

II.

CELTIC PLACE-NAMES IN ORKNEY. BY HUGH MARWICK, F.S.A.Scot.

This is a subject which has, so far, received scant attention from professional philologists. In his highly interesting book, *Scottish Land Names*, Sir Herbert Maxwell says (p. 79): "All the names in Orkney and Shetland which are not English are in Old Norse." Mr Johnston, in his *Place Names of Scotland*, comes to practically the same conclusion. Isaac Taylor, in his *Words and Places*, p. 113, says of the Orkneys: "In all the sixty-seven islands there are only two, or perhaps three, Celtic names." The only previous investigators of any consequence had been Captain Thomas, R.N., and Professor P. A. Munch, and it was probably on the results of these gentlemen's work that Sir Herbert Maxwell and Mr Johnston based their conclusions.

With regard to Shetland, the case is very different. In his *Shetland-sjøerne Stednavne*, the late Dr Jakobsen has given us a study of Shetland place-names which, for combined precision, exhaustiveness, and scholarship, surpasses every other work on British topographical nomenclature. One chapter is devoted to place-names of Celtic origin, and the number of Celtic words that he found still survived is quite surprising. In the present article the writer hopes to show that in Orkney also, in spite of the lapse of over a thousand years and the total extinction of the Celtic vernacular, a considerable number of the old place-names still survive, corrupted indeed at times, but often preserving their old Celtic form unchanged.

Before dealing with the names themselves, let us consider briefly the circumstances under which, and the time at which, these borrowings could have taken place. On these points there is a considerable diversity of opinion. The extreme view—that when the Norsemen first came over they found the isles uninhabited (save perhaps for a few Christian anchorites)—need not detain us long. The supposed absence of Celtic place-names was the chief argument in favour of this view, and the existence of the appended names is sufficient to rebut that. Until recently, however, the current idea (even yet common) was that the coming of the Norsemen was cataclysmic, a wave sweeping before it every vestige of the former inhabitants and their culture. The more recent and reasonable view is that for a couple of centuries before the great Viking age—*i.e.*, roughly speaking, prior to A.D. 800—intercourse had been taking place between Scandinavia and these northern isles, and that Norsemen had gradually secured a footing, and made settle-

ments, both in Orkney and Shetland. It would be difficult indeed to explain the adoption of these loan-words otherwise.

Professor Alexander Bugge¹ employs four converging lines of argument in favour of this view.

1. He first quotes Zimmer's opinion that the ravaging of Tory Island in A.D. 617 was due to Scandian sea-rovers. Dr G. Henderson,² however, shows that it is not necessary to assume this, seeing that the Picts of Albion were not innocent of such pastimes themselves. The same view is taken by Professor W. J. Watson, who, in a recent paper—reported in the *Inverness Courier*—argues that Orkney was the earliest headquarters of the Picts in this country, and that they were notorious freebooters both by land and sea. *Murchobhlach muiridhe*, a "marine fleet," is the phrase used in the *Annals of the Four Masters* for the spoilers of Tory Island, and *pioraiti na fairgi*, "pirates of the ocean," is the phrase used in *Gorman's Martyrology* for the ravagers of Eigg in the same year. One would suppose that the Picts and their homeland would be well enough known, and it is possible that the phrases used point rather to strangers whose homeland was unknown—"over sea."

2. Jakobsen's research into Shetland place-names proved the existence in considerable abundance of place-names there which were obsolete, or nearly so, at the Viking period. Such names as O.N. *vin*, pasture, *bólstaðr*, homestead, and *heimr*, homestead, are practically unknown in Iceland (which was settled in the end of the ninth century) but are common in Shetland and Orkney.

3. From Celtic decoration on stones in the island of Gothland it appears certain that intercourse had taken place at a very early period with the Celts of Britain, and the nearest point of contact was of course these northern isles.

4. Lastly, Bugge shows that odal right was not spoken of in Iceland, but Torf Einar took their odal rights from the Orkney settlers, in return for his payment of the fine imposed on the islands by King Harold Hárfagr, as *mannbót* for the slaughter of his son Hálfðan. Hence, Bugge concludes that at that time Orkney had been so long settled that the settlers had had time to acquire odal rights (probably five generations). In that case the date of settlement would be put back to about the middle of the seventh century, if not earlier.

It is thus probable that the Norsemen had been living in touch with the earlier inhabitants for a long time before the great Viking age.

¹ *Vesterlandenes Indflydelse paa Nordboernes og saerlig Nordmaendenes ydre Kultur, levesaet og samfundsforhold i Vikingetiden.* Kristiania, 1905.

² *Norse Influence on Celtic Scotland.* 1910.

