NOTES AND COMMENTS

A. SCOTTISH PLACE-NAMES

25. "Hill of —" and "Loch of —"

The present enquiry is an extension of an investigation which, in two previous issues of this journal, examined the distribution and origins of the type *Burn of* in Scottish river-names (Nicolaisen 1959:92-102) and the more general implications of the use of the preposition *of* in Scottish place-names, with particular reference to its usage in conjunction with the elements *Water*, *Mains*, *Mill(s)*, *Bridge*, *Braes* and *Braeside* (Nicolaisen 1960:194-205). The conclusion reached at the time was that "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" (1960:203-4), and that specifically "*Burn of* —" was "a good example of different linguistic substrata influencing the same incoming language" (1959:100), i.e. Gaelic in North-East Scotland and Norse in Orkney and Shetland. In fact only *Burn of* showed any significant representation in the Northern Isles—especially in Shetland with 95 examples on the one-inch Ordnance Survey maps, but also in Orkney (20) and in the "Scandinavian" easterly part of Caithness (5)—whereas the striking feature of most of the other types examined (*Water of* —, *Mains of* —, *Mill of* —, etc.) was an extremely heavy concentration in the north-east, with another, thinner, group of names in the south-west, both areas which were formerly Gaelic speaking but subsequently came under the influence of Scots.

Although the type *Burn of* — (like *Burn of Birse* ABD, *Burn of Duglenny* KCD, *Burn of Turret* ANG, etc.) was therefore the starting point of the investigation and also satisfactorily explained, the sequence of events which created this new name pattern in the process of the replacement of Gaelic by Scots in the north-east, it also constituted an exception in so far as it

occurs in large numbers in the Northern Isles. As a substratum could successfully be shown to be responsible for the creation of this type in the north-east—the ultimate origin being a Gaelic pattern of the type *Allt an t-Sluic Léith*—a similar explanation

