da King's hoose. — A thimble.*
Six examples; d *gritter dan a loose*, e and f *haes as mony windows*. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

1237

171. *Bigger as a loose peerier as a moose | Yet has mair doors an windows as i' da King's hoose. — A thimble.*
Three examples; c *It haes mair windows*. J. Nicolson 91.

1264

172. *What is it that's higher than a steeple, lighter than a feather, yet no man can lift it? — A shadow.*

173. *Roond as an O | Black as a tanny | A wee wee wife in a wee wee manny. — Penny.*
Tanny=a dark complexioned person.

174. *As roond as an O, aan as broon as tan | A wee wee wife an' a wee wee man. — A penny.*

171

175. *Roond as an O, an clear as crystal. — A drop o'*   1314
      water.

176. *As roond as an O, an' as clear as crystal | If du*   1314
      dusna guess my guddick I'll shut de wae my pistol. —
      A rain drop.

177. *Roond as an O as clear is crystal | If do dosena guess*   1314
      dat a'll shoot de wi my pistol. — Moon.

178. *Roond as an O | An' clear as crystal | If du guess me*   1314
      guddick | Ise shut de wi' me pistol. — A watch.
      cf. Gregor 76; Findlay 58.

179. *Roond as an O, an' deeper as a cup, | An' a' da men*   cf. 1315-
      in Shetland canna lift him up. — A well.   1325

180. *Roond as a grind steen | Luggit lake a kert | A' da*
      ribs wethin hits boadie | Rins till hits hert. — A
      mill wheel.

181. *Roond laek a mill stane luggit laek a cat | If do wid*   cf. 1343
      guess aa day do widna guess dat. — A muckle
      kettle.
      Seven examples; e *if do gusses ä day döol never*
      guess me dat, f *guess du aa day du'll no guess dat,* g
      do can guess a' day.

182. *Roond like a mill stane | Lugged like a cat | Standing*   cf. 1343
      upon three legs | Can du guess dat? — Old-fashioned
      three-legged pot.
      Spence 184.

183. *Roond as a millstane | Luggit as a cat | Ye can*   1343
      guess a' day | Ye'll no guess dat. — Washing-tub.
      Three examples. J. Nicolson 91; cf. Gregor 79.

184. *As roond as an O, lugged lik a cat, | If you'd guess*   cf. 1343
      aa day you widna guess dat. — A muckle kettle.

185. *Roond as a mill-stane shaped laek a cup | Aa da men*
      in Europe coodna lift hit up. — Moon.

186. *Round as an O, sharp as a lance, | If do wis apon*   1348
      its back it wid carry de ta France. — Da moon.
      Four examples; c *cood win ipon his back,* d *wis on*
      da tap o hit.

187. *Roond as a riddle | Sharp as a lance | If ye wid jump*   1348
     ipo me | I'd carry you ta France. — The moon.
     Riddle=sieve. Two examples; b *upo my back.*
     J. Nicolson 92.

188. *Roond as a lum, an' spottit laek a lark, | An' every*
     time its hert baets, it gies a peerie bark. — A clock.

189. *As hard as horn, as soft as silk, | As red as blood, as*
     white as milk. — An egg.

190. *Hard as horn and soft as silk | Black as tar, an' as*
     white as milk. — Da swan.

191. *Foo dark, foo dark, foo deep it is | Foo rough aboot*
     da mooth it is, | For Kings and priests and lords it
     is. — A grave.

192. *Mouth like a mill door | Luggit like a cat | Guess*   1397
     a' day | An' doo'll no guess dat. — A three-legged
     pot.
     Chambers 109; Firth 134, *lugs like a cat. — A*
     lugged sheu (shoe); G. W. R. 53.

193. *Shapet laik a mill door | Lugget laek a cat | Guess*
     aa day an' du'll no guess dat. — A sack of meal.

194. *Hairy oot hairy in | Lift di fit in shove him in. — A*   1416
     sock.
     Two examples.

195. *Oo withoot, oo within, | Lift de leeg and push it in.*   1416
     — A stocking.
     Oo=wool. Firth 135, *woo' | Not a single bit of*
     skin | Lift thee leg an' shove it in.

196. *Hair athoot and hair ithin | A' hair an' nae skin. —*   1418
     A hair rope.
     Chambers 109; Gregor 80; Findlay 59.

197. *Hair withoot, hair within | All hair in nae skeen.*   1418
     — Girsy simminds.
     Girsy=grassy; *simmind*=rope; *skeen*=skin.

198. *Hairy without an hairy within, | Aa hair an nae*
     skin. — A wirsit glove.
     Wirsit=worsted.

199. *Hair withoot, hair within, | A' hair an' nae skin.*
— *A rower.*
Rower=carded wool rolled between the backs of the cards and ready for spinning.

200. *What is neither within da hoose nor without the house? — The window.*   1423

201. *What is it, dats nedder in da hoose nor oot o' da hoose, an yet hits aboot da hoose? — The windows.*   1423
Nine examples; i *part of the house.* Gregor 82.

202. *What's neider outside o' da hoose, or inside o' da hoose, an' yet is in da hoose? — The door.*   1423

203. *I'm nedder i' da hoose | Nor oot o' da hoose | Bit I'm aboot da hoose. — The lum.*   1423
Two examples.

204. *Afore laek a fork | Behint laek a stock | Da middle laek a spoot | Whaur da watter rins oot. — An ox.*

205. *A heid lik a yarn klo' | An' a body lik a buggy o' sids. — Cat.*
Yarn klo'=ball of yarn; *buggy*=sheepskin bag; *sid*=a husk of oats, etc.

206. *A head like a simint cloo | A body like a buggie o ooo | A tail like a staff. — A cat.*
Simint cloo=ball of rope, cord. Two examples; b has first two lines transposed.

207. *Head lake a simmond clue | Bodie lake a buggy o' oo | Heid lake a green hazel staff. — A cat.*
Heid inadvertently for *tail* in line 3.

208. *A belly laek a buggy o ool | A heid laek a yarn clue | In a tail lake a lazy staff. — A cat.*

209. *A body like a buggie a oo | A head like a heather clue | A tail like a bismer. — A cat.*
Bismer=balance (for weighing).

210. *A head laek a hedder clew | A boady laek a buggie o' oo | A tail laek a rower. — A cat.*
Rower=roll of carded wool.

211. *A body like a sock a oo | A head like waftie clue | A tail like a rower. — A cat.*
Waft=warp.

212. *What has a heid lik a cloo | An' a boady lik a buggy o' suds? — Cat.*
suds, i.e. *sids*=husks.

213. *A boody lik a buggy o oo | A head lik a simmond clew, | Four feet an twenty nails, | An' a tail lik a teengs. — A cat.*
Teengs=tongs. S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

214. *Patch ore Patch, withoot ony stitches, | If do tell me dis riddle I'll gie de my breeches. — Kale stock.*   1438

215. *What goes in saft in dry in comes oot weet in dreepin? — Tea.*   cf. 1448-1452

216. *In he goes, cauld, raw, soople, oot he comes haet, boiled, stivvened. — Cooking sheep's puddings.*
Stivvened from *steeve*=stiff, firm.

217. *What is highest with the head off? — A pillow.*   1454

218. *What is its aa holes and yet it hadds water? — Sponge.*   1459

219. *What is all holes and yet it holds water? — Crook and links used on an old Shetland open fire-place.*   1461
Six examples.

220. *Twa lookers and twa crookers | Twa flappers and fower gingers an fower hingers | An a flap tae flap da flees awa. — Cow.*   1476
I.F.C. Ms. 1026, 112.

221. *Four still-staanders, four dill-dawners | Twa lookers, twa crookers an' a switcher. — A cow.*   1478
dill=to sway, swing about.

222. *Four stiff standers, four dilly danders | Twa un-lookers, twa hookitie crookers, | An one dilly dander. — A cow.*   1478
cf. Spence 182.

223. *Four hang and four go | Two stand firm and fast | Two shine like the sky | And een comes last. — A cow—has four teats, four legs, two horns, two eyes and one tail.*   cf. 1481-1489
Three examples. Saxby 69.

224. *Fower hingers, fower gingers, twa upstaanders | Ane coming on behint ta flap da flies away. — A cow.*   cf. 1481-1489

225. *Ruffie raise an raxed him, stuid a while and stivened him. Fower i da earth i twa i da air. Ane oot ahint and ane oot afore. — Grise—pig.*   cf. 1490-1494
Raxed=stretched.

226. *Four neuked, tail teuked, teeth oot a number. — Wool cards.*
Neuked=cornered; *teukit*= ? hardened, rigid. Nine examples; g *tail djukit*, h *tail kuikit*, i *teeth ithoot number*. Spence 183; J. Nicolson 89.

227. *Two white sticks an tree white sheets | An she walks o'er da watter, withoot any feet. — Sailing ship.*

228. *Black withoot in black within | A' hair in nee sken. — A rower.*

229. *Black and ugly though I be, der no a leddy in the land that widna tak me in her hand. — A tea kettle.*

230. *Everything has what da puddin has. | What has da puddin? — A name.*   1573-1575

231. *Du dusna hae it, an du widna laik tae hae it, | But if du had it du widna laik tae want it. — A bald head.*   1593

232. *Formed long ago, yet made to-day, | Employed while others sleep, | What few would like to do without | And none would like to keep. — A bed.*   1596

233. *What is it nane likes ta keep in nane likes ta gee awa? — Bed.*   1596

234. *What is it few men wid laek ta keep bit nae man wid laek ta want? — Their bed.*   1596

235. *What is it that everyone requires and no-one wants to keep? — Your bed.*   1596

236. *Trow a rock trow a reel trow an auld spinny wheel | Trow a sheeps shank bone sick a trick wis never done. — A worm in a sheep's fit.*   cf. 1597-1603
Fit=foot. Firth 134; *As I cam' ower the hill o' heather | There I met a man o' leather | Throw a rock . . . Sic a man was never known. — A woodworm.*

237. *Trou a rock, trou a reel* | *Trou an aald spinnie wheel* cf. 1597-
| *Trou a sheep shank bone* | *Sic a job was never done.*   1603
— *A man weaving.*
Two examples. cf. Spence 184, line 4 lacking,
—*A web of cloth*; J. Nicolson 90.

238. *What can gang up da lum doon but canna go doon da* 1604
lum up? — *An umbrella.*
Four examples.

239. *What can't go down a rainpipe up but can go up a* 1604
rainpipe down? — *Umbrella.*
Two examples; b *can go up a spout down.*

240. *I gaed awa abune da eart an' cam agen anunder da*
eart. — *A person going away with an empty kishie*
and returning with it full of peats or mould.
Kishie=a straw basket.

241. *It guid west abune an' cam hame in-under.* — *A*
man carrying a burden of "flaws".
Flaa=flake of turf torn up by hand and used
in thatching.

242. *What goes in through a womble bore* | *An' canna*
come oot through an ox byre door? — *Snow.*
Womble=augur.

243. *Whit can win in tru a whomlie bore* | *Yit canna com*
oot tru an ox byre door? — *The sun.*

244. *Whit ist it canna turn itsel in a coo's byre, yet can*
geng troo a moose hol? — *A sunbeam.*
Saxby 69, *coo's byre for size* — *Sunshine.*

245. *What is it, it never wis, an never will be?* | *Hadd* 1629
dy haand up, an den du'll see. — *The little finger is*
always shorter than the rest.

246. *I guid an I got it,* | *I set me doon an sought it,* | *An'* 1632-1642
whin I couldna fin it | *I took it hame wi' me.* — *A*
thorn in the sole.
Two examples.

247. *I guid an got it, I sat an socht it* | *Caase I coodna fin* 1632-1642
it, I cam hame carrying it. — *A thorn in the foot.*

248. *Banks foo and brae foo, gadder a day and doo'l never*   1651
     get de haand foo. — Mist.
     Thirteen examples with minor variations, e.g.
     de neive foo; grip all day. cf. Chambers 184;
     Gregor 81; Saxby 68; J. Nicolson 92;
     S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

249. *As I cam ower da Brig o' London | Da Brig o'*   cf. 1670-
     London brook | An' a' da men in London | Dey   1671
     couldna big it up. — Ice breaking.
     brook=broke; *big*=build. Two examples.
     Chambers 110; A. Nicolson 24; J. Nicolson 91.

250. *When I cam ore da Brig o' London den da Brig o'*   cf. 1670-
     London bruke | And aa da men in London could no   1671
     hale him up. — Frost.
     Hale=drag.

251. *Khittle my craig an claw my belly | An whit do tinks*
     I say? — Fiddle.
     Khittle=tickle; *craig*=neck.

252. *What is it, if you cut aff at baith ends, it aye grows*   1693
     longer? — A ditch.

253. *Watter canna weet, in da sun canna dry. — Butter.*
     Four examples.

254. *What is it da sun canna dry, an' water canna weet?*
     — Butter.
     J. Nicolson 92.

255. *What is it, da mair you dry it, da weeter it gets? —*
     Butter.

256. *Water canna weet, an fire canna burn. — Butter.*

257. *Hit rins ower da hedder in hit sinks ida sea | Da fire*
     canna burn it so what can it be? — Da sun.
     Three examples.

258. *Lifts ower the heather | Sinks idda sea | Fire canna*
     burn it | What can it be? — The sun.
     Four examples; Saxby 68; A. Nicolson 28.

259. *Sails on da hedder an sinks a da sea | Fire canna*
     burn it an what can it be? — Mist.

260. *Sweems apa da laund in sinks apa da sea. — The*
     sun.