The Viking incursions, which began towards the end of the eighth century, were due to various causes, into which we need not enter here. The point to be emphasised, however, is that it is quite improper to conclude that even then did a complete extirpation of the natives take place in Orkney. Even these terrible Vikings must have been fully alive to the market value of the natives as slaves, and the women-folk, at least, must have been regarded as desirable property. In the *Laxdale Saga* is told the story of an Irish slave Melkorka and her little son—one of the most moving episodes in literature—and saga references to Celtic slaves are too numerous to mention.

The influence of the Norsemen on the Celts has been sketched by the late Dr Henderson, and the reciprocal influence of the Celts on the Norsemen has been very fully discussed by Professor A. Bugge (see above). Among other things, the latter refers to Celtic words still in use in Faeroe. Some of these, together with others, are represented in the Orkney dialect of to-day; but here it will be sufficient to refer only to the traces of Celtic preserved in the place-names.

For many years before his most regrettable death, Dr Jakobsen had been making a careful study of this subject. In a conversation I had with him during, I think, his last visit to Orkney, I asked him what proportion of the Orkney place-names were of Celtic origin. "One per cent.?" I asked tentatively. "Oh, much more than that," he replied; "I should think probably from five to ten per cent." This I feel sure was an exaggerated estimate; but of course there was no one better able to express an opinion.

Only harm can be done by a rash ascription to Celtic origin of words which are difficult of interpretation otherwise. Seeing that the vast majority of Orkney names are of Norse origin, it is always safer when a word may, with equal probability, be interpreted either as Celtic or Norse, to prefer the latter origin. Take Grory (*gróri*) as an example. This name occurs twice, once in Eynhallow and again in the Holm of Scockness, in each case as the name of a low pebbly point—the marked characteristic in each case being the mass of clean, light-coloured pebbles thrown up by the sea. I mentioned the name to Dr Jakobsen, and as he could not think of a Norse origin we looked up Spurrell's Welsh Dictionary. There we found *gro*, "pebbles, ridge of pebbles thrown up by the sea." This seemed extraordinarily appropriate. Recently, however, in thinking over this word and its unexplained termination, it occurred to me that it was a combination of Norse *grá*, grey, and *eyrr* (in dative, *eyri*), a gravelly beach. Hence, I prefer to regard the name as Norse; though, on the other hand, Professor Magnus Olsen of Christiania in a recent letter to me notes: "It seems to me a little

strange that *-eyrr* in two places should be combined with the adjective *grár*, which is not very common in place-names."

Another difficulty arises with Hoy names. There we find several *glens*, and there are little lochs among the hills marked *lochans* on the map. It is very hard to decide whether these are ancient names or names applied more recently by map-makers or others. Consequently, though it is necessary to refer to them, I do not feel confident in regarding them as ancient borrowings.

One further point must be mentioned. It is generally acknowledged that the pre-Norse inhabitants of Orkney were Picts. Our almost total ignorance of the Pictish language makes it very difficult to decide to which branch of the Celtic race they belonged, even if we do not go so far as Rhys and deny them Celtic origin altogether. Most authorities regard them as having been in closer affinity with the Cymric than the Gaelic branch, but until more facts are at the disposal of scholars a final decision is impossible. Some of the names cited below may perhaps shed a little light on the nature of their language. It may seem staggering to some to find Cymric, Gaelic, and Irish words occurring side by side in Orkney. But Jakobsen found the same thing in Shetland, and we must accept the facts as we find them and make our theories suit them and not *vice versa*. My own knowledge of Celtic being very slight, I shall merely suggest derivations that seem obvious, and as far as possible make comparisons with similar forms occurring elsewhere.

(For convenience in comparison, the system of phonetics employed below is that used by Dr Jakobsen in his various works on Shetland.)

Gael. *àirigh*, hill pasture, shieling. This word is found in three places at least: in Stronsay where we have the farm of Airy (*æri*), in Birsay where there is a farm of the same name near Greeny Hill, and in Sanday where there was a farm of this name now extinct. (See Mr J. S. Clouston's *Records of the Earldom of Orkney*, p. 206.) In Sanday also, on the farm of Warsetter, there is a field Airafea (*ærfæi*) situated on an elevation almost the highest in the island. The farm of Airy (spelt Arie in the *Uthel Book*) must have been near here if not actually on this field. In Stronsay, Airafea is a name applied to an extent of hilly ground. These names seem to contain the same root; the *-fea* part is of course the usual Orkney termination meaning hill (O.N. *fjall*). The Early Irish form of the word was *airge*, and we know from the *Orkneyinga Saga* that the Norsemen understood and used this term as a place-name, *Asgríms-erg*. (See *Rolls O. Saga*, p. 216.) In Joseph Anderson's edition of the *Saga* we find (p. 187) this name identified with the present Askary. In the *Flatay Book* text of the *Saga* the form is different—*Asgríms-ærgin*. Anderson, followed by Jakobsen in *Shetlandsøerne Stednavne*,

regarded *ærgin* as the Gaelic plural *airidhean*; but Professor Watson informs me that this is a modern form and hence the suggested explanation fails. In the latest edition of the *Saga* by S. Nordal (Copenhagen, 1913-6) it is suggested that the word is a neuter plural with the suffixed article *-in*. That is more probable, but whatever the explanation, it seems certain that this is the name we find applied to a farm near Stromness—Ayrean (*æriən*), and again to a place in the Woodwick hills. (For the phonetics cf. *Burrian infra*.)