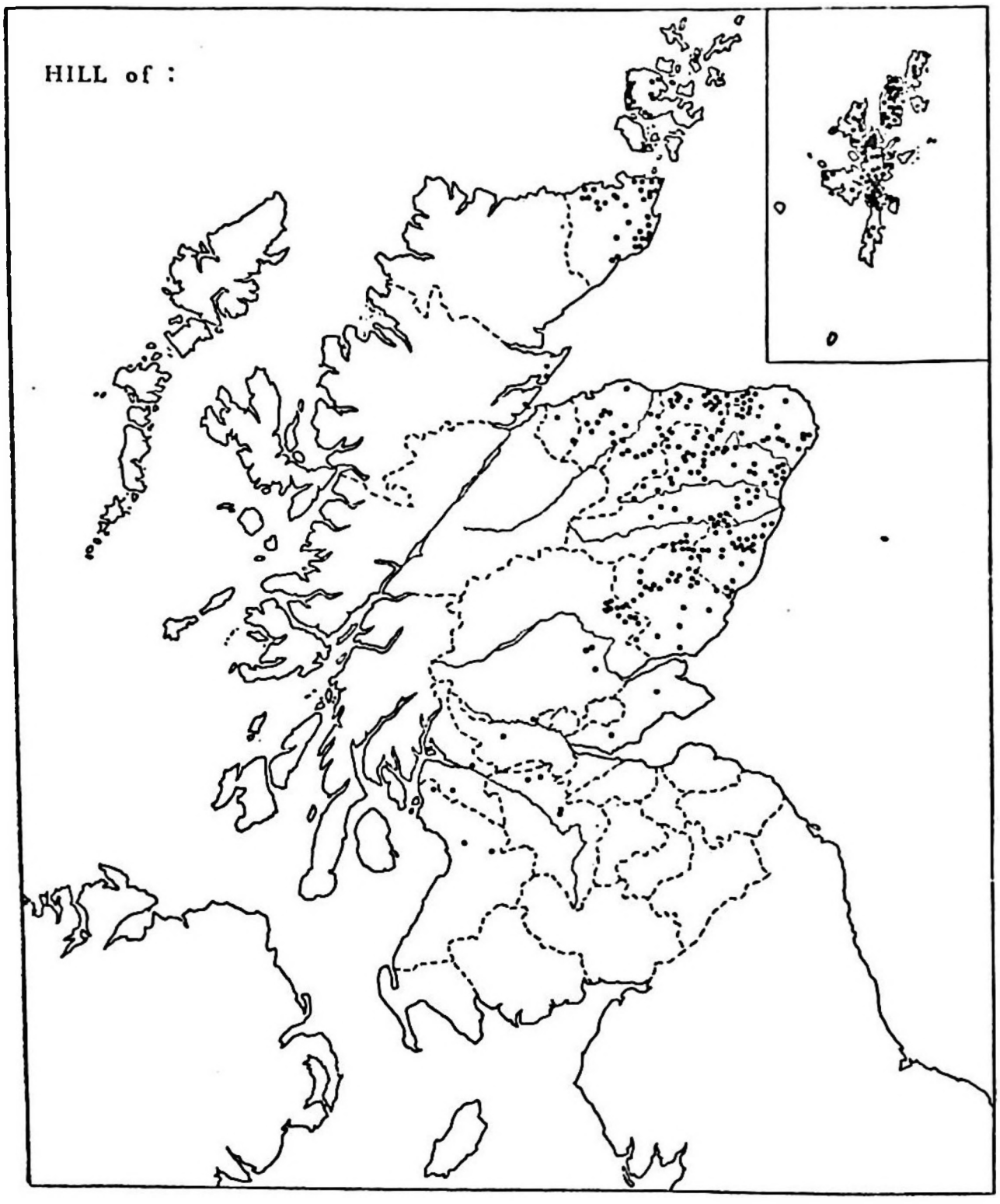

FIG. 1.

appeared likely for the extreme north, as long as the impulse could be demonstrated to have come from the outgoing Scandinavian dialects of Orkney and Shetland, instead of from Gaelic This seemed possible because, in his account of the place-names of Shetland, the Danish philologist Jakob Jakobsen had

suggested the *de Hill o' de Waters* (Yell) probably represents an older **Vatnahul* or **Vatnabrekk* (Jakobsen 1936:5) and *Hill o' Dale* an older **Dalsfell* (*ibid.* 6). He further maintained that "Shetl. *hul* (O.N. "hóll", sb., hill) has been exchanged in several cases in compounded place-names for L.Sc. "knowe" (Eng. "knoll"); in the same way *-fel* (O.N. fell, mountain), and the above-mentioned -hul for Eng. "hill", *-o*, *-wo* (O.N. "á", a stream) for L.Sc. "burn", *-teg* (O.N. "teigr", strip of field) for L.Sc. "rig" (in the names of strips of field). In place-names the word "hill" is either retained as the second part, or placed before the original first part with which it is connected by the prep. "o' " (of), e.g. "Crookseter [*Krukster*] Hill", and "Hill o' Crookseter" (Dc.). Shetl. *vatn*, *vatten* C.O.N. "vatn", water, lake) as the second part in lake-names, has mostly changed to "water", or exchanged for L.Sc. (from Celt.) "loch"; . . . The words "loch" and "water" also occasionally represent an origin. sjon sjøn . . ., O.N. tjarn, small lake, tarn" (Jakobsen 1936:6).

This short note is intended to look more closely at Jakobsen's theory in the light of the evidence afforded by two of the name types cited by him, *Hill of* — and *Loch of* —, and consequently to re-examine the conclusions reached in our previous study of *Burn of* —. Before we do so, however, some comment on the general distribution of these two new examples is necessary. As can be seen on the relevant map (Fig. 1), the distribution of names of the type *Hill of* — very closely resembles that previously published of *Burn of* — names (Nicolaisen 1959:95), i.e. two stray clusters in the north-east and in the extreme north, with some outliers in the Forth-Clyde area. The dot representation stands for a total of 375 names extracted from the one-inch Ordnance Survey maps of Scotland although the great density of names in some areas, particularly in Shetland, did not allow us to show every single name, on a map of this scale. In fact, the *Burn of* — and *Hill of* — maps are practically interchangeable as far as the regions are concerned in which these names occur; even the numerical proportions and percentage figures are very similar: whereas 120 (or 46 per cent) of the 261 names of the *Burn of* — category are found in the originally Scandinavian settlement areas of Shetland, Orkney and Caithness, and 131 (or 50 per cent) in the "Gaelic" counties of the north-east, 155 (or 41 per cent) of the *Hill of* — names come from the Northern Isles and Caithness, and 201 (or 53·6 per cent) from the north-east, including

Eastern Perthshire. Figures for the individual counties are (using the same geographical subdivision as for *Burn of* —):

Extreme North: Shetland 109, Orkney 14, Caithness 32.
North: Ross-shire 3.
North-East: Moray 11, Banffshire 35, Aberdeenshire 81, Kincardineshire 29, Angus 33, Eastern Perthshire 12.
Southern Perthshire 3, Stirlingshire 2.
East: Fife 2.
West: Dunbartonshire 2.
South (of Forth-Clyde line): Renfrewshire 1, Ayrshire 3, Lanarkshire 4.