261. *Hit rins ower da land, hit flees ower da sea, | Fire canna burn it, an' what can it be?* — *Mist.*
Firth 134, *rins on the land, swims on the sea;* G. W. R. 53, *hooks owre the heather cowes, sails owre the sea.*

262. *Sinks in da heddar | And sweems in the sea | Fire canna burn it, | And what can it be?* — *Water, but in the Fair Isle programme they called it the Sun.*
The informant refers to a B.B.C. feature broadcast. Two examples.

263. *Sinks through the heather | Sweems through the sea | Fire canna burn it | What can it be?* — *The sun.*
Two examples.

264. *Sinks in da heather, sweems in da sea, | Fire canna burn it, whit can it be?* — *Rain.*

265. *It shines i' da wattir, an' it sweems i' da sea | An' fire canna burn it, an' what can it be?* — *Sunbeam.*

266. *Da blind man saw a hare, | Da dumb man cried "Where?" | Da legless man ran an' got it, | Da naked man pat hit in his pocket.* — *Impossibility.*

267. *What God never saw, kings seldom see, yet we see every day.* — *His equal.*   1715

268. *What is it that God never saw, the king seldom sees, but we see it every day?* — *An equal.*   1715
A. Nicolson 62.

269. *We see it often | The King sees it seldom | But our Maker never saw it.* — *Our equal.*   1715
Two examples; b *see every day . . . An God never sees.*

270. *What is it da rich man puts in his pocket | But da puir man bals at his feet?* — *Mucous—blowing the nose.*   1724
Bals = throws.

271. *What is it dat da rich man gives, da poor man has, and all men carry ta der graves?* — *Nothing.*   cf. 1726-1727

272. *What is it all men love more than life, | That which contented men desire, | The poor possess, the rich require, | The miser spends, the spendthrift saves, | And all men carry to their graves.* — *Nothing.*   cf. 1727

273. *There was a man bespoke a thing and to the owner home did bring, | The man that made it did refuse it, the man that brought it could not use it, | The man that owned it couldn't tell whether it fitted ill or well. — A coffin.* cf. 1728
cf. Chambers 108.

274. *Da man it made it selled it, and da man it bought it never used it, and da man it used it never saw it. — A coffin.* 1729
Two examples.

275. *Da man it maks it dusna need it, but da man it needs it dusna see it. — A coffin.* 1729

276. *What is it a man makes only once, and after he's made it, he never sees it. — A widow.*

277. *Scoor me weel in keep me clean | Fire a ball in calis green. — A gun.*
Calis = ? Calais. cf. Chambers 159, rhyme on Mons Meg: *Powder me well and keep me clean, | I'll carry a ball to Peebles green.*

278. *I grew wi da coo, yet wis made be a man | I bor till his moo, what wis boiled ida pan. — A horn spoon.*

WITTY QUESTIONS AND CONUNDRUMS

279. *Fu mony hairs in a cats tail? — None, dae are all on da outside.*

280. *What way is a wife['s] beauty like a sovereign? — Because once changed it shoon gengs.*

281. *What time a year is da maist hols open? — The hairst with all the holes in the corn stubbles opened.*
Hairst = harvest.

282. *What is the "fool" wi da red neb? — Goat.*

283. *What is the "duke" wi da black fit? — Thaw.*
Duke = duck.

284. *What is the most polite thing in the world? — A ship, because she always advances with bows.*

285. *Why is a widow compared to a turnip? — Because the better half is under the ground.*

286. *Peg, Meg, an' Marget was my true lover's name. |
Hit was neither Peg, Meg nor Marget | Bit yet I've
spelled her name. — An[n].*

287. *I sat inta white, and I stude inta white | An I saw
white, aetin white, | I pat white oot trow white ta pit
white oot a white. — A woman in a white shawl,
standing in a white house, looks out and sees white
sheep eating ripe corn. She sends a white dog to drive
them away.*

cf. 845-
850

288. *I sat itta me cheerum charrum | An luikit troo me
leerum laarum | An dere I saa da ree raa | Carryin
me linty pipes awaa. | I swore be me britti bratti |
At if I hed me twitti twatti, | I wid mak da ree raa
| Lat me linty pipes faa.*
Cheerum charrum=chair; leerum laarum=lum in
middle of roof; ree raa=crow; linty pipes=chic-
ken; britti bratti= ? Bible; twitti twatti=gun.

289. *I sat in my sheeram sharrim | An looked trou da
leeram laarim, | I saw da ree-raw, | Carrying da
linti pipes awa. | I swore by my bretti bratti | If I
hed my tweeti twatti, | I wid shut da ree-raw | An
mak da linti pipes ta faa. — A man sitting in his
chair, and looking through the windows, saw a raven
carrying off a lamb; he swore that if he had his gun,
he would shoot the raven, and save the lamb.*

290. *I sat ida leerim laurim in lookit oot da cleerim
clarum. I saw da ree raw rinnin away wi da rantie
pipes. If I hed my roostie rapie I wid a shot da ree
raw in made da rantie pipes ta faa. — A crow run-
ning away with chickens and a man wishing he had a
gun to shoot it with.*

291. *I sat in my sheeram shaarim | An' looked trou da
leeram laarim | I saw da ree raw | Carryin' da lintie
pipes awa' | I swore by my breeti braati | If I had
my tweeti twaati | I wid shut da ree raw | An' mak'
da linti-pipes ta fa'. — A man sitting in a chair,
looking through the windows and seeing a raven
carrying off a lamb. He swore if he had his gun he
would shoot the raven and save the lamb.*
J. Nicolson 93.

292. *I sat upo my hump-dumpy | I luikit oot my luck-aleery | I saw da ree-ra peckin my linti-ties awa. —* Crow picking off chickens.

293. *I sat in my snjeerin snjaarin | An luikit trow da leerin laarin | I saw da ree raw | kerryin da rantie pipes awa. | I swore by my brutie bratti | If I had my tweetie twattie, | I wid shut da ree raw | An makk da rantie pipes faa. —* Sitting in my house, looking through the window, I see a raven carry away a young lamb. I swore if I had my gun I would shoot the bird and get the lamb back.

294. *I sat upo me humpie birlie | An luikit troo da humpie dirlie | An I saw the ree raw | Carrying da lintie pipes awa | An I swore be mi nittie nattie | I wid tak mi wittie wattie | An mak the ree raw | Pey fi carryin da lintie pipes awa.*
Saxby 68.

295. *I sat upo mi hootie cootie, an lookit ower mi nemple rootie, an I saw da ree raw, baer da lintie pipes awa. —* Crow carrying awa da sheep's faa.
cf. Chambers 185; *I sat upon my houtie croutie | I lookit owre my rumple routie | And saw John Heezlum Peezlum | Playing on Jerusalem pipes. —* The Man in the Moon.

296. *I sat apon my humply dumply | I cried upo my gaffie allie | I saw tree neckie nockies | eatin' oot o' my lentie whitie. | I sed if I had my ree-raw | I wid lat dem a' tree fa'. —* A man sitting on a stool sees three white maws eatin' oot o' his rig. He cried upo his dog an' said if he could get his gun he'd shoot dem.
Maw=gull.

297. *Roondie roondie at da fire | Snudie at da wall | Guffie guffie ida door | Piggie ida strae.*
Roondie=teapot; *snudie*=wheel (noise of); *guffie*=dog; *piggy*=pig.

298. *Fiddeks at da fire, trimmiks at da wa, | Guff, guff i da door, dummie ida sta. —* Brünnies baking, a spinning wheel, a pig and a horse.
Brünnies=bannocks of bere or oats.

299. *He walked on earth, he talked on earth, | convicting man of sin; | He's not on earth, he's not in heaven, | Nor yet can enter in. — Balaam's ass.*

300. *She walked on earth, she talked on earth, | She rebuked a man for sin, | She's not on earth, she's not in Heaven, | Or likely to get in. — Balaam's ass.*

301. *Nine lang oors pa rötless tree | Hung He dere fir aa ta see. | A bluidy mett wis in His side, | Med bi a lance—it widna hide, | Nine lang oors pa rötless tree, | Bit ill wis da fokk an guid wis He. — The body of Jesus hanging on the Cross.*
Mett=wound.
Saxby 59.

302. *What chews da cud every yule morning laik every udder horse? — The White Horse of Hoofield.*

303. *Clippit taes an nippit taes | O'er da meadow rides do. | Boanie feet an braw feet | Hame under da caldron bides do. — Peat moss.*
cf. Chambers 68 and 69 in two versions of "Rashie-coat".

304. *Boanie fit an braa fit | Ower da burn ride, | Nippit fit an clippit fit | Haem aboot bide. — "Essiepattel an da Blue Yow".*
Lines 1 and 3 have been transposed by the informant.

ARITHMETICAL RIDDLES

305. *Da Bishop and da Minister and Mr Andrew Lamb | Gaed in da gairden whar three pair hang, | Dey aa took ene and still twa hang. — All the one man.*
Two examples; b *three apples.* Cf. Chambers 111, *A priest and a friar and a silly old man.*

306. *As I wis gaeing ta St Ives I met seven wives. Every wife had seven sacks and in every sack wis seven cats and every cat had seven kittens, kittens, cats, sacks and wives, foo mony wir gaeing ta St Ives? — One.*

307. *As I gude tae St Ives I met seven auld wives. Every wife had seven skits, and every khit had seven cats, every cat had seven kettlins. How many went to St Ives? — One.*

ALPHABET RIDDLES

308. *Roond aboot da raggit rock | The raggit rascal ran. | Foo mony Rs and Ds in that? | Come tell me if you can. — None.*

309. *Arrond da ragged rock da ragged raskle ran, | Foo many Rs in dat, pray tell me if do can? — None in "dat".*

310. *The beginning of eternity, the end of time and space, | The beginning of end, and end of every place. — Letter E.*

311. *Paul had it behind, Luke had it before. | All girls have it once, boys cannot have it. | Old Mrs Mulligan had it twice in succession. | Dr Lull had it before and behind, | And twice as often behind as before. — The letter L.*

312. *Up a hill and doon a hill | Up a hill in stop dere. — Letter N.*

313. *In Amsterdam its common | Holland wants it still. | It's no in aa the world | And yet it's in a mill. — The letter M.*
Six examples; f *my snuff mill.*
S.S.S.R.L. 795.2.

PUNNING RIDDLES

314. *How is an olick like a telephone bell? — A peerie ting-a-ling.*
Olick = a young ling.

315. *What [is] da difference between a black coo, and a white een? — One is a black cow, the other is a white fish.*
White een = whiting.

316. *What weys da hen? — Scales.*
Weys = way is.

[1] The contribution submitted by Mr. G. R. Deyell, Bixter, was adjudged the best, while the second and third awards went to Mrs. S. G. Jameson, Burgh Road, Lerwick, and Mrs. Jas. Umphray, Sellafirth, Yell, respectively. The other contributors were Miss J. A. Linklater, Park, Bressay; Mrs. Johnson, Newton, Quarff; Mrs. Fred Robertson, West Houlland, Bridge of Walls; C. C. Smith, 4 St. Clair Road, Cunningsburgh; James A. Gray, Dykes, Isle of Foula; G. Murray, Mossbank; C. H. Robinson, Weisdale; Mrs. A. J. Sandison, Altona, Mid Yell; Miss J. A. Williamson, Neapaback, Burravoe, S. Yell; Jerry Eunson, 6 Battlefield Avenue, Glasgow, (Fair Isle); Charles Williamson, Vidlin; J. J.; Mrs. Smith, 38 Robertson Crescent, Lerwick; and E. J. F. Clausen, 5 Sycamore Place, Aberdeen.

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NOTES AND COMMENTS

A. NOTES ON SCOTTISH PLACE-NAMES

14. *Avon*

A few years ago, the etymology of this river-name—so frequent in most parts of the British mainland—was one of the few undisputed results of place-name research. Identical with Welsh *afon* "river" and cognate with Cornish and Breton *auon*, Old Irish *abann*, with the same meaning, it was taken to represent a British (and also Gaulish) *Abonā whose ultimate Indo-European root is *ab- "water, river" (Pokorny 1948: 1). Anybody dealing with the intricate problems presented to the interpreter of our river-nomenclature would heave a sigh of relief because the many Avons, at least, did not put any obstacle in the investigator's way.

Now this generally accepted explanation has at last been challenged, and we shall have to think again. The challenge comes from Professor Heinrich Wagner of Belfast who, in a paper in the *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* (Wagner 1958:58-75), discusses our name in the course of an investigation of linguistic material common to Indo-European and Mediterranean groups of languages, as well as to some in the Near East. The main argument of this article is based on lexicographical material from the sphere of religion, dealing particularly with the worship of gods and goddesses who are said to be frequently represented as, or given the attributes of, animals some of which appear to have been thought of as living in water-courses.

Amongst the latter, Wagner lists a divine cow which he derives from the equation of a Sumerian word *ab* "cow" with Old Irish *oub* "river", Latin *amnis*, the same (Wagner 1958: 67). He comes to the conclusion that an Indo-European feminine *ab-n- must be regarded as an animated concept, in contrast to Greek ὕδωρ, English *water*, etc.: that it was, in fact, the Terra Mater. In support of this theory he quotes our British *Abonā* which is also on record as the second element in Gaulish *Equ-abonā* "horse-burn". This Gaulish name proves that, as far as our Insular Celtic and Gaulish evidence is concerned, the present meaning of "river" was the only one attributed to

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Abonā at that time and that any connections with animal worship must be looked for in early Gaulish times.

This Wagner himself admits but, at the same time, points to the parallel formation of the Gaulish goddess-names *Epona* and *Damona* which to him are "the great horse" and "the great cow" respectively. He concludes from this that *-ona* is the suffix employed in the designation of feminine divine beings and that consequently *Abona*, which shows the same ending, must originally have been the name of a goddess which he interprets as "the great cow", identical in meaning therefore with *Damona*. He also doubts the existence of an Old Irish *ā*-stem *ab*<*abā*, genitive *abae* which has been postulated by Pokorny (1948: 1).