Blan. This word is applied to a hill in Shetland, and Jakobsen refers it to the Welsh *blaen*, a point, extremity, end, top, etc. In Stronsay there is a *Blan* (*blān*) *Loch*, a tiny loch with a hillock rising beside it. This is possibly the same word. In S. Ronaldsay there is also a farm *Blansetter* on the slope of a small hill above St Margaret's Hope, but that, I think, must be regarded as the *saeter* (O.N. *sætr*, pasture, etc.) of *Blan*. A man of this name figures in the *Ork. Saga*. Nevertheless, as the farm appears in the 1502 rental as *Blanksetter*, we may have here another origin altogether.

Burrian. Jakobsen derives this word as used in Shetland from the Irish *boireann*, cliff, rocky coast, and says that the fact of its always being applied to cliffs or "stacks" in the sea shows it can have nothing to do with O.N. *borg*. In Orkney, however, the word occurs several times—in N. Ronaldsay, Rousay, Sanday, and Harray—and in each case is applied to the site of a broch. Thus, in Orkney at least, there is no doubt that it is simply the O.N. *borg + in* (the def. suffixed article). This word is cited by Jakobsen once from Shetland, but there it is pronounced *burgen* (*börgən*). This is rather odd, for we find the Orkney pronunciation reproduced in the *Hildina-ballad* from Foula which Low took down phonetically. There the original *glas borgin* (glass castle) has been modified to the form represented by Low's *glass buryon*.

Brae. Gael. *bràighe*, upper part (of places), Scots *brae*. This appears in the name *Brae-an-finyan* (*bré:ən:ffnjən*)—a steep brae on the farm of Faraclett in Rousay. The structure of the word is characteristically Gaelic—the chief accented qualifying syllable coming last. What *-finyan* means is very doubtful. Although the foot of the brae is very marshy, we can hardly think of the Welsh *ffynnon*, well, spring, as that word seems to be regarded as a borrowing from Latin.

Gael. *ceall*, a church. In Sanday an old site goes by the name of the *Kirk an' Kill o' Howe* (*kil*). Here, there are two slight hillocks—about 100 yards apart. The westernmost summit is called the *Kirk*, and the eastern one the *Kill*, but they are generally referred to conjointly as the *Kirk an' Kill o' Howe*. Though there is no trace of building now on either spot, the whole field being cultivated land, one suspects from

the curious combination that here we have indications of an earlier and a later church. I imagine that the Kill has been the site of a Celtic church, and, after that fell into decay, a later Kirk, in Norse times, was built in close proximity.

The same word may, I think, with certainty be found in Kili (Kíli) Holm, a small island lying at the north end of Egilsay. The O.N. *Kill* means a long narrow inlet, or passage of water, as we find in the Kyles of Bute. Here the word is quite inapplicable. Furthermore, we must note that in his description of Orkney, written in 1633, Robert Monteith of Egilsay and Gairsay gives the name of this island as Ridholme. As he was the owner, it is hardly possible that he was making a mistake about the name, although to-day it is quite unknown. The north point of the island, however, is called the Point of Ridden (rīdn), and this I fancy is the same word. The full significance of the name Kili can only be realised, however, when we consider it in relation to the name Egilsay later.

Can-. Several names containing this prefix may be cited, but whether all are to be referred to the Gael. *ceann*, head, is doubtful. There are Cannigil (kánigēl), a farm near Scapa; Canniesile (kánisēl), a point just below the church in Holm; Cannamesurdy (kánemesórdi), a well on the beach in Frotoft, Rousay; Cantick (kántēk) Head, the eastern point of Walls that juts out into the Pentland Firth; the Glen of Kinnaird, in Hoy, a valley among the hills; and Stours Kinnora, cliffs on the west side of Hoy. I take these last two names from the Survey map and have not been able to ascertain the local pronunciation. In Cantick, the accent being on the *can-* shows that to be the qualifying part. Mr A. W. Johnston, Editor of the Viking Club's *Miscellany*, etc., in a letter to me suggests that this is Gael. *ceadha-an-t-šwic*, the point of a plough on which the share fits. *Ceadha* is also used of a quay or pier jutting out into the sea. This seems phonetically suitable, but is somewhat too ingeniously metaphorical. But, in any case, there seems no doubt of Celtic origin.