Not counted in these figures nor represented on the map are such names in which the word *hill* is preceded by a qualifying adjective like *East*, *West*, *North*, *South*, *White*, *Black*, *Round*, *Wee*, *Big*, *Mid*, *Fore*, etc., as in *East Hill of Bellister* (Shetland), *South Hill of Craigo* (Angus), *Fore Hill of Glengap* (Kirkcudbrightshire). Neither has the diminutive *hillock* been included although there are also some examples of it in the formation under discussion.

The distribution of *Loch of* —, on the other hand, becomes quite unmappable on this scale, as 187 (or 87·4 per cent) out of the 214 names mentioned on the one-inch Ordnance Survey maps occur in the Northern Isles and Caithness, 137 of these in Shetland alone. The rest are scattered over the usual counties in which we expect to find "of —" names on the Scottish mainland, numbers varying from 7 in Perthshire to 1 each in Banff-, Wigtown-, Kincardine- and Selkirkshire. The inclusion of the last county is perhaps a little surprising but the single example in question, *Loch of the Lowes*, probably owes nothing to the Gaelic substratum of the north-east or to the resulting new name pattern of the Lowland Scots of the area, anyhow, but is the kind of formation which could have been created quite independently anywhere within the region where Scottish English is, or was spoken.

From a semantic point of view, it becomes quite clear that here we have two groups of "secondary names", a term which implies that the explanatory element in these names—the one represented by the dash in the formula "Hill of —" and "Loch of —", is in practically all instances another, earlier, name and not an appellative. In the case of the mainland examples of "Hill of —", many of these earlier names are of Gaelic origin, as in *Hill of Achalone* CAI, *Hill of Balbae* ANG,

Hill of Dalnapot MOR, *Hill of Shenwall* ABD, etc., although others are definitely English emphasising the secondary relationship. In a number of the Gaelic names so used we are able to discover what appear to have been the primary names of the hills in question, as in *Hill of Ardiffery* and *Hill of Ardo* ABD, *Hill of Cairnby* BNF, *Hill of Candacraig* ABD, *Hill of Carlincraig* BNF, *Hill of Crimond* BNF, *Hill of Drumfergue* ABD, *Hill of Drumgray* LAN, *Hill of Knocknashalg* BNF, *Hill of Menduff* BNF, *Hill of Mondurran* ANG, *Hill of Mountblairy* BNF, *Hill of Tillylair* and *Hill of Tillymauld* KCD, *Hill of Tillymorgan* ABD, *Hill of Tornechole* MOR and *Hill of Turlundie* ABD. If no settlement bearing the original hill-name exists nearby, it may be assumed that the new name is a direct successor of the old one, but if such a settlement name does exist, the relationship may be more complex in so far as the name of the settlement may have supplied the explanatory element in our new name of the "Hill of —" pattern. When there is no Gaelic name involved which contains a word meaning "hill" or the like (like *Drum-*, *Knock-*, *Tilly-*, etc.) the secondary nature of our group of names becomes even more obvious. In extreme examples, the name providing the element after the preposition may refer to the direct opposite of a "hill", as in *Hill of Dalnapot* MOR, *Hill of Glenroads* BNF and *Hill of Strathbathie* ABD. In the majority of instances this arbitrariness is also apparent although not to such an extreme. For the few examples of "Loch of —" on the formerly Gaelic speaking mainland the picture is very similar.

As in the case of "Burn of —" and "Water of —", the geographical distribution of our mainland names, as well as their close association with other Gaelic names, demand that the explanation of our "Hill of —" and "Loch of —" pattern in the areas in which they occur lies in the linguistic contact between Gaelic and Lowland Scots, probably some time between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries. Where *allt* is translated by *burn*, and *abhainn* by *water*, there the Scots loanword *loch* stands for its Gaelic original, and *hill* may be the translation of a variety of Gaelic words, like *cnoc*, *druim*, *airde*, *tulach*, etc.

As far as the mainland evidence is concerned, the conclusions reached in the investigation of our two groups of names is consequently more or less identical with the results of our investigations in 1959 and 1960. How far can this also be said of the material provided by the Northern Isles and the

"Scandinavian" part of Caithness? Are we here in fact confronted, as Jakobsen assumed, with a similar translation of Norse words and the adaptation of an existing Norse morphological pattern of basic word plus explanatory element (or name) in the genitive? For the kind of example he lists—*Hill of the Waters* and *Hill of Dale*—this explanation is possibly the correct one, as the explanatory elements in these two names are, in fact, not other names but common nouns. There are, however, not very many names belonging to this category, and they form the exception rather than the rule. In the vast majority of instances, the explanatory element is, as on the mainland, another name, usually referring to a settlement, and practically always of Scandinavian origin, as is only to be expected. In *type* therefore our Northern "Hill of —", "Loch of —" and "Burn of —" names differ in no way from their counterparts in the north-east.