It cannot be the purpose of this relatively short note to examine the whole complexity of Wagner's argument, nor can it review the paper from all angles. We shall therefore confine ourselves to those points which have some bearing on the ultimate etymology of our Scottish Avons. The examination of these points will be critical in so far as we feel that we cannot agree with Wagner's thesis of the religious background to our names. This does not mean that we want to dispute the association of rivers with divinities or with divine animals thought to be living in water-courses, as such; our own Scottish *Don*<*Dēuonā* in Aberdeenshire, and *Dee*<*Dēuā* in Aberdeenshire and Kirkcudbrightshire (cognate with Latin *deus* "god", Old Irish *dia*, Welsh *duw*, etc.) undoubtedly imply that these rivers were regarded as having divine qualities, and the French *Marne*<*Matronā* no doubt belongs to this category.

It is, however, necessary to stress that in these three instances it is the meaning of their stems which assigns them to the sphere of worship and religion, and not the morphological make-up of the names. This is particularly borne out by the juxtaposition of *Dēuā* and *Dēuonā* where it is obvious that the suffix has no bearing on the divine qualities expressed by the name and should be regarded as being employed to form an adjective or maybe an amplicative or diminutive derivative. It must be remembered, too, that the Dee and the Don have been closely associated in the peoples' minds for a long time, because of their geographical proximity, so that onomastically one name could easily be derived from the other, in this case the latter from the former.

It can also not be denied that the names of animals, birds, fishes, etc., are frequently associated with the names of water-

courses. In an earlier volume of this journal the present writer has pointed out (Nicolaisen 1957: 226-7) that the relationship between these two categories of names can be twofold: It is either based on the observation that the animals or birds in question are plentiful in the vicinity of the stream; this normally results in a genitival construction like *Allt a' Ghobhair* SUT "burn of the goat", or *Allt na Seabhaig* ARG "burn of the hawk". The alternative is that rivers were called after animals whose peculiar qualities were so strikingly mirrored by the character- istics of the water-course that it was almost inevitable to equate the two. Examples of this kind of symbolic identification would be the *River Tarff* INV, possibly because of the wild "bull-like" strength and speed of its flow, and the *River Bran* ROS whose colour may have struck the name-givers as being "raven- black". It is unlikely, however, that in these instances the bull and the raven were taken to be living in the waters of the river. We would say this also of a name like the *River Conon* ROS which goes back to *Conona*<*K͡unonā* "dog-river" (cf. Watson 1926: 430). Here we have our suffix -*onā*, but formations like (*Allt*) *Conait* PER, taken by Watson (1926: 445) to be a Gaelic diminutive *Conaid* "little hound", or *Conglass* BNF, meaning "dog, or wolf-stream", make it most improbable that we have to assume a divine "big dog" *K͡unonā* at the back of the Ross-shire name.

It is our opinion, then, that in spite of the usage of -*onā* in goddess-names like *Epona* and *Damona*, and in spite of the identification of animal names with river-names in Scottish hydronymy, there is no justification for the assumption that *Abona* was originally the name of a goddess depicted as a cow living in a river. To substantiate this statement we shall have to turn to the evidence we have of Gaulish goddess-names showing the suffix -*onā* and also to further parallel examples of the usage of this ending in Scottish river-nomenclature.

First of all the Gaulish material. *Damona* and *Epona* are by no means the only names of Gaulish divinities formed with the suffix in question. Wolfgang Meid, in an admirable paper on the suffix -*no*- in names of divine beings (Meid 1957: 73-4, 108, 113-6), also lists the following: *Rito-na* or *Prito-na* "goddess of buying and selling" and *Nemeto-na* (from Gaulish *nemeton* "holy grove, holy place"), as well as *Alisā-nos* (cf. *alisā* "alder"), *Buxe-nus* (from Gaulish **bosco-*, *bocso-* "wood"; with *o*-grade of the thematic vowel in *Campus Buxonus*, now Camp-Buisson, cf. Meid: 115 note 50), *Molti-nus* (Gaulish **moltos*, Irish *molt*

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"ram"), and *Bele-nus* (from Indo-European **bhelos* "bright, white; sheen, fire"). This list makes it quite clear that the basic suffix is not *-onā*, but *-no-* or *nā*, preceded by the stem-vowel or some modification of it, as the *e*-grade which is sometimes weakened to *-i-* as in *Molti-nus* and *Belinus*, a side-form of *Belenus*. It is also of interest to note that all these examples belong to the *-o-/-ā*=declension, and that we have masculine gods besides goddesses.

This group of names will have to be examined as a whole, and it would be unmethodical to isolate the two or three names connected with the animal world, like *Damona*, *Epona*, and *Moltinus*, treating them as something substantially different. It has also to be taken into account that, on the one hand, this formation does not only occur in Gaulish but also in other Indo-European languages, and that, on the other, our suffix *-no-/-nā* is not confined to names of divine beings but can, amongst other functions, serve to express leadership as, for example, Gothic *þiudans* "king", Old Norse *dróttinn* "lord of the band of warriors", Greek *κοίρα-νος* "army-leader", Latin *tribūnus* "tribune", Celtic **tegernos* (suffix *-rno-*, *-rnio-*) "lord, king; i.e., master of the house", etc. (cf. Meid 1957: 74-5). This by no means exhausts the applications of our suffix in Indo-European languages; the principle of leadership is hardly present in the tribal name *Coriono-totarum* gen. pl. (CIL. VII, No. 481) and the most satisfactory explanation is that of "people of soldiers, i.e. members of the army" (cf. Meid 1957: 78).

Consequently no argument can be based on parallel usage of the suffix alone, particularly so as the semantic implications of the latter are manifold. Theoretically *-no-/-nā* show a potential amplicative meaning in names derived from names of animals, and it is justified to translate *Damona* as "the great cow", *Epona* as "the great horse", *Moltinus* as "the great ram", and perhaps even *Alisānos* as "the great alder", but this is hardly possible with *Nemetona*, *Ritona Pritona*, *Buxenus*, and *Belenus*. Here the concept of power or charge over the holy grove, buying and selling, the wood, fire and light, is preferable as a basis of our interpretation, and this principle can be extended to our first four names so that *Damona* becomes "the goddess with power over cows", *Moltinus* "the lord of rams", etc.

In connection with the latter interpretation it is well to remember de Vries' remark (1958: 50) that anthropomorphic gods can be proved with certainty for the Indo-Europeans as

far back as the beginning of the second millennium B.C., and that the occurrence of animals in Celtic religion does not necessarily imply divine beings in the shape of animals. According to de Vries, these animals are symbols of the god or goddess with whom they are associated, exemplifying certain characteristic qualities of the divine being. This definition would presuppose the same kind of relationship between god and animal which we think existed between some of our Scottish rivers and certain animals, in the minds of the name-givers. The god was never just the animal, just as the river was never only the bull, the raven, or the hound.

In this complex situation, then, the possibility of a goddess-name *Abona* meaning "the great cow" or "goddess of cows" must be taken into account, in spite of the incorrect isolation of *Damona* and *Epona* as apparent parallels. It depends mainly on the question whether it can be proved that a word *ab-* meaning "cow" ever existed in Indo-European, and consequently in Celtic. This, however, does not mean that there is any proof at all for the hypothesis that this cow lived in a river and subsequently became equated with the river, later losing the "divine animal" aspect of its meaning and simply becoming to mean "water-course" as such. In this connection, we shall now look at another sphere in which the suffix -no-/-nā has been particularly productive: hydronymy. Although examples could be adduced from various countries and languages, we shall confine ourselves to our Scottish material, and especially to names showing the thematic vowel -o-, if this is the old stem vowel or not.

Here we can distinguish between three classes of names, according to the basis to which the ending is suffixed:

(1) The basis is a Celtic adjective or noun which is an *o*-stem:

Dēuonā < *Deiuonā* < *deiuo-s* "god, divine person", Old Irish *dia*, Welsh *duw*, Old Cornish *duy*, etc. (*Don* ABD); cf. the neighbouring *Dee* < *Dēu-ā*.

Dubonā < *dubo-* "black," Old Irish, Old Wels *dub*, etc. (*Devon* PER, *Black Devon* FIF).

Labaronā < *labaro-* "talkative", Old Irish *labar* "dto", Welsh *llafar* "language" (*Lavern Burn* DMF, *Levern Water* RNF, *Lowran Burn* and *Louran Burn* KCB); cf. the river-name *Labarā*, now, for instance, the *Burn of Aberlour* BNF.

*Lemonā<*lemo- "elm", Middle Irish *lem*, Gaulish *Lemo-*, *Limo-* (*Leven* (a) INV/ARG, (b) DNB, (c) KNR-FIF).

*Limonā<*limo- "flood", Welsh *llif*, Cornish *lyf* (*Lyon* PER); cf. the river-name *Lima*, now Lyme (Devon and Dorset).

(2) The basis is a Celtic word, formed with the element -to-/-tā, usually from a verbal root:

*Brutonā<*bru-to-, Old Irish *bruth* "glow, rage", Old Welsh *brut* "animus", Welsh *brwd* "hot", Indo-European root *bhereu- "to boil" (*Burn of Brown* INV/BNF).

*Iektonā<*iek-to-, cf. Welsh *iaith* "language" (*jekti-), Indo-European root *iek- "to talk" (*Ythan* ABD).

*Lektonā<*lek-to-, Welsh *llaith*, Breton *leiz* "moist", Indo-European root *leg- "to drip, to ooze, to dissolve" (*Leithen Water* PEB).

*Nektonā<*Niktonā<*nik-to-, Old Irish *necht*, Sanskrit *nikta* "clean", Indo-European root *neigu- "to wash" (*Nethan* LAN).

(3) The basis is not an *o*-stem:

*Katonā,<Gaulish *Catu-*, Gaelic *cath*, Welsh *cad* "battle, fight". Here -onā must have been regarded as the ending, cf. *Inverhadden Burn* PER.

*Kunonā<Old Irish *cu*, genitive *con* "dog, wolf", Welsh *ci*, Breton Cornish *ki*; Indo-European *kuuō(n), genetive *kunós. Formed from the oblique case or from the compositional form of the stem (*Conon* ROS).

(4) The basis has not been established with certainty:

*Ambonā, from the reduction grade *mbh- of the Indo-European root *embh-/ombh- "moist, water", as seen in Gaulish *ambe* "rivo", (*Almond* WLO and PER).

*Kalonā, or possibly *Kalaunā, frequently connected with the root *kel- "to shout, cry, sound", found in Irish *cailech*, Welsh *ceiliog* (*kaljākos) "cock". In this context, a nominal root is probably preferable to a verbal one, and one might think of *kal- "hard", well evidenced in Old Irish, Middle Irish *calath*, *calad*, Welsh *caled* "hard" and in our many rivers called *Calder* (*Caleto-dubron*). Examples in Scotland are *Calneburne* ELO, *Kale Water* ROX, *Caddon Water* SLK.

*Kar(r)onā, < *kar- "hard", Swedish dialectal *har* "stony ground". The existence of an *o*-stem *karo- seems to be inferred by the two French river-names *Cher* < *Caros* and *Chiers* < *Carā*. In Scotland we have several *Carrons*, from Ross to Dumfriesshire.[1]

Although practically all these names, with one or two exceptions, belong to a much later period than the early Gaulish *Abona* which Wagner has in mind, their accumulative evidence is still convincing enough to invalidate the argument that *Abona* must have been a goddess-name because *Damona* and *Epona* show the same suffix. By listing other divine names of parallel formation where the suffix has a different semantic function, and by glancing at a number of other meanings of -(*o*)*nā*, we have already shown that this ending does not imply divinity in every single instance. Now its extensive usage in river-nomenclature in cases where it is impossible—particularly in group (2)—to ensure a divine origin of the name, makes it even more unlikely that our many *Avons* originally belonged to a religious context. Whatever the original stem formation of the root word may have been—in Old Irish *aub oub ob*, genitive *abae* fem., it behaves like an irregular *n*-stem (Thurneysen 1946: 213), in Scottish Gaelic the obsolete *abh*, genitive *abha* has been replaced by *abhainn*, genitive *aibhne*, and in Welsh the plural of *afon* is that of the *io-/iā*=stems, *avonit* and *avonoed* in the earlier language, in Modern Welsh *afonydd* (Jones 1930: 203)—, for our purposes we must start from a basis *ab- or *abo- "water", with -*no-/-nā*=extension. In this form, i.e. as *Abona* > *afon* and *auon*, the word apparently exists only in the *p*-Celtic languages, but if Pokorny is correct—and Wagner doubts this —the earlier stages of the Goidelic branch of Insular Celtic possessed in *abā*, genitive *abae* "water", the unextended *ā*-stem of our root. For the many derivatives from Gaelic *abh* see Watson (1926: 477), particularly *Loch Awe* ARG, but also *Averon* < *Abarona* on p. 431.

However, neither in *Abona*, nor in *Lemona*, *Līmonā*, etc. does the suffix as such mean "water-course". It would be more correct to say that in all these instances it forms adjectives and nouns which do not differ very much in meaning from the bases from which they are derived, particularly in the case of derivations from adjectives or participles. Where the name is based on a noun, abundance of whatever is depicted by the original noun, seems to be indicated.

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It is our opinion, therefore, that the customary derivation of our *Avons* from an earlier *Abona* "river" still stands and that our name belongs wholly to the sphere of river-nomenclature and has no religious aspect whatsoever. A goddess of the same name never existed, and an equation of Sumerian *ab* "cow" and Old Irish *oub* "water" is more than doubtful.