Gael. *cnoc*, a hill; dimin. *cnocan*. The latter word certainly appears in Nockan (nókēn), the name of a fishing mark east of N. Ronaldsay. Knucker Hill (nókēr) in Westray is, Jakobsen thought, the same word. In Faeroe, *knokkur*, m., is used for the head, especially the crown or back of the head. Furthermore, Knokkur or á Knokki is the name of a fishing mark also in Faeroe, while another bears the plural form Knokkarnir. Bugge regards these as certainly of Celtic origin, and, as Jakobsen says that the word does not occur elsewhere in Norse, either as a generic or a place-name, there seems no doubt on the point. It is interesting to note the termination -r, Faer. *Knokkur*,

Shet. *Knokkers* Knowe, Ork. *Knucker* Hill. Jakobsen thought it a modification of the Celtic diminutive ending *-an*, and compared the change sometimes of *boireann* to *borrier*. On the slope of Knucker Hill is the farm of Knugdale (nóg:del). Here again the *cnoc* appears. In Rousay there is a high hill called Knitchen (nítføn, knítføn). Not far down from the summit is a fairly big loch called the Loch o' Knitchen. This I think shows a double transference. The Norse have found the hill termed Cnoc; they have adopted the name and called the loch Cnoc-tjörn, the *cnoc-tarn*—which name in time has been transferred back to the hill itself. The O.N. *tjörn* regularly becomes *-shun* or *-chun* (føn or tʃøn) in Orkney.

Gael. *corc*, Ir. *coirce*, M. Ir. *corca*, Welsh *ceirch*, oats. There are many places in Orkney having the prefix *cork-* or *curk-*, e.g. Corkaquina, Curquoy, Curkland, Curkabreck, Curcum, etc. Most of these names are certainly to be derived from O.N. *kirkja*, church; but I have always thought it strange that, while we have names preserving the old Norse word for barley, we have apparently no word meaning oat-land. It is almost certain that the Norse must have adopted that cereal from the Celts, whether they borrowed the name or not. I am thus inclined to suspect that some of these cork- names represent the old Celtic name for oats.

Diamonds. This is one of the most interesting names in the island group. Jakobsen says that in Faeroe are two high rocky islands—*Stóra* and *Lítla Dímun*; in Broadfirth, Iceland, there is *Dímun*, an island with twin hills, and *Dímunarklakkar*, two tall rocks in the sea; in Rangaavolde, Iceland, two hills, *Stóra Dímun* and *Lítla Dímun*. He does not refer to the name in Norway, but in Rygh's *Norske Gaardnavne* (Romsdal's Amt) we find *Dimmen indre og ytre* (pronounced *Dímna*), "doubtless the proper name of the island now called *Dimmø*. The island has two hills separated by a deep hollow." In Shetland, the name *Dimons* (*dímøns*) occurs twice. Everywhere the word occurs there is a suggestion of a group of two—two islands, two peaks, two rocks, and Norse philologists seem agreed that it is a Celtic word. Joyce (*Irish Names of Places*, vol. ii. p. 247) shows that the numeral two was a favourite in Irish place-names. Jakobsen suggests the Irish *di-muinn*, two tops, two heads. It may, however, be *da*, or rather *de + monadh*, two hills or elevations. But whatever be the precise origin, the usages make it clear that it is a word implying twin elevations of some sort. In Orkney there is a house in Deerness called now *Diamonds*—pronounced as the English word; but Jakobsen made a special trip there to see the place, and great was his delight to discover again the two hillocks near the house that had given rise to the name.

There is a small island lying in the Bay of Firth called now Damsay. The Saga name is *Damisey* or *Daminsey*. Professor Munch regarded this as a Celtic name, and suggested that it might perhaps have been named after St Adamnan. His mere suggestion has been generally adopted as the true origin. More recently, however, Mr A. W. Johnston in a letter to the *Scotsman*, dated 2nd July 1921, associates it with the name of an island in Lough Erne in Ireland—spelt in the eleventh century as *Daiminis*, *i.e.* *Bovis insula*, or ox-island. This is by no means improbable; but we have to note that here again in the Bay of Firth, lying close together, are *two* small islands—the one called Damsay and the other merely the Holm of Grimbuster (from the township on the adjacent mainland). I would suggest, then, that the Norse found the name, represented in the examples cited above, applied here to the two islands, and, not understanding the meaning of the word, applied it to one only—the larger. And in slight confirmation of this we can point to the fact that the other has no *independent* name of its own, but is simply the Holm of Grimbuster. It is also noteworthy that the final *-s* appears in the Shetland form, the Deerness form, and the Saga form. In any case, it is in the highest degree improbable that the name has any connection with Adamnan.

In this connection, I have seen no reference made to Ptolemy's *Dumna* which Captain Thomas identified with Foula. I think it highly probable that this name also should be associated with the various forms cited above.