The arbitrariness of the new compound names shows itself most clearly in a number of Shetland names in which both "Hill of —", and "Loch of —" are combined with the same primary place-name. Examples of such duplicates are *Hill* and *Loch of Basta*, *Brindister*, *Burwick*, *Colvister*, *Garth*, *Girlsta*, *Grista*, *Haggrister*, *Houlland*, *Huxter*, *Kirkabister*, *Sandwick*, *Setter*, *Skellister*, *the Waters* (!), *Trondavoe*, *Ulsta*, *Windhouse*. Nor does this category in Shetland stop at duplication for in Yell we have *Hill*, *Wick*, *Head* and *Burns of Gutcher*. Unst, on the other hand, provides a pointer to the variety of basic elements involved in this kind of name pattern which is by no means confined to our three words, *hill*, *loch* and *burn*. Here we have, amongst others, *Wick of Collaster*, *Point of Coppister*, *Ness of Wadbister*, *Head of Mula*, *Taing of Noustigarth*, *Geo of Henken*, *Ward of Clugan*, *Keen of Hamar*, *Holm of Skaw*, *Lee of Saxavord*, *Breck of Newgarth*, many of these being coastal features. These are only a few examples of what, for the whole of Shetland, would be a long list; and the picture in Orkney is very similar.

There can be no doubt about it, therefore that the "x of y" type of name is a well-established pattern in the Northern Isles; but what are the origins of this pattern? To the best of the writer's knowledge there is no similarly constructed group of names in any of the Scandinavian languages which could have served as a prototype, and it looks unlikely now that Jakobsen's explanation of a **Vatnahul>Hill of the Waters* development could satisfactorily account for the vast majority

of the names in question and their obviously secondary status. There is nothing in the Norse background to these names which could have been responsible for their spontaneous creation all over the Northern Isles, quite apart from the fact that a development as Jakobsen sees it, presupposes an "x of y" type in the incoming, receiving, adapting language.

The age of this type is also difficult to establish although there are some hints in Storer Clouston's *Records of the Earldom of Orkney* which cover the years 1299-1614 (Clouston 1914). In this collection the first examples of our pattern appear in the last decade of the fifteenth century, in 1492, when we have *Nethirtown of Grenyng* (Marwick), *Bordland of Swarthmale* and *Bull of Rapness* (Westray), *Bull of Kerston* (Stromness) and *Bull of Hoye* (Hoy). In the last three cases, *Bull* represents Old Norse *bú* "farmstead, estate, etc.", and it is particularly this formula "Bu of —" which worried Clouston on another occasion (Marwick 1952:242), his explanation being the following: "This must have been a Scotch designation invented by the Scottish chamberlains or factors of the earldom estate (probably soon after 1379 when the Sinclairs became earls) in order to distinguish these large manorial farms. They found bu in use in Orkney as the regular term for such places, and they used it just as they would have said 'Mains of', 'Place of', etc. in Scotland." Dr. Marwick approved of this for he commented (*ibid.* 243): "Mr. Clouston's comparison with 'The Mains of' or 'The Manor of' is exactly to the point, though the latter is an over-pretentious term to use in regard to Orkney farms." He admitted, however, (*ibid.* 248): "We have really no data on which to determine exactly when the peculiar formula 'Bu of X' first came into use, though the farms so named had no doubt been settled from a much earlier point."

The present writer feels that Clouston and Marwick, those great Orkney scholars, are certainly correct in attributing this formula to Lowland Scottish influence; only it must be freed from the narrow "Bu of —"<"Mains of —" parallel, and from the restricted sphere of the Scottish chamberlains, for the "Bu of —" formula is part of a much larger and much more comprehensive invasion of this Scots name-type from those parts of Scotland where it had developed in linguistic contact with Gaelic. What we have in the Northern Isles is nothing but the exported result of this contact situation, and in this way the Gaelic original "Allt a' —" or "Loch a' —" or "Cnoc a' —" is ultimately, although indirectly, also responsible

for that plethora of "x of y" names in Shetland, Orkney and the eastern half of Caithness.

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B. COLLECTION AND RESEARCH

Goat-keeping in the Old Highland Economy—3

The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to some aspects of goat-keeping which have not so far received much comment in the two earlier articles on the subject (Megaw 1963 and 1964), and to add to their general picture some particulars from Mid Argyll.

While it may well be true that goat-keeping provided the staple diet for the poorest members of a Highland community, there were three reasons for owning goats that were equally applicable to all strata of society. These were:

(*a*) the prophylactic property of goats' milk;
(*b*) the importance of goats as adjuncts to sheep management;
(*c*) the availability of goat-flesh in the "hungry-gap" months of spring.

The first aspect has already been touched on in these articles (Megaw 1963). It should perhaps be explained that it is very rare for a goat to contract tuberculosis when kept on