15. *Names containing the preposition* of

In the last volume of this journal (Nicolaisen 1959: 92-102) we discussed the type of name represented by *Burn of Achlais* STL, *Burn of Swartaback* ORK, *Burn of Turret* ANG, and the like, i.e. the generic term *burn* followed by the preposition *of* and a defining element very often descriptive of the terrain through which the water-course flows, or deriving from the name of another geographical feature in the vicinity. We held the type *Burn of* — to be a fairly recent stratum in Scottish river-nomenclature, and found that its geographical distribution in Scotland was as limited as it was significant (Nicolaisen 1959: 95). The two main areas in which these names occur are the Scottish north-east and the Northern Isles, with a few scattered examples in Central Scotland and the south-west. We concluded that the creative impulse which brought this type of name into being, was linguistic contact, or more precisely favourable conditions for the creation of the type *Burn of* — were given whenever Scots came into contact with a substratum of either Gaelic or Norse, from the late Middle Ages onwards. There is no evidence for this kind of name both in the Lothians and the Border Counties, and in the Western Highlands and Islands, whereas there are 261 of them concentrated in the two chief strongholds.

Two major objections have since then been brought to the present writer's notice, and if they stand, the conclusions arrived at after careful examination of our *Burn of* — names may be considerably invalidated. The first criticism has been that the evidence on which the argument was based was too slender because it consisted exclusively of names of small and medium sized water-courses, showing only one generic term: *burn*. The second objection has been raised by way of an alternative explanation of the rather striking geographical scatter of these names, and it has been proposed that this may be due to the whimsies of a particular surveyor at the time when these names were first recorded by the Ordnance Survey.

We shall deal with the second of these two objections first. If this type of name was entirely due to the person responsible for the recording of names when the areas in question were first covered by the Ordnance Survey, one would not expect to find it in any other source or in genuine oral tradition. A simple check shows us that our *Burn of* — names do occur on earlier maps. We have only to consult William Roy's unpublished Military Survey of 1747-55 to discover names like *Burn of Crombie* and *Burn of Bly* in the Glenlivet area of Banffshire, and *Burn of Bogendolich* and *Burn of Bulg* in Kincardineshire, to mention only a few examples. This pre-dates our material to at least a hundred years before the first Scottish Ordnance Survey maps proper, and although Roy's map contains fewer names of water-courses than the one-inch maps from which we have extracted our names, the geographical distribution of our name-type does not seem to differ to any marked degree from the modern situation.

As to local, colloquial usage of our names, the position appears to be this: If the second element of the name is the original name of the water-course, the *Burn of* part is very often dropped. The map has *Burn of Tervie*, for instance, for a tributary of the River Livet in Banffshire but locally it is always called (*the*) *Tervie*. If, however, the defining element of the name refers to some other geographical feature in the vicinity, either by name or by description, *Burn of* — remains, with normal dialectal shortening of the preposition to *o'*. This widespread usage in the areas concerned cannot be ascribed to any mapmaker, however great the influence of the map may have become even on local users of place-names, and we must regard the majority of instances of *Burn of* — on our maps as genuinely taken from oral tradition.

The other objection, the validity of which we would be the first to accept, is best dealt with by extending our enquiry to other basic elements and to names not applying to streams but to other geographical features. A glance at the section of Roy's map which contains the two Kincardineshire stream-names mentioned above, shows us that this name-type is by no means confined to the element *burn*. Here we find, amongst others, *Mill of Blackymuir*, *Kirk of Pert*, *House of Fetterkarne*, *Cotts of Newton*, and even *River of North Esk*. The last two types of formation are not to be found on the one-inch map, with *Cotts of* in some instances having been replaced by *Cotton of*, but in respect of many other generic elements this formation is quite

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prolific even on the modern map, and it would be interesting to see how far their distribution coincides with that of the type *Burn of* —. As we cannot possibly examine every single one of them, we shall limit ourselves to about half a dozen and look at their geographical scatter in turn.

(a) *Water of* —

It may be convenient to start with a word which in Scottish river-nomenclature is normally applied to larger water-courses, compared with *burn*. This word is *water* which seems to take an intermediate position between *burn* and *river* although not every *burn* is smaller and not every *river* larger than a *water*. There are 47 names[2] of the type *Water of* — on the one-inch map; of these we only mention *Water of Ailnack* INV, *Water of App* AYR, *Water of Buchat* ABD, *Water of Ken*, KCB, *Water of Leith* MLO, *Water of Malzie* WIG, *Water of Tulla* ARG, and *Water of Unich* ANG.

There are two aspects of the distribution of *Water of* —which immediately strike one as showing a strong resemblance to that of *Burn of* —: (1) The thick cluster of names in the north-east, and (2) the complete absence—with one or two exceptions— of our name-type from the Lothians, the Border Counties, and the Highlands and Islands (see Fig. 1). Different on the other hand are the frequency with which this type occurs in South-West Scotland, and the complete lack of it in the Northern Isles. Whereas the two points in support of our *Burn of* — evidence do not need any explanation, the two aspects in which *Water of* —differs from it will have to be looked at more closely. There is no apparent reason why the type *Burn of*—should be so scantily represented in SW. Scotland, whereas *Water of*—names are fairly plentiful. The latter is what one would expect to see in an area in which Gaelic was gradually ousted by Scots and where there must have been prolonged contact between these two languages. However, the type *Bishop Burn*, *Kildonan Burn*, *Palnure Burn* is by far the rule in this area, and one wonders if any earlier Germanic influence—both Anglian and Scandinavian—on this part of Scotland has anything to do with it. One can only say that the picture provided by the distribution of *Water of* — is completely in accordance with our conclusions from that of *Burn of* —, and that the reasons for the development of this type are probably exactly the same: The influence of a Gaelic substratum on a top-layer of Scots.

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This still leaves the absence of *Water of* — in Orkney and Shetland to be accounted for. It would be more correct to speak of the absence of *Water of* — in stream-names, for it does
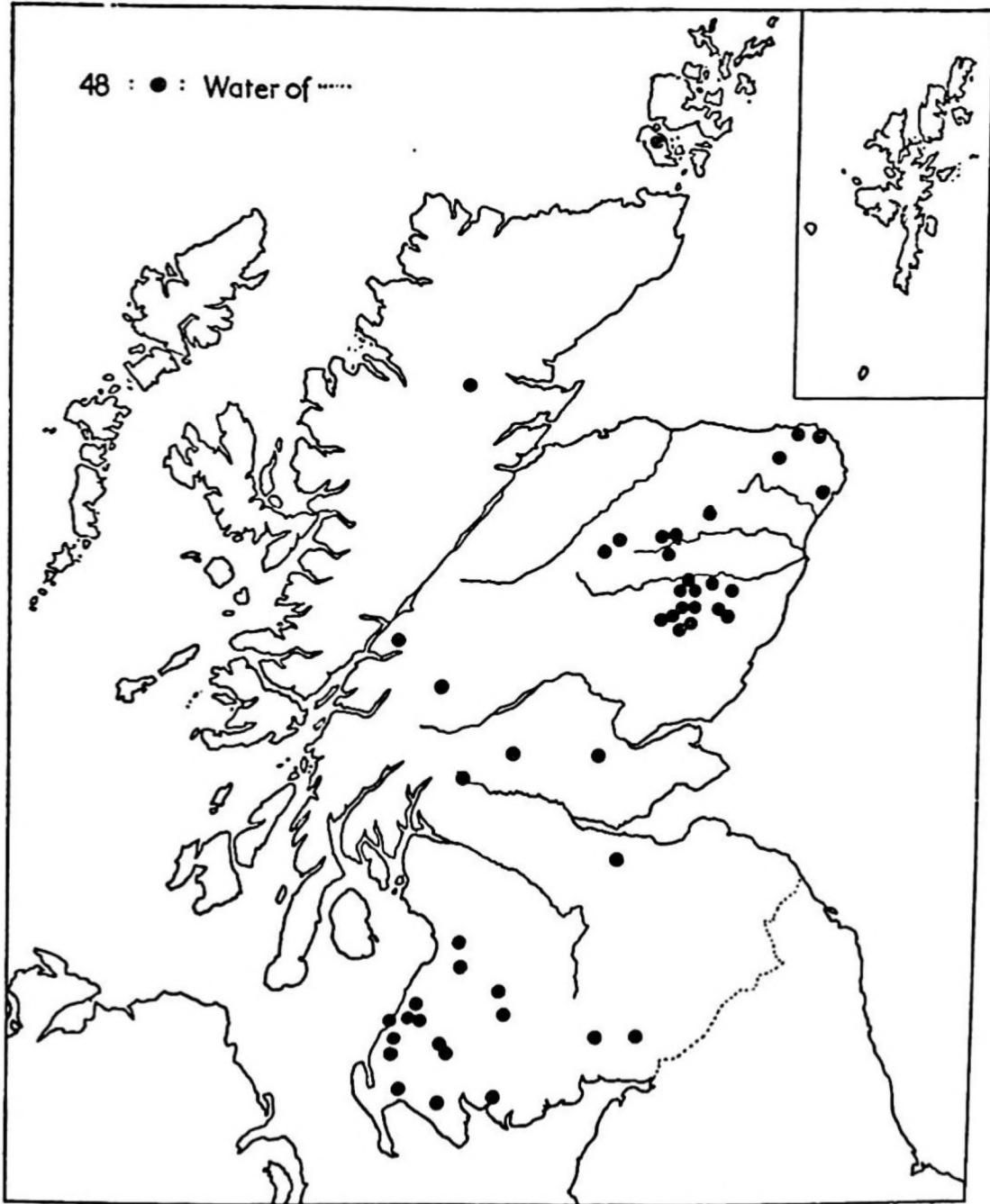
Fig. 1

occur in at least two loch-names in Hoy, the *Water of Hoy* and *Water of the Wicks*, and here we have the clue to the whole question. In the Northern Isles *water* is used in conjunction with lochs and not with streams. The pattern may have been set in this respect by Old Norse *vatn* which is probably behind both the *water-* and the *loch*-names in Orkney and Shetland.

In passing it may be mentioned that the formation *Loch of* —
is fairly common in these islands. *Burn*, however, is practically
the only word used to denote a course of running water.
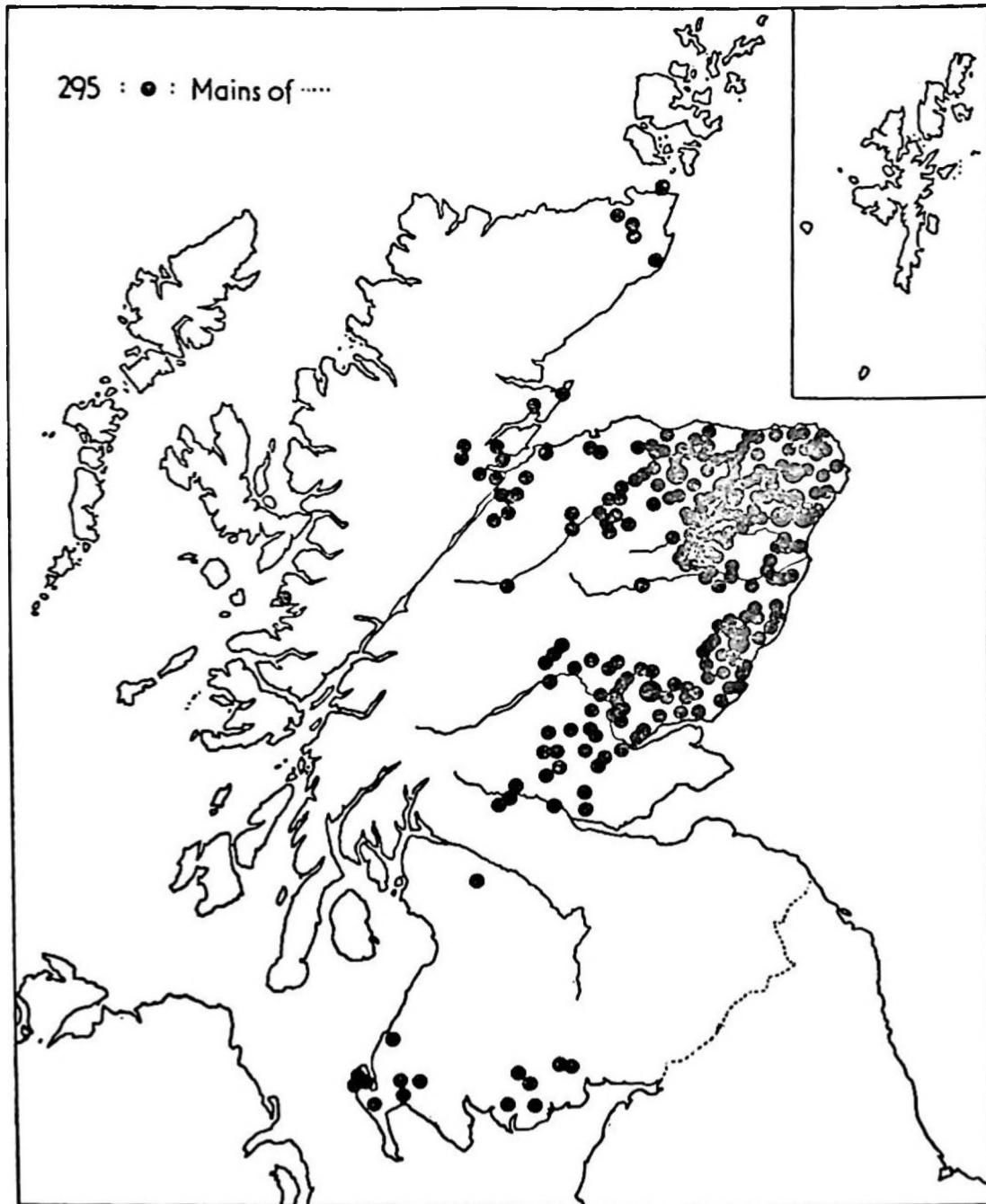
FIG. 2

(b) *Mains of* —

From smaller and medium-sized water-courses we move to
human habitations, and here we shall look at the distribution
of a term which, like *burn* and *water*, is not entirely confined to
the areas shown on the map (see Fig. 2) but which, in con-
junction with the preposition *of*, shows a similarly limited

scatter: *Mains* "originally, the home farm of a landed estate". Now, there are plenty of names containing *mains* in the Lothians and in the Borders but in all these instances the word follows the defining element, as in *Castle Mains* BWK, *Keith Mains* ELO, *Melville Mains* MLO, etc. The category of the *Mains of* — names, however, is only to be found in the two areas defined on the map, with the vast majority of them concentrated in East and North-east Scotland, from Fife to Ross and Cromarty. Here are some of them: *Mains of Auchindachy* BNF, *Mains of Balmanno* KCD, *Mains of Cairnbrock* WIG, *Mains of Callander* PER, *Mains of Dunmaglass* INV, *Mains of Keithfield* ABD, *Mains of Usan* ANG. Their total number is almost 300.