Aise, etc. Between Kirkwall and Scapa there is the Burn of Aisedale (*ēz*-, *ēs*-); in Sandwick, part of the Burn of Hourston appears as the Burn of Ess; in Rousay, there is a spring on the beach below Langskail known as the Well o' Ease (*iz*, *is*). With these names cf. Esthwaite Water and Easedale in the Lake District, Easdale near Oban, the Ise River near Wellingborough, Easeburn in Yorkshire, etc. In all of these Isaac Taylor thought there was to be found the Celtic word for water—Gael. *wisge*, Welsh *wysg*, a current. These two roots, however, are not cognate, as the Welsh *wy* regularly corresponds to the Gael. *ia*. Nor is it probable that in either do we see the origin of the above names. Nor can the Gael. *eas*, a waterfall, be accepted, for, while there are indeed some small falls on the Burn of Aisedale, there is nothing in the other two cases to which *eas* could refer. Nevertheless, as no Norse origin can be suggested, and as similar forms are so numerous, both in this country and on the Continent, we must conclude that they have their origin in some Celtic root—living or obsolete.

In Harray, there is also a valley Eskdale which is obviously derived from a burn **Esk-á*, where the suffix represents the O.N. *á*, a river or

burn. The *Esk*-, however, is probably not the Celtic word but the O.N. *askr*, ash-tree, which appears also in Eskadal in Norway.

Gael. *achadh*, a field, plain. This seems to appear in the name of a loch in Burray—Echnaloch (ἀέχνα:λόχ). This loch is separated by a narrow strip of land from a bay which bears the name Echnaloch Bay. A difficulty arises from the position of the stress. If it means Field-loch, one would expect the order of the words to be reversed; if it means Loch-field, the stress should be on -loch. It is just possible that, as loch is a well-known generic term in Orkney, the Echna- has come to be regarded as the descriptive part and attracted the stress.

Egilsay. Probably more has been written on this than on any other Orkney place-name. Munch lent the weight of his great authority to the Celtic side—deriving it from the Greek word for church, which passed into Old Irish as *eclais*, Welsh *eglwys*, and Gael. *eaglais*. No doubt the presence of the famous old church lent much credibility to this origin, but the actual occurrence of another Egilsay in Shetland without any old church (so far as I know) makes one suspicious and disposed to regard the name in both cases as O.N. *Egils-ey*—Egil's island. Jakobsen was uncertain, but inclined towards regarding it as of this Norse origin. I do not think, however, that he was aware of the full significance of the combination Egilsay and Kili (see above). Rev. A. B. Scott in his *Pictish Nation* deals with the organisation of the Ninian Missions, and shows how they were modelled on the establishment of St Martin at Tours. Apart from the church and the group of monastic buildings, the head or Ab of each settlement seems to have had for himself at some little distance a "cell" or cave or other retreat to which he could retire for prayer and meditation. Such was St Ninian's cave at Whithorn, and such I imagine was Kili Holm in connection with the Egilsay Mission. The main church or *eaglais* was on the island of Egilsay, and Kili Holm was probably the site of the cell or *ceall* (genitive, *cille*). There is no appearance of a house now on the holm, but only a big cairn of stones. It would be an interesting site, I believe, for a thorough archæological investigation. We saw above that Monteith's name for the island is perhaps preserved in the name for the north point—Ridden. This also—Ridholme or Ridden—is a difficult name to explain from any Norse origin, and may represent some other Celtic word. Finally, a hostile critic might very well say that the curious juxtaposition of the two names Egilsay and Kili Holm may be regarded as a mere coincidence. But when we find a similar juxtaposition in another island, we must regard it as something more than coincidence. In Sanday, four or five hundred yards north of the Kirk and Kill o' Howe referred to above, lies the North Loch, and in between

lies a field known as Egiltun. The final element of this word is of course a well-known term for a field, but the *Egil* I strongly suspect to be the Celtic *eaglais* again. The absence of the "s" sound is curious, but the only alternative origin that can be suggested is the Norse personal name Egill, and in that case also an "s" should be present—*Egilstún. Furthermore, the disappearance of "s" can be paralleled in the name Ecclefechan, and the hybrid form appears also in Eaglesham and Eaglesfield. (See *Scottish Land Names*, p. 29.)

Finyan, etc. We have already considered Brae-an-finyan. In Rousay, also, there is a field called Fananoo (fänənú). Alongside this field runs a small burn. The u- sound hardly represents the O.N. *á*, burn, seeing that it carries the stress. Then again, on the edge of the Sourin Burn, where now the U.F. Manse garden lies, used to be a house called Manafinyie (mänəfnji). There is a small waterfall at the spot, and this may be borne in view when we come later to Mananeeban. What the origin is I do not know, but I feel certain, both from the sound and stressing of these names, that here again we must ascribe a Celtic origin.