That the usage of these names may have been more widespread—in documentary evidence, anyhow—a few centuries ago, is indicated by a number of recorded forms mentioned by Macdonald (1941: 61 and 65). He has *Mains of Kincavill* in 1569 (now lost), *North Mains of Torthraven* 1571 and *The South Mains of Trattrevin* 1473 (now simply North and South Mains) in the county of West Lothian. As the shortened form of Middle English *demeyne* seems to be first on record in the second half of the fifteenth century, this may also give us a clue as to the date when our name-type developed, and we can hardly expect it much before the time of the first record of it.

It is difficult to say whether there was any underlying Gaelic for the type *Mains of* —, in the same way as *Burn of* — and *Water of* — may be said to derive, in part at least, from an earlier Gaelic genitival construction. It rather looks as if the type of name in which the preposition *of* links the generic and the defining elements, had already been established when the social and agricultural situation demanded that the concept and reality of the "home farm" had to find linguistic expression, in order to distinguish it from the "big house" itself or from the *Cotton* or *Newton* bearing the same name. The idea of the *Mains* belongs to the post-Gaelic, feudal pattern of life, rather than to the Gaelic period. The distribution of this category does, however, not clash with that of the two groups examined so far, groups that are probably much more directly linked with Gaelic name patterns.

(c) *Mill(s) of* —

It is hardly necessary to devote much space to the discussion of another basic element connected with human activities on the land, rather than with the land itself. The grain grown on

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the land of the *Mains* had to be turned into flour, and although not every estate would possess its own mill, a great number of them would be required to cope with the agricultural produce.
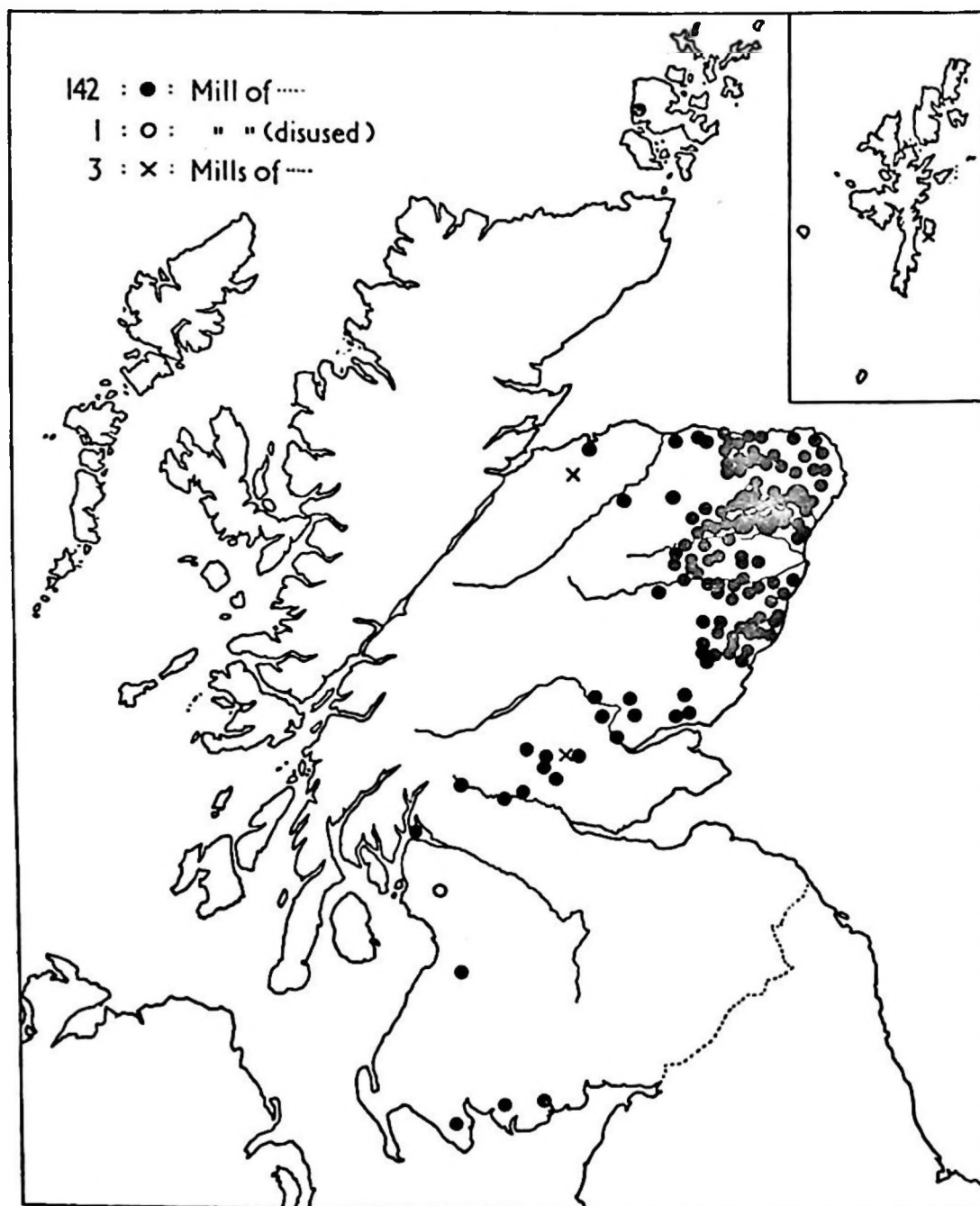
FIG. 3

In the north, therefore, the map (Fig. 3) shows a great number of names of the type *Mill of* —, and their geographical distribution does not differ to any extent from that of the group just investigated. Examples are *Mill of Camno* PER, *Mill of Knockenbaird* ABD, *Mill of Thornton* KCD, *Mill of Tommore* BNF. Unfortunately it was not possible to accommodate on

this map the 47 instances in which *Milton* is followed by *of* and the name defining the geographical location, although this element must be viewed together with simple *Mill.* It can, however, be said that every single example, on the Ordnance Survey one-inch map, of *Milton of* — is to be found within the areas covered by *Mill of* —, so that the picture created by this type is supported rather than changed. It must suffice here to give one or two examples: *Milton of Balgonie* FIF, *Milton of Buittle* KCB, *Milton of Collieston* ABD, *Milton of Larg* WIG.

It is unlikely that there was any direct Gaelic forerunner to this type, containing *muileann* or the like, but again these names appear to belong to the post-Gaelic period, making use of a pattern which had already developed in other categories of names in contact with a Gaelic speaking population.

(d) *Bridge, Braes, Braeside of* —

When one has to be selective because it is impossible to present the relevant material in its entirety, it is tempting to include in one's selection only that evidence which more or less falls into a pattern and does not require explanation of too many exceptions. While it is easy to say that this has not been the underlying principle in the choice of the material brought together in this note, it would not be so easy to prove it if every single distribution map were to conform to a suspiciously tidy pattern. The last map in this series will show, however, that the material was not selected with any preconceived idea in mind and that the result of the plotting of the various basic elements in connection with *of*, was in no case a foregone conclusion. Never were we able to say what a particular distribution was going to look like till the last name had been plotted on the map, and although certain distributional patterns became more probable than others after the first two or three maps, the task was never without surprises.

The geographical scatter of names of the type *Bridge of* — (Fig. 4) is one of them, for although the stronghold of these names is again the north-east, its much greater penetration into Central Scotland as far as the Great Glen will have to be accounted for. Names contributing to this much looser texture of the pattern are, for instance, *Bridge of Allan* STL, *Bridge of Awe* ARG, *Bridge of Coe* ARG, *Bridge of Grudie* ROS, *Bridge of Nevis* INV, *Bridge of Oich* INV, *Bridge of Weir* RNF, etc.,

whereas most of the others are found in the more "conventional" regions for this name-type.

When considering this particular problem, it is well to remember that the Gaelic prototype of this category still exists, the most instructive instance being *Drochaid Chonoglais* right beside *Bridge of Orchy* in Argyllshire. Other examples are *Drochaid Coire Roill* ROS and *Drochaid Lusa* in Skye. This means that we do not have to fall back on to any other basic element for an illustration of the linguistic contact involved in the creation of our group of names, and it can be stated with a good deal of confidence that the majority of these names on the Scottish mainland is probably due to direct translation from the original Gaelic.

Their more extensive distribution must, we feel, be ascribed to their association with means of communication, especially in those cases which occur west of the "normal" area of *of*-names. Bridges spanning water-courses which were otherwise difficult if not impossible to cross, must have been vital points in the scanty system of roads in the Highlands, and Lowland drovers and other travellers must have been well acquainted with them so that they became known far beyond their immediate neighbourhood. To us this appears to be the main reason for the distribution of our name-type as shown by our map, a reason that is completely extra-linguistic.

Of the other two elements thrown in on this map (Fig. 4) for good measure, the seven examples of *Braeside of* — do not create any particular problem; six of them occur in the extreme north-east, and one in Fife, the latter being *Braeside of Cults*. The small group of the *Braes of* — names, on the other hand, again refuses to be limited to the north-east proper and invades a good bit of the Central Highlands; the most westerly examples are *Braes of Balquhidder* PER, *Braes of Dunvornie* ROS, *Braes of Muckrach* INV, *Braes of Ullapool* ROS. An eighteenth example should have been included on this map but was unfortunately left out; it is one of the best known, the *Braes o' Lochaber* INV. Further comparison might also be made with the equivalent singular *Brae of* —, of which the Scottish one-inch maps have 24, like *Brae of Achnahaird* ROS, *Brae of Downie* ANG, *Brae of Fordyce* BNF. These two categories, i.e., the ones containing *Brae* and *Braes*, are almost as widely diffused as the type *Bridge of* —. They naturally cling to mountainous regions, and their wider scatter may partly have been caused by the fact that they normally depict fairly extensive geographical

features, although this explanation alone is, perhaps, not wholly satisfactory and there may be other reasons, which have eluded the present writer, to account for this distribution.

51 : ● : Bridge of ········
17 : ○ : Braes of ··········
7 : × : Braeside of ····
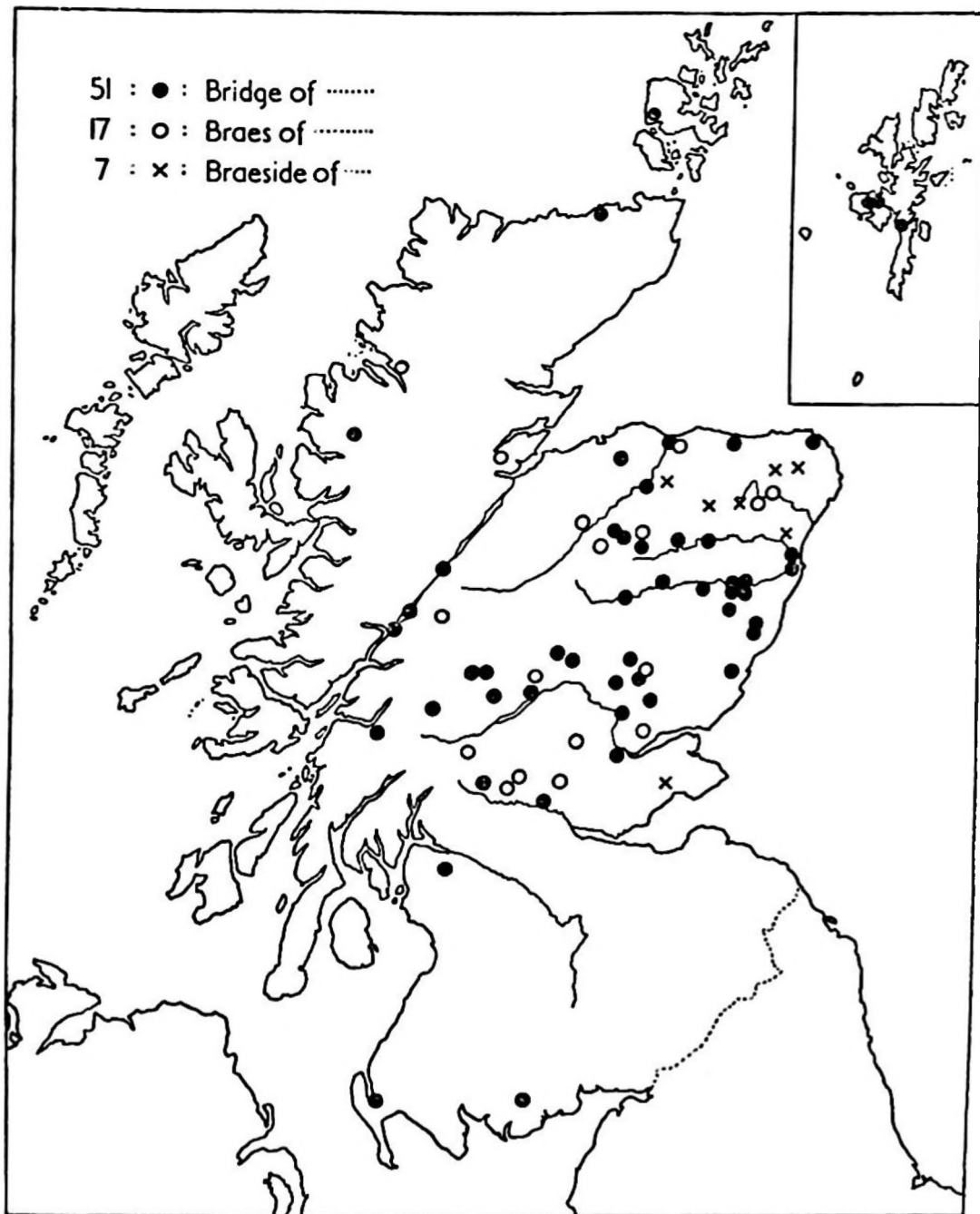
Fig. 4

Summing up all our evidence, however, it is not too much to say that the additional information presented in this note supports and strengthens the conclusions come to after the investigation of the more limited material supplied by the names of smaller water-courses of the type *Burn of* —. The origin of our group of names must be sought in the linguistic

contact of Scots with Gaelic, or in some instances with Norse dialects. The percentage of genuine original translations differs from element to element, and in some cases, as in those of *Mains of* — and *Mill* or *Milton of* —, the attractive power of the established pattern appears to have been responsible rather than imitation of Gaelic examples. It would be interesting to find out if this name-type is still creative to-day and if names can still be formed in this way.

NOTES

[1] Possible Continental equivalents of the last two names are the two French river-names *Calonne* and *Caronne*, for which see Gerhard Rohlfs, "Europäische Flussnamen und ihre historischen Probleme" in: *Reports of the VIth International Congress of Onomastic Studies* Vol. I (1960) 27 note 120. Munich.

[2] The printed distribution map (Fig. 1) has 48 names, but of these the dot in Orkney will have to be eliminated, as it was entered by mistake; it refers to the *Water of Hoy* which is a small loch.

COUNTY ABBREVIATIONS

ABD	Aberdeenshire	KNR	Kinross-shire
ANG	Angus	MLO	Midlothian
ARG	Argyllshire	ORK	Orkney
AYR	Ayrshire	PEB	Peeblesshire
BNF	Banffshire	PER	Perthshire
BWK	Berwickshire	RNF	Renfrewshire
DMF	Dumfriesshire	ROS	Ross and Cromarty
DNB	Dunbartonshire	ROX	Roxburghshire
ELO	East Lothian	SLK	Selkirkshire
FIF	Fife	STL	Stirlingshire
INV	Inverness-shire	SUT	Sutherland
KCB	Kirkcudbrightshire	WIG	Wigtownshire
KCD	Kincardineshire	WLO	West Lothian

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W. F. H. NICOLAISEN

B. OTHER NOTES

Book Reviews

Shetland Life under Earl Patrick. By Gordon Donaldson. Edinburgh, 1958. Oliver and Boyd. 149 pp. 15s.

Dr. Donaldson describes Shetland life about three hundred and fifty years ago with many interpolations as to modern conditions and some comparisons with Iceland, the Færoes and Norway. Unfortunately the basic Court Book is largely a record of law-breaking and squabbles and so the reviewer feels that thieves, slanders and the like create the impression that law-breaking was particularly prevalent in the Shetland Islands. One would like to be familiar with the Norwegian pattern at this period and also to be able to assess the significance of the illegal conversion from Norwegian to Scottish forms of tenure and law.

The section entitled "The People" has much of interest. The distribution of population is discussed together with the possible origin of the families according to their names. Individual inventories of property are given, together with the contemporary values, and show that in the north the social classes had been clearly defined while the taxation system bore heavily on the middle classes.

This volume is of value as emphasising that life was complicated by the Scottish legal concepts being harshly applied by a ruthless overlord despite assurances given a century earlier. The udal system of proprietorship had advantages in this

environment and may yet have some bearing on the outlook on problems between authorities and local people.

This volume is well illustrated by photographs but the bibliography is not so full as might have been expected. It is to be commended as the type of study which needs to be done before social histories of a district can be written. Students of geographical conditions in northern countries will not always agree with the conclusions believing, as they do, that physical conditions can account for some of the differences between the Shetland Islands and its "neighbours" the Færoes and Iceland. Incidentally the end paper maps do not locate Lerwick although this might be justified by the fact that the burgh was of later foundation.

ANDREW C. O'DELL

Gaelic Words and Expressions from South Uist and Eriskay. Collected by Rev. Fr. Allan McDonald of Eriskay (1859-1905). Edited by J. L. Campbell, M.A. (Oxon), Hon. LL.D. (Antigonish). Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. 64-65 Merrion Square. 1958. 301 pp. 18s.

Native speakers of Scottish Gaelic who are also students of the language are aware of words current in speech which are seldom, if ever, to be met with in print; yet systematic efforts to collect words in the most direct way possible have been few. The earlier dictionaries drew largely upon literary sources; and while Dwelly deserves credit for seeking out previously unrecorded words from correspondents representing various parts of the Gaelic-speaking area, these contributions only serve to draw attention to a source of information that has remained largely unexplored.

It might be expected that this lack would be made good by studies of various dialects undertaken within recent years. But the fact is that the time required to examine the phonetics, syntax and morphology of a dialect is not sufficient to gain a full mastery of its lexical and idiomatic content. This is possible only as a result of patiently amassing information as it happens to turn up over a prolonged period. Nor should the importance of some other factors be overlooked. Anyone undertaking such a task should of course be able to record what he heard with accuracy and understanding; he should be resident among the people and in close contact with their daily lives in its various aspects; yet he should not be one of them, for the native speaker's familiarity with his own dialect is apt to make him a

bad judge of what is noteworthy in it. Indeed, it might be argued that a person who has had to learn the language has some advantages in this respect over anyone else.

Father Allan McDonald conformed closely to these requirements. He was a parish priest in South Uist for twenty-one years, first in Dalibrog (1884-1893), and thereafter in Eriskay (1893-1905). Though a native of Lochaber, his knowledge of Gaelic in early life was defective, but he took up its study with enthusiasm while still at college. How thorough was the course of self-improvement he set himself will be realised by readers of *Eilean na h-Oige*, his description in verse of life in Eriskay; and it was this need for conscious application to the complexities of the language that made him such an acute observer of it. It might be added that we find his nearest counterpart to-day in Mr. J. L. Campbell himself, who is to be thanked for having Father Allan's lexicographical work published (under the auspices of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies), and congratulated on carrying out his editorial duties with such skill and discrimination.

Perusal of a list of words taken mainly from non-literary sources leads to a realisation that we are to some extent in the domain of folklore. It is not only that Father Allan has recorded many interesting traditions attached to words in his collection. There is also the fact that some of the words themselves may yield their secrets only when subjected to the kind of scrutiny which has produced results particularly in folklore studies. There is, for instance, the importance of variants. It is probable that many words in this collection can be properly identified only after ascertaining variant forms in other dialects. To take one example, variants of *deurach*, a tingling pain, are *deighreach* (*d'eiðɔx*) for North Uist and *déireach* (*d'e:ðɔx*) for Ness, Lewis, forms which might suggest a connection with (*d*)*eigh*, ice, and the corresponding collective *eighre*(*adh*). Mr. Campbell has added variants from Barra, North Uist, Canna and Lewis, but only those from Barra are numerous enough to be regarded as a serious contribution in this direction. The following examples may give some idea of how much could still be done if the net were widely cast and the mesh sufficiently small. When from Father Allan's collection we take *buathann, buille-theanganna, buille-thuig, ciar cabhach, caicead, ceamh, clabag, craobh-iongnach, craoiceall, crubha, dioc, dreóghann, grùig, leagan, leideig, liosraich, mo near, sgeilmseag, sorrag, traoisgeir, tulaidh-bhriagan*, the corresponding series from Ness, Lewis, is *buaitheam, boile-thiongainn*,

buill'-ig, cabhach odhar, cacan, ghèa(mh), clubag, ciribh-ìongnach, cruchaill, crubhagan, deic, tradhn, drùid, leogan, pleideag, lìosraig, m'an aire, sgiolmag, surrag, tarbhsgeir, tula-bhriagan, (and similarly *tul-fhìrinn*). This list could be extended, more especially by good speakers of the dialect belonging to an older generation; and a similar list could be given, for example, from North Uist. (Sometimes, of course, it is not a question of variants, but of entirely different words for the same concept, and comparative lists of these would be very useful, particularly when their distribution could be shown on a map; sometimes, again, the words are the same but the meanings different).

Important for establishing the meanings of words is that they should be recorded in a variety of contexts. Unfortunately Father Allan was not always able to do this, so rarely were the words to be heard even in his day, and some of the meanings assigned in such cases must be regarded as tentative. Sometimes the figurative use of words gives rise to misleading, or at least unduly restricted, explanations; e.g., *leus*, a blister or welt left by a blow, and *tosgaireachd*, the abstract of *tosgaire*, an ambassador or messenger. There are some cases in which the meaning inferred from a particular context is erroneous. Thus *brimeil* is translated "contemptible creature" on the strength of *fìor bhrimeil an Roinn Eòrpa*, rendered "the most contemptible being in Europe". Father Allan wrote "MacCodrum" in brackets after the quotation, but in this instance he may not have meant that it is to be attributed to MacCodrum. Be that as it may, *brimeall* was in fact applied to the MacCodrums, the seal-folk of North Uist, and is the word for a bull seal (O.N. *brimill*)— also an epithet which, when cast up to connections of the MacCodrums, was once sufficient to start a fight!

No context is given for *deirilean*, explained as "a soft-hearted excitable creature"; but the word occurs in a poem published in 1631 in the Gaelic version of Calvin's Catechism (Reid 1832:174): *Thréges deirbhlean dìleas Dé.* Another instance of it— and it is translated "orphans"—is from a Macrae lament (Macrae 1899:386) composed in the last decade of the seventeenth century: *Tha do dheirbhleinean broin | Mar ghair sheillein an torr.* (In Father Allan's orthography the epenthetic vowel is usually, though not always, written in, so that *deirilean* and *deirbhlean* are to be equated.) Also to be remembered is the reference in 1656 to a class of people in Wester Ross known as the "derilans" of Saint Mael-rubha: "theas poore ones quho are called Mourie his derilans, and ownes theas titles, quho

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receawes the sacrifices and offerings wpon the accompt of Mourie his poore ones" (Dingwall Presbytery Records 1896: 282). The following genitive in the first example, and the use of the possessive pronoun in the others, suggests a relationship, as of people enjoying the protection respectively of God, of a father (and patron), and of a saint. We may compare *deidblén*, a weakling, orphan, pauper (RIA Contribb. 1959), the form in the above citations influenced perhaps by a feeling that it was a word (*deirbhleanbh*?) from the class of compounds denoting family relationships that have *dearbh* as the first element. The puzzling term *seòl-sìth* may be further illustrated from North Uist, where it is associated with the Laings, descended from Andrew, son of the Rev. John Laing, schoolmaster of the parish early in the eighteenth century. *Seòl-sìdhe Chlann Andra* refers to the ease with which they are supposed to do certain things, such as memorising what they hear recited or sung, a gift bestowed, so it is said, by the fairies. Maximum effect with apparent minimum of effort may be the idea, as also of the related term *siubhal-sìdhe*.

Some further selected corrections and suggestions may be inserted here. *Bruthach na Seile-daraich* (p. 77) looks like an error for *Bruthach na Saile Daraich*, that is, the place in South Uist where was kept the oak log which was bored with an auger to kindle the neid-fire. The corresponding place in North Uist was on the Sollas machair at Skellor. (Cf. Carmichael 1928:II, 370). With *eadariona* should be compared *a bhi . . . an naodhnach cloinne*, translated by Alexander MacDonald as "to labour in Childbirth" (MacDonald 1741:160). *Faragradh* (2) must be for *farfhogradh*, which is to be compared with *farfhuadach*; the song now known as *Oran Mòr Mhic Leòid* used to have the title *Farfhuadach a' Chlàrsair*. *Mar-bhi*, in the context referred to, is correctly translated as a noun meaning uncertainty; but in the usage of those who still know this as a noun, for example in Lewis, *mara-bhitheadh* also means a defect or imperfection. *Soc-shlinneineach*, which is left unexplained, means round-shouldered (cf. the Lewis expression *socadh 'san t-slinnean*, with the same meaning). *Seileach* or *teileach*, an adjective applied to the seal, appears to be an inaccuracy arising from the fact that the initial consonant is aspirated in the context quoted—*nàmhaid an ròin theilich*. But in Maclagan MS. No. 206 there is a song in which occurs the line *Bu du marbhaich (namhaid) Roin mheillich nan ob*, where *meilleach* must be the adjective from *meill*, a blubber lip (Robertson 1899-1901:360) and this doubtless also

gives us Father Allan's *meilleas*, thick lips. The *ùradh* is not removed from the newly made cloth by the waulking process, but by subsequent washing. Neil MacVicar (*Niall Ruadh Mór*), a North Uist bard and inveterate lampooner (*fl.* 1830), was once taunted as follows:

> Cluinn Niall Ruadh a' bùircanaich,
> Cluinn na tairbh a' sumhnais ris;
>   Chan 'eil clò a théid a luadh
> Nach toir Niall Ruadh an t-ùradh as.