Cro. On one of the Sanday farms called Trave (see *infra*) is a field called Kromerrandeem (kro:mærən:dím). As Trave is a certain Celtic word, it is not improbable that in this name also for the field the *Kro*-represents the Celtic *cro* rather than the Norse *kro*, which is indeed a borrowing from Celtic. The rest of the word is very obscure.

Gael. *linne*, a pool; Ir. *linn*, Welsh *llyn*. In Shapansay, near the Point of Ork in the north-east of the island, we have a small loch called Loch Linn. The O.N. *hlíð*, a slope, is here inadmissible, as that word appears in Orkney regularly as Lee, or with the definite article—Leean (líən).

Maes. This is a very puzzling word. It appears in Maeshowe—the famous chambered mound—and seems to be repeated in Masshowe in Holm—a name I have heard pronounced also méz:həu. On Blaeuw's map of Orkney, the present Maizer in Sanday is spelt Maisouer. This seems the same name—the *-ouer* representing the O.N. nominative singular *haugr*, or, more probably, the plural *haugar*, mound(s). Then there is Maeslee, a beach in Shapansay; Maestaing, a little taing in Gairsay; Maesquoy, a field in Harray with a knoll in it; Maesdale, a field in Burray; Mount Maisery, a chambered mound at the Start Point in Sanday; and Maeswell, a shoal off N. Ronaldsay. In the last-named island also there is a mound called Howamae (hóuəme), which Jakobsen fancied was the same name as Maeshowe transposed. Welsh *ma* or *maes*, a field, is cognate with Gael. *magh*, a field or plain; and Jakobsen was inclined to believe that this word must have been used of a hillock also—from its use in Orkney. This, however, is most improbable, and we may rather think of the Gael. *màs*, O. Ir. *máss*, buttock, as coming nearer

to the sense. But in any case, one has to look elsewhere than to Norse for any satisfactory origin.

Gael. *meall*, E. Ir. *mell*, a lump, knob, hill, etc. Off the Costa coast there is a sunken rock called the Mell which we may regard as from that root. Joyce, however, remarks that the Irish *mael* (used of a bare bald object) has a diminutive *maelan*, often applied to round-backed islands or round bare rocks.

Mam. Joyce says (*Irish Names of Places*) "the word *madhm* (pron. maum or moym) is used in the western counties to denote an elevated mountain pass or chasm; in which application the primary sense of breaking or bursting asunder is maintained." In Galloway, Mammy's Delph, a cleft in the cliffs, shows the word in the same original sense. Jakobsen ascribes the Shetland Mamiskala, a cliff with an opening clear through it; and Mamas-Hole, an opening in a cliff, to the same origin. In Birsay the word seems to appear also in Mamro (*mámru*), a "geo" or cleft in the cliffs.

Munt. Welsh *mwnt*, a mound, cognate with *mynydd*, Gael. *monadh*, a mountain—from root *men*, to jut out. This appears in the Munt (*mónt*), a small promontory or elevation jutting out into Kirkwall Bay, immediately to the east of the harbour. Jakobsen found this word applied also to rocks or cliffs in Shetland. In Egilsay there is a small creek, running in among rocks, known as Muntlye (*Möntláí*). On the Ness of Tenston, in Sandwick, there is a place called Maemont, with tumuli near.

Man. Welsh *maen*, a stone. In Orkney we have the Old Man of Hoy, an isolated pillar or "stack" on the west side of Hoy; Manclett, a farm in Walls; Manafinyie, in Rousay (see above); Manmogila, now applied to a smallish pond near Maemont in Tenston; Mananeeban, a waterfall (sometimes called the Forces o' M——) on the burn of Netherbrough in Harray; and Sinchman (*sə́n/mən*), a fishing rock on the Birsay coast. There is an Old Man of Coniston, another Old Man in Cornwall, and a third in Skye. Isaac Taylor derives these from Celtic *alt maen*, high rock. *Maen* is Welsh, but *ailt*, high, while found in Irish and Gaelic is not Welsh. There is, however, an Old Welsh form *allt*, meaning cliff. Professor Watson informs me that the Old Man of Storr in Skye is a mere euphemism; the real name is Bod Storr—the phallus of Storr. Another complicating factor is the occurrence several times in Orkney and Shetland of Gamal or Gamli as a name for a cliff. At first sight this would appear to be the Norse equivalent of Old Man (O.N. *gamall*, old); but Jakobsen regarded this as a broken-down **gamla mið*, old (fishing) mark. The various examples of *man*, both in Orkney and elsewhere, give probability, however, to a Celtic origin. Manclett would

thus be a hybrid (O.N. *Klettr*, rock), each element being synonymous (cf. *Mèn-rock* in Cornwall, and the Carr Rocks at Crail and Berwick-on-Tweed). In *Sinchman* the first part may be a cognate of Gael. *sean*, old (cf. Early Irish *sinser*, an elder). Contrary to the usual practice in Gaelic, *sean* is placed before its noun.