> (Hear Red Neil bellowing,
> Hear the bulls snuffling-and-whining at him;
>   There is no cloth that is waulked
> But Red Neil will extract the filth from it.)

In Appendix I, s.v. *buaidh, Gun bhuaidh ort!* seems rather weak as an imprecation; what the writer has heard is *Gon-bhuaidh ort!* On the same page *bunacha-bac* is strangely explained as "some unknown place outside Uist". It means the horizon, and is used in the singular (*bun-bac*) as well as in the plural. The primary meaning, however, appears to be the position above the eaves of the old-style house where the weights are tied to the ropes holding down the thatch; and the term has been applied to the horizon because of a comparison between the meeting of earth and sky and that of the wall and roof of a house. (See Dwelly, *bonnacha-bac*, s.v. *taigh*.) This Appendix also provides us with a ghost-word, *glù-thònadh*, which must be someone's mistranscription of *glutlionadh*, the North Uist word corresponding to Father Allan's *glutadh*, the packing of rubble and earth inside a wall.

Father Allan MacDonald had no training in phonetics, but he had a good ear and knew how to use the Gaelic orthography to advantage. His methods, such as the use of key-words to indicate certain vowel sounds, are surprisingly effective, though it should be added that this is partly due to the admirable way in which this aspect of his work has been interpreted and annotated by Mr. Campbell. Among minor ambiguities still remaining is the variable treatment of the epenthetic vowel, as already mentioned. There is also the fact that Father Allan seems never to write *èa* (e.g. *giadh* for *gèadh*), with the result that *ia* and *iə* are usually not distinguished; and there is a similar uncertainty about *a* in final syllables (e.g. *earraig*). It is to be regretted that phonetic transcriptions have not been given throughout, partly, as explained in the section on pronunciation,

owing to the cost, but also to the fact that many words are no longer known even to good speakers of advanced years. It would have been a good thing, nevertheless, to indicate, if only by an asterisk, what words have in fact been heard by the editor in South Uist.

It may be remarked that this Collection is more extensive than would appear from the title-page. Father Allan himself included the rarer words he met with in the compositions of the bards, particularly *Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair* and *Ailean Dall*, and also in old waulking-songs. The editor has added words collected in South Uist by the late Rev. Dr. George Henderson, Lecturer in Celtic at Glasgow University, and he has made use of another list from the hand of the late Rev. Dr. Angus MacDonald, Killearnan. Dr. MacDonald was a native of Benbecula, but it is not surprising that his collection has a distinct North Uist flavour, for he had a connection with that island both by immediate ancestry and by early education. Also included is a contribution from a collection made in South Uist by the editor.

Let it not be thought, however, that what is here brought together is a mere inert mass of words. Ever and again they are presented in a setting which brings them to life. Idioms, sayings, proverbs, charms, superstitions, games, customs, religious beliefs, place-names, personal names, botanical and zoological terms, technical terms connected with work on land and sea, obtained for the most part from monoglot Gaelic speakers born before the year of Waterloo—the book is a treasury of information on all these categories and many more; and not the least of Mr. Campbell's services is that he has supplied a classified index which enables the reader to explore any of them with the minimum of trouble.

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<div align="right">W. MATHESON</div>

Scotland Before History. By Stuart Piggott and Keith Henderson. Nelson. 1958. viii+112 pp. 15s.

Considerable progress has been made in our knowledge of the prehistory of Scotland since the late Professor Gordon Childe's *Scotland before the Scots* appeared in 1946, and the present book, written by Professor Piggott and illustrated by Mr. Henderson, has been designed to provide the general reader with an up-to-date synthesis in an attractive format and at a reasonable price.

As the preface says, the text is simply a long essay, divided into five parts, which describes in non-technical language the story of human settlement and development in what is now Scotland from the earliest times to the Roman occupation. The author's reputation is a sufficient guarantee of the reliability of the sources on which the narrative is based, and indeed many of the advances in the interpretation of the archæological evidence which are recorded in these pages derive directly or indirectly from Professor Piggott's own researches. Cases in point are the new theories concerning the architectural affinities and ritual of the Clyde-Carlingford and Clava cairns, the identification of the Cairnpapple earthwork as a "henge"-monument, and the brilliant reconstruction of the Deskford boar's head as a Celtic war-trumpet.

Unlike the tortured writing of some scholars, the prose is admirably lucid and graceful: this, in fact, is archæology designed to be read as literature. Equally impressive is the skill with which the dry bones of archæology—the wasting monuments in the fields and the dusty relics in the museum cases—have been brought to life by an alert and creative imagination without overstepping the limits of legitimate inference and deduction. No better first introduction to the prehistory of Scotland could be wished for, and although the

book quite properly dispenses with a bibliography and with footnotes, on the grounds that it is not intended for specialists, it can hardly fail to encourage many readers to delve more deeply into the subject. In order therefore to prevent alarm and despondency, it is perhaps as well to issue a warning that the chronology tentatively adopted by Professor Piggott may have to be substantially modified. Owing to the increased application of scientific methods of dating, new chronologies are at present being evolved; and radio-carbon dates obtained both in Britain and on the Continent since the book was written seem to indicate that the dates given therein for the first appearance of man in Scotland (c. 2,500 B.C.), and for the arrival of the Neolithic communities in Britain (c. 2,000 B.C.), may be up to 1,000 years too late. And although the margin of error naturally tapers towards the point where prehistory merges into history, there are now good reasons for thinking that the introduction of the Early Iron Age cultures into Scotland should be put back from the first century B.C. to the second, or even the third, century B.C.

Not the least merit of the text is that it stresses throughout the limitations of the archæological evidence, which can tell us a great deal about the technological achievements of our early ancestors, but little or nothing about their thoughts and feelings, their language, religious beliefs and social organisation. A reminder that prehistory is primarily concerned with people and not with things, can, however, be most easily conveyed by visual means, especially by reconstruction drawings, and a welcome feature of this book is that Mr. Henderson's illustrations have not been subordinated to the text but accorded an independent status. The chosen subjects cover a wide field including specimens of prehistoric flora and fauna, standing stones, tombs, habitations of various kinds, and scenes from everyday life. The drawings are vigorously executed, and added dramatic effect has been cleverly achieved by the employment of white-on-black technique, and by the occasional use of the "staring eye" (or empty eye-socket) to impart a subtle aura of those magical and dreadful influences which must have played a dominant part in the life of prehistoric man.

To the student of archæology, a synoptic view of this kind is valuable not only as a record of progress but as a stimulus to further research, and Scotland's prehistory still presents many problems. For example, why should the finest Neolithic chambered tomb in Britain occur in Orkney? What is the precise

significance of the apparent resemblances on plan between the Neolithic/Bronze Age houses in Shetland and certain Megalithic tombs and "temples" of the Western Mediterranean? What is the origin of the broch, and may we not postulate some connection, however remote, with the Sardinian *nuraghi* in view of the revised dating of the latter structures and the fact that they are no longer regarded as tombs? Why is it that there are so few burials in Scotland assignable to the period between the Late Bronze Age and post-Roman times? And what correlation, if any, can be established between the various classes of Early Iron Age settlements and the tribal pattern recorded by Ptolemy? These are only a few of the questions which spring to mind on reading this book, and which, given time and a reasonable measure of luck, it should be possible to answer by modern archæological techniques.

K. A. STEER

Studies in Irish and Scandinavian Folktales. By Reidar Th. Christiansen. Published for Coimisiún Béaloideasa Eireann by Rosenkilde and Bagger. Copenhagen. 1959. 249 pp. 32s.

Dr. Reidar Th. Christiansen of Oslo is one of Europe's outstanding folk-tale scholars. Not only is he an authority on Norwegian folk-tales and oral traditions generally, but he is equally distinguished in the Finnish field, while he is, of course, the only living scholar competent to write a comparative study of Irish and Scandinavian folk-tales. It is almost forty years now since Dr. Christiansen spent a long period in Scotland studying the Campbell of Islay collections, with the result that he probably knows them better than anyone in Scotland. Throughout his study there are frequent references to the work of Campbell of Islay and his collectors, but the main part of the work was written before the later Scottish collections of the post-1945 period began to take shape. The work done by Dr. John Lorne Campbell, K. C. Craig and others now exceeds the Islay collections in quantity, at least, if not in quality also. In a great many cases the texts of the Islay tales were abridgements, while the modern collectors have been able to secure more faithful versions, largely through the help of modern recording techniques. The variants recorded in this century, even if fragmentary at times, give a closer indication of genuine, narrative tradition. Even the tales noted down by K. C. Craig without the help of recording-gear are exact reproductions of actual narration.

Instead of taking a single tale and, by a meticulous examination of all its variants in all countries thus establishing an archetype to determine origin and distribution, Dr. Christiansen takes a group of tales popular in Scandinavian and Irish tradition, indicates their main characteristics in each area, decides if they have gone from Scandinavian to Irish tradition or *vice versa* or if there really is any direct contact at all.

The study reveals an unparallelled acquaintance with Irish and Scandinavian printed folk-tale material. He first studies the tales dealing with Giants and Dragons, Aa.-Th. types 300, 302, 303; then comes the Magic Flight, Aa.-Th. 313; The Mouse as Bride, Aa.-Th. 402; The Maiden in Search of her Brothers, Aa.-Th. 451; The Man on a Quest for his lost Wife, Aa.-Th. 400; The Magic Mill, Aa.-Th. 565; The Wizard and his Pupil, Aa.-Th. 325; The Boy who was never frightened, Aa.-Th. 326; Friends in Life and Death, Aa.-Th. 470; The Bridge to the Other World, Aa.-Th. 471 and, finally, the tale known as Godfather Death, Aa.-Th. 332. All are international tales and tales popular in Irish and Scandinavian tradition. The writer points out that the Irish versions are less uniform than those of Scandinavia and says that the reason for it is that the Irish, like Icelandic story-tellers, were conscious of an ancient literary tradition, they were more interested in the ornaments and technique of story-telling and tended to expand simple stories into more pretentious compositions. Dr. Christiansen, of course, identifies Scottish Gaelic with Irish tradition. That, however, is hardly true as far as folk-song and music traditions are concerned. I doubt if it is even true as far as the legends are concerned.

There are less of the above magic tale-types in current tradition in Scotland to-day than in Ireland, considerably so, I think. The reason is that the people in the Scottish Gaeltacht are more sophisticated than their Irish counterparts, while in Ireland the number of monoglot Irish-speakers is larger, and it is really among them that the outstanding story-tellers are to be found. Comparatively few versions of tales such as The Magic Flight, The Maiden in Search of her Brothers, The Wizard and his Pupil, and The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife have been recorded in Scotland within the last twenty years, while a prolonged search over a wide area of the Highlands and Islands resulted in one solitary version of the Magic Mill tale. That kind of material is going out of oral tradition.

Tales and legends illustrative of beliefs that still hold ground do put up a struggle for survival. The case of the tale of the Friends in Life and Death indicates how very difficult it is to know exactly what is in current tradition and what is not. In places it is told as a local legend, at other times it is fixed neither as regards time nor space. Dr. Christiansen states that there are three Irish versions of the tale and notes one from Scotland contributed by Campbell of Islay to the *Folklore Journal* VI: 184. Campbell states that the tale "is a rare one, now seldom told". Since 1945 three further versions of the tale have been recorded in Barra, Shetland and Easter Ross respectively, while during the winter of 1959-60 three further versions were recorded in South Uist. The South Uist versions are rather close to the story recorded by Larminie in Galway, while the Barra version is much closer to that of Shetland. Printed sources are unlikely to have influenced the distribution of this tale in Scotland, and what is noticeable is that only the versions from the east of Scotland and Shetland contain the invitation-to-the skull motif.

Dr. Christiansen concludes that there is little direct connection between Scandinavian and Irish folk-tales, even although for centuries the Norse and Gaels were in constant contact. Even despite the extent of Norse settlement in the Hebrides, for instance, the whole pattern of tradition is Gaelic-Irish. Only in isolated cases can direct contact be assumed, but it is impossible to say whether that is through some chance visits of a later day or by contact at an earlier period.

This is an extremely valuable book and is to be classed as compulsory reading for all students of the folk-tale.

C. I. MACLEAN

Scottish Farming, Past and Present. By J. A. Symon. Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh and London. 1959. ix+475 pp. 42s.

In tackling "the story of Scottish agriculture from its early beginnings" the author has essayed the impossible, and this is most evident in his opening chapters in which he seeks to describe husbandry in prehistoric and medieval times. Here the author hoists himself with his own petard; for, by boldly asserting that lack of documentation cannot excuse the general historians of Scotland for their neglect of this important subject, he raises hopes that are beyond his powers to fulfil. Perhaps in cautiously skirting this vexed matter the general historians reveal wisdom rather than ignorance. The best of them know

as much as is readily ascertainable about the subject but their training tells them that this is insufficient for a genuinely historical exposition of it. In such situations, the guess, the "hunch" and the forced analogy merely make confusion worse confounded. So far as the Dark Ages are concerned Mr. Symon is obliged to recognise this, but unfortunately he fails to see that in certain respects the more amply documented Middle Ages are merely, in truth, "darkness visible". He has a simple formula to overcome all difficulties, of which the main ingredients are an extremely general treatment, an uncritical use of sources, and anachronism. Thus, his description of run-rig husbandry in the Middle Ages draws largely upon eighteenth-century sources which describe eighteenth-century conditions—and which even for their legitimate purpose require critical handling. The result is entirely predictable. We encounter yet again the largely hypothetical norm that has been imposed upon run-rig, complete with stylised "diagrammatic representation of infield and outfield, after Wilson". This abstract work of art is about as remote from the rich variety of nature as anything evolved at La Tène—although in fairness to Mr. Wilson's article in "The Transactions of the Highland and Agricultural Society" for 1902 he was not unaware of its limitations. Much more to the point in Mr. Symon's work would have been a thorough study of a particular locality at a definite period, after the contemporary evidence. Perhaps the medieval records of Scotland, no matter how diligently studied, simply will not afford us such a luxury—save perhaps as regards monastic lands. In that case a plain statement of the inconclusiveness of the evidence must needs suffice.

Mr. Symon, however, elects for boldness, and as a consequence his chapters on the medieval period (whether he is discussing agricultural or social conditions) are far from satisfactory. His approach shows a fundamental defect which his merits of industry and unflagging enthusiasm cannot overcome —namely, his lack of the technical equipment required of the medievalist. Thus, his treatment of such matters as feudalism and serfdom are dated and misleading. Following Cosmo Innes, he tends to force the equation of *serf* and *slave*, but for this no real warrant is to be found in contemporary sources. Innes has been justly described by Sir Maurice Powicke as "a remarkable scholar", but it is inadvisable to-day to lean so uncritically on his pioneer work as Mr. Symon does. The general historians of our own time have not been as idle as all that. For instance,

Mr. Barrow in his book "Feudal Britain" (1956), in a few pages deals with this very problem neatly and trenchantly. Again, a much deeper insight into feudal and seignorial problems than that afforded by Innes can readily be found in the detailed introductions to Professor Croft Dickinson's editions of "The Sheriff Court Book of Fife" (Scottish History Society, 1928), and "The Court Book of the Barony of Carnwath" (S.H.S., 1937). Yet these quite basic works are never once referred to by Mr. Symon. Nor do references to Cunningham's "Church History of Scotland" (1859) or Ninian Hill's "The Story of the Scottish Church from the Earliest Times" (1919) inspire much confidence in Mr. Symon's treatment of ecclesiastical affairs. Acquaintance with more recent work on this important subject would surely have prevented him from writing of the decay of the Celtic Church in the time of David I. One can only conclude that in dealing with the Middle Ages the author has struggled conscientiously but to little purpose, and this verdict must cover agriculture no less than other topics that the author has unwarily discussed.

As he approaches more modern times the quality of Mr. Symon's work noticeably improves. Yet it must be confessed that his treatment of the eighteenth century is still disappointing. It is trite, rather superficial and still too generalised. Here the need for detailed regional studies is imperative; and that such studies are not only feasible but highly rewarding has been recently shown by Miss Third in her unpublished Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis "Changes in Eighteenth Century Rural Scotland" (1953) and one or two brief published articles based on it. The truth is that the old eclectic, superficial approach can no longer contribute anything to the understanding of this crucial but painfully complicated period. Far from being worked out, the "Agrarian Revolution" is still one of the boldest challenges to the historian of modern Scotland. Mr. Symon displays no awareness of this unhappy state of affairs. It is distressing to find him still holding to the old ill-focussed synoptic view, still displaying inability to evaluate his sources of information, still referring to works that do not carry much weight of authority nowadays—such as, for example, Anderson's "Scottish Nation". On the whole, Mr. Symon rests content with well-known facts culled from predictable sources to tell a familiar, but not necessarily illuminating, story. If his version were superior in the telling to existing accounts he might plead justification. But it is not; it lacks the

crisp clearness of Dr. Handley's "Scottish Farming in the Eighteenth Century" (1953).

It is almost as if Mr. Symon had written two books within the one cover, one of indifferent quality and the other of considerable merit. In his discussion of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which takes up the greater part of the book, the author is clearly in his element. His grasp of the subject is surer, his treatment more penetrating and lucid. Not only has he mastered his materials but he also turns to good use his practical farming knowledge and his experience in the Department of Agriculture. Here he enjoys obvious advantages over the academic historian, and the result is some fine work judged by any standard.

Indeed, in a short review it is not easy to single out for praise any particular section in this part of the book when sound information and keen insight inform all. The present writer found Mr. Symon most informative in his study of the depression that set in after 1815, with its unexpected but convincing conclusion that Scottish farming, because of its adapability, fared less badly than English farming. This theme of the elasticity of Scottish agriculture figures even more prominently in the long depression that followed "the Prairie Corn Crisis". The effects of the two World Wars of the twentieth century are also sharply etched and make absorbing reading. These, it seems to the present writer, are the highlights of Mr. Symon's book which make valuable contributions to our knowledge of modern Scottish history. Valuable too are the specialised chapters which close the volume and which deal with such important topics as "Livestock", "Grasslands", and "The Potato". They bring together much useful but out of the way information. A distinctly useful feature of the book is also the bibliography of writings on Scottish agriculture of date prior to 1850.

All things considered, it is a pity that Mr. Symon did not limit his work to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for if he had he might have produced a book of high and uniform quality.

W. FERGUSON

The Silver Bough. Volume Two. A Calendar of Scottish National Festivals. Candlemas to Harvest Home. By F. Marian McNeill. William Maclellan. Glasgow. 1959. 21s.

In the first volume of *The Silver Bough* an attempt was made

to discover the main factors, geographical and historical, that had determined the character of Scottish folklore and folk-belief. The second volume covers a field less wide, and a subject less dependent upon the interpretation of evidence which is often extremely vague. Scottish calendar customs, with which this volume is concerned, are to a large extent historical facts, and the reader is accordingly less conscious of being caught in "the druidical mist", or in, to use a more modern term, "The Celtic Twilight". The author's plan was, to use her own words, to fit the scraps of Scottish folklore together like bits in a "jig-saw puzzle", and after "much juggling" she found a pattern clear and consistent, even if the reader is sometimes too much aware of the juggling to make the pieces fit, not so much by cutting and clipping, as by filling in the interstices with leaves from the Golden Bough.

Considering her plan, the first chapter on Medieval Plays may cause some surprise, but it contains very interesting descriptions of local festivals, and illustrations from old prints. The subsequent chapters, however, follow the calendar from St. Bride's-day-Candlemas to Harvest Home. These February festivals, including St. Valentine's day, raise a question that is present in any study of Scottish tradition; that is, the problem of assessing the true balance between Celtic, i.e. Irish Gaelic elements, and those that come from the continent, either directly or through English tradition. Apart from in the Northern Isles, traces of Scandinavian influence are curiously vague. The question is further complicated by the fact that in Celtic folklore as well, continental influence, often of a more ancient date, plays an important part, and further because the folklore collected in the Gaelic West is so much richer and more varied than that from the rest of Scotland, and besides is presented in such an attractive way as in the *Popular Tales of the West Highlands* and in the *Carmina Gadelica*.

Now the cult of St. Bride is of Irish origin, even if one may doubt her being "the successor of a Celtic goddess of the same name", but the beauty of the prayers and charms in the *Carmina* is independent of any explanation of possible origins. In these February festivals one point worth noting is the decisive part played by the women. The special festival parties of the women (p. 26) have their counterpart in similar gatherings in Germany and France, "where men were not admitted until the evening", and such practices are part of the idea that February was the month of women (*der Weibermonat*),

an idea that can be traced back to the Romans. Ceremonies of this kind are known from various countries, and the sole reminiscence seems to be the privilege of women to propose, restricted sometimes to a leap year, or even to the 29th of February, the extra day put in after the calendar reform, sometimes fixed at February the 14th, or St. Valentine's day. One may refer to a very interesting paper written by H. A. Rose (*Folklore* vol. 30): "Customary restraints on celibacy." Probably the girl referred to by Ophelia exercised this privilege, cf. the next verse, and did not meet her sad fate, only because she happened to be the "first met".

In the long list of rites and ceremonies, well written and arranged, almost every point has parallels from outside Scotland, even if the background suggested is not always convincing. Compare e.g. as a background for the cockfights, the statement that "the cock was a sacred solar bird", the distance being bridged with a "nevertheless". There is the "dreaming bannock", well known in Scandinavian countries, and "the dumb supper" known in the American countryside, with a slightly different rite. Salted bannocks are baked and eaten in complete silence by the girls, who naturally will dream about offering or being offered a drink, and from the nature of the beverage chosen—beer, milk and water—their future circumstances may be inferred. Easter eggs, often coloured, are also widely known, but not the rolling of them, whether or not it is "a symbol of the stone rolled from the tomb of Christ" (It is still done on Easter morning on the White House lawn in Washington D.C.).

The chief landmarks of the Celtic calendar were Beltane and Samhain. The first is associated with the sun, fire and spring. The reason may be that to the druids the sun was the centre of divinity, and fire "their medium of expression", but, to quote the author, "of the mysteries enacted by the druids nothing is known", and the lacuna is hardly filled in with a passage from *Prince Otto*, by R. L. Stevenson. Maypoles are known elsewhere, but were they "of course a phallic emblem", any more than say the Christmas tree or even the round towers of Ireland? May fires are lit in some places in Sweden, but generally they belong to Midsummer, the first of May being too early to celebrate the arrival of spring. Again the reader is grateful for good descriptions of local ceremonies. On Midsummer day, in Shetland "simmer-mal", fires are still blazing in Northern Europe, and in Western France branches of the

birch tree are taken into the house, fixed to the horses' harnesses, even to the railway engines, or, in Ireland, fastened to the gates. Flowers are common in divination rites elsewhere. From the illustration it is hard to identify the St. John's wort. The dictionary says: "a plant of the genus Hypericum", which corresponds to its Swedish name *Johannes-ört*, and to the German *Johannis Kraut*. It was always believed to have protective powers against anything evil. As for the Michaelmas races, reference may be made to a study of such practices, written by Prof. Solheim (*Studia Norvegica* nr. 8, 1956). At Harvest Home, finally, the last sheaf, "the May Maiden" etc. represents the Scottish variant, with several characteristic touches, of similar rites in other countries, enacted to ensure the continuity of the yield of the fields, a problem of supreme importance in any agricultural community.

In this way the present volume of *The Silver Bough* has brought together and made accessible in an attractive manner a large amount of information, and if a reader may disagree as to the explanation and the interpretation of some rite, he will be grateful for a valuable compendium of information.

REIDAR TH. CHRISTIANSEN

An exhibition of traditional Scottish agricultural technology

The National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland held an exhibition recently, dealing with Scottish agricultural implements and techniques, which has been an important landmark in the move to bring Scottish ethnographic studies, and the material culture aspect thereof in particular, into line with developments in Scandinavia, and, indeed, in other parts of the British Isles. Whilst local folk museums are doing vital work there is an imperative need for a focal point, where the nation as a whole can see the progress of ethnographic research, appreciate its significance, and thus be induced to participate, as has been done, for example, at Skansen and St. Fagans. It is in this connection that the enterprise of the National Museum of Antiquities in creating the post of an Assistant Keeper dealing with Scottish ethnology, with the subsequent appropriate appointment of Mr. A. Fenton, is now bearing its first fruits.

A series of annual exhibitions of traditional aspects of Scottish rural economy has been planned, and the opening of the first of these in June 1960 coincided very suitably with the Royal Highland Agricultural Show. This initial venture, which

was confined to agricultural technology, aroused considerable interest among visitors, and this in turn led many farmers to offer further material. Considerations of space, which press heavily on the National Museum, made it necessary for the exhibition to be sited away from the main building. Whilst this may have been a slight disadvantage there has been the compensation of it being, virtually, a self-contained unit.

Attractively laid out, the exhibition reconciled very satisfactorily the conflicting claims of the mass of material which has been collected, with the selective limitation on exhibits necessary to retain the interest of the average viewer. Carefully arranged with regard to interrelationship and chronology, the exhibits were accompanied by fully explanatory texts and by photographs. In his selection Mr. Fenton chose, with regard to the space at his disposal, to treat some selected themes in detail rather than to attempt a comprehensive coverage of agricultural technology. The contents included an entire smithy, a sequence on plough evolution ranging from prehistoric to nineteenth-century types, sowing, reaping, and thrashing implements, types of harness, peat cutters, an interesting miscellany of veterinary equipment, branks, "horse-throwers" and other features of an age of more robust animal management. An especially interesting section is that devoted to ropes and rope-making where considerable interpretative research is apparent. The further implications of distribution and comparative linguistics have been followed up, showing clearly that even in so relatively small a field, a pattern of traditional regional usages can contribute much to more general historical studies.

The National Museum's enterprising and encouraging experiment has been most successful. It is intended to vary the emphasis of these; the next one, which is to open in the Spring of 1961, will specialise in traditional crafts. It is by means such as this, in association with the efforts of local museums and interested societies throughout the country, that the public will be made aware of the importance of scientific study in the field of Scottish ethnology.

IAIN A. CRAWFORD

A Society for Folk Life Studies

As mentioned in our last issue, in May of this year, the need for regular meetings of those concerned in Folk Life Studies in

these Islands was agreed by all who took part in the 1959 Symposium of the School of Scottish Studies on "Aims and Methods in Material Culture research" (*Scottish Studies* 4, 1960, 120).

This year's meeting of the British Association at Cardiff provided an opportunity for many of those interested in the formation of a new society to discuss the matter in a wider setting, and a steering committee consisting of the following persons was appointed to meet at Reading at a later date: Messrs. J. G. Jenkins (Welsh Folk Museum), C. A. Jewell (University of Reading), A. T. Lucas (National Museum of Ireland), B. R. S. Megaw (University of Edinburgh), C. S. Mundy (University College, London), I. C. Peate (Welsh Folk Museum), and S. F. Sanderson (University of Leeds). The results of this meeting will be announced in the New Year.

EDITOR

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