Orc. Besides "Orkney" itself, we have the Ness of Ork in Shapansay, and *Orkahaugr*, the Saga name for Maeshowe. In Deerness there is a mound, Howe Húrkis (həu:hórkəs), which Jakobsen was disposed to regard as a transposition of the two elements in *Orkahaugr*. In Shetland, on the west coast of Unst, is a cliff called the Orknagabel, which fishermen at sea refer to as "de Orka" or "de Orki," "de face o' O—," "de gable o' O—." On the west of Dunrossness are found two hills, de Muckle and de little Orka. Then we have the Ptolemaic Orcas—probably Dunnet Head. Jakobsen was of opinion that there was a connection between the old Pictish *orc* (seen in Orcas) and these *orc*-names in Orkney and Shetland, which makes it appear probable that *Orc* has been a term for a projection or elevation. In his Rhind Lectures, and again in a more recent lecture reported in the *Inverness Courier*, Professor Watson offers the weightiest grounds for regarding "Orkney" as a word derived from a Pictish tribe—the Orcs—who resided in Orkney, and are often referred to by old Irish writers. Professor Watson's distinction as a Celtic scholar and the authority with which he speaks on place-names are well known, and in the face of the evidence he adduces it is most unwise to accept any other explanation. In that case Orka- might perhaps be regarded as a Norse genitive plural and *Orkahaugr* be taken as the "howe of the Orcs."

Papa. When the Norse came over to Orkney, we are told in the *Historia Norvegiae* they found the isles occupied by two classes of people, the *Papae* and the *Peti*, or Picts. The former were the Christian missionaries, and their name is still preserved in Papa Stronsay, Papa Westray, Papdale (Kirkwall), and Papley in Holm, and S. Ronaldsay. The same name is probably to be found in the Steeven o' Papy, a rock off the shore of N. Ronaldsay. The first two are still called Papey (pāpi) locally, but for the sake of reference people outside of Stronsay and Westray generally speak of them by the map names, and then the word is pronounced Papa (pāpa). The Saga names are *Papey meiri* (P. Westray) and *Papey minni* (P. Stronsay). Papdale must represent an O.N. **papa dalr*, valley of the Papas—in this case Kirkwall—where there has evidently been a Christian settlement. Papley (the Saga *Papuli*) is probably a contraction of **papa-bōli*, the homestead of the Papas. In Pittaquooy (Graemsay), Pickiequooy (Kirkwall), and Quoypettie (Deerness) we seem to find traces again of the early inhabitants, the

Picts or Petts. Pentland Firth is, of course, the old *Pettlands-fjörðr*, and by the older generation is still called commonly the Petland Firth.

Ros. Gael. and Ir. *ros*, a promontory. Roseness (*rós:nez*) in Holm is one of the boldest and most characteristic promontories in Orkney—running out towards the south-east and ending in some magnificent crags. I have little doubt that we have here a hybrid of synonymous names, Gael. *ros* and Norse *nes*. In Orkney we find O.N. *hros*, horse, frequently combined with *-ness*, but the pronunciation is always Russness (*rós:nez*), while the Holm name is pronounced with a long *ō* sound. On the headland is a farm called Roy, also suspiciously Celtic in appearance.

Welsh *rhaiadr*, cataract, waterfall; *rhaiadru*, to spout out. Jakobsen considered that this appeared in Orkney sometimes also, in the sense of "spring." In the Harray hills is a well called Inyar-ia (*ínjəräia* or *ínjəräia*). This he explained as "cool spring," deriving the first element, I think, from *fionn-fuar*, which appears in Gaelic as *fionnar* and in Mid. Irish as *indfhuar*, cool. In Rousay the same word seems to appear in the name of a rocky hill above Hullion—Marlariar (*márləräiər*), and in Egilsay a bay goes by the name of Ramriar (*rámräiər*).

Gael. *sruth* (also Irish), a stream. In Egilsay there is a well just above the Sand of Skail known as the Well o' Struith (*strøð*). A tiny stream runs past it. Near Stromness there is the Burn of Straither (*stréðər*). This is a diminutive form used in Ireland—*Sruthair* (pron. *sruhar*) according to Joyce, and occurring in Scotland as well, *e.g.* Anstruther.

Gael. *tobar*, a well. This appears in the island of N. Faray as the name of a small point—the Point of Tober (pron. *túbər*). Alongside this point is a narrow "geo," and at the head of the geo, but separated from it by a narrow bridge of rock, is a deep hole or "gloup" or well, about 15 feet in diameter. The water in this hole is about 5 fathoms deep, and the sea ebbs and flows through an opening underneath the bridge of rock referred to.

In Rousay there is a small ridge, which occupies the bottom of a small valley or corrie among the hills, and which used to be known by the quaint name of "The Camps o' Jupiter Fring." Now it is merely termed "The Camps." This last term is probably the Norse *Kambr*, a "kame" or ridge, but the other part is very obscure. There is a well also at the spot, and Mr A. W. Johnston has suggested to me that the name represents *tiobart air fring*, the "well upon the hill-brow." *Ffring* is a Welsh term for brow or ledge, and *tiobart* is a Gaelic term for "well," though apparently not found in Welsh. At all events, whether this be correct or not, it is the most reasonable conjecture that has been made with regard to this Olympian name.

Treb, Trave. Early Irish, Old Welsh, and Old Breton *treb*, a dwelling, homestead; Welsh *tref*, id. (Cf. Early Irish *trebaim*, to inhabit or cultivate, and Gaelic *treabh*, to plough, till.) In his Rhind Lectures Professor Watson stated (*Scotsman* report) "the term *Treb*, Welsh *tref*, a settlement, appeared from Inverness to the Forth on the east, and south of Forth and Clyde, in such names as Cantray, Fintray (white stead), Ochiltree (high stead), and Threave, the Douglas hold on an islet in the river Dee." The word occurs in Orkney also. In N. Ronaldsay there is a farm called Trebb, the land on which is reputed to be the most fertile in that island. In Sanday there was also a house of this name—now forgotten. In Sanday also, in several places, are to be seen the remains of prehistoric, low, earthen ramparts. They are really too broad to be called dikes, but the name given to each is the *Treb* or the *Treb Dike*. In fact, they are so numerous that the word is now employed as a generic term, and, in Sanday, one speaks of a *treb* dike or a *trebby* dike. There are also three farms in the island called Trave. I had long suspected this to be the same word, but last summer I had striking confirmation. In Burness there is a *Treb* dike that runs in a north-westerly direction past the farm of Neagar. It then loses itself in a huge mound called Gorn—probably the site of an old broch. On the other side of this mound it emerges again, and a few yards farther on we come on the house of West Trave, actually built on the *Treb* itself.

Twyn. In Orkney there are several instances of the name *Twynes* (*twínjez*)—in N. Ronaldsay, Westray, Shapansay, and St Andrews—always applied to a point or ness. In none of these is there any possibility of finding the O.N. *twi*, two, and indeed the palatalising suggests the presence of two n's in these names. Jakobsen was satisfied that we have here the Cymric root which appears in Welsh—*twyn*, headland or promontory. Thus once more we find a hybrid with the two elements synonymous—*twyn*+*ness*.

In addition to the above words there are some others that are quite non-Norse in sound or application. Among these I may mention Pontith (*póntəp*), the name of a point jutting out into the Loch of Harray; Cloudie, the name of a piece of land near Cleat, Westray; Pinguoy (*pénzkwi*), a small ridge of land surrounded by a marsh in Egilsay; the Burn of Peeno, running down from the hill of Blotchniefell in Rousay (there is a river-name *Piná* in Norway also for which Rygh offers no explanation); and Pullan, the north-west shoulder of the Ward Hill of Orphir.

In conclusion I shall refer to a few names that seem to commemorate the names of some of the early Celtic saints. The Saga name for N. Ronaldsay was *Rinansey*, the island of Rinan or (almost certainly)

Ringan—a variant of the name Ninian. Colm's Kirk is a name applied to several old church sites in Orkney, and these the Rev. A. B. Scott (in his *Pictish Nation*) would attribute to the Pictish St Colm or Colman rather than to the great Columba. On the other hand, there is a place in Sandwick called Clumlie (Klómli), and on an old map appearing in a Dutch edition of Camden's *Britannia*, published at Amsterdam in 1617, the name *St Columban* is marked at this spot. In Shetland the name Clumlie also occurs, and the late Mr Gilbert Goudie (followed by Jakobsen) regarded it as derived from Choluimeillie. The stress, however, in this latter word falls on -cille, a fact that would seem to invalidate the above suggestion. Nevertheless, the appearance on the map of St Columban renders it probable that Columba's (or Colm's?) name is represented in the word Clumlie. Mr Scott would also regard the name Deerness as derived from the Celtic *daire*, an oak grove, which he says was used by the Pictish clergy of their churches. Now, although there are plain traces of a church settlement on the Brough of Deerness, that seems the slenderest evidence on which to base the theory that *daire* was corrupted into the Saga word *Dyrnes*, from which the present name is descended.

In the foregoing pages, dealing as they do with obscure names that have for the most part never been discussed before, and of which there are unhappily very few old spellings available, there are no doubt many errors that would have been avoided by any one really skilled in Celtic philology. If any such scholar on reading this paper would be kind enough to communicate with me on any of the points raised, I should esteem it a great favour. My best thanks are due to Professor W. J. Watson, of Edinburgh University, for his great kindness in replying to my numerous queries on different points, but no responsibility rests on him for any of the views expressed herein.