

# **From Starafjall to Starling Hill**

**An investigation of the formation and  
development of Old Norse place-names in  
Orkney**



**Berit Sandnes**

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Frontpage photo: View from Rousay towards Evie. Photo P. Gam-meltoft.

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## **Foreword**

The present work is a somewhat revised version of my doctoral thesis from the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, published in Norwegian in 2003. The Norwegian version is clearly not very easily accessible for potential British readers, whether scholars or people with a local interest in Orkney names, and I am very pleased to be able to present an English translation.

This is also a way of thanking my very helpful informants and other contacts in Orkney: Mary Bichan and Sheila Spence who first helped me with my Harray thesis (a translation of that work may follow), Robert Bakie, who let me use his Rendall material, Alistair Marwick, who helped me with Evie names, the Millers of Niggly, Neil Leask and everyone else who spent time helping me. I would like to thank Peder for our many fruitful discussions and last but not least – many thanks to Gillian Fellows-Jensen for invaluable proof-reading of the manuscript. All mistakes are my responsibility.

## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

This book contains an investigation of the formation and development of Orkney place-names in the Old Norse and Scots periods in Orkney. It is based on the study of place-names in four Orkney parishes for my master and doctoral theses (Sandnes 1996 and 2003).

The development of Orkney place-names in this period depends fundamentally on the interaction of the two contact languages. Our first task, then, is to give an outline of the actual contact situation – the socio-political and sociolinguistic setting. This is done in chapter 2. Secondly, we need a description of the two contact languages. This is not as straightforward as it might seem, as the actual languages in contact were hardly standard variants. A short presentation of the contact languages and major developments of the two is given in chapter 4. Ch. 3 is an overview of former research.

The actual place-name material is presented in chapter 6, along with suggested interpretations and other information.

The remaining chapters explore features of the formation and development of Orkney place-names from a more principal point of view. First of all, it is important to decide which names are Old Norse formations and which are Scots. This is problematic for a number of reasons, most importantly because nearly all the written sources for place-names are in the Scots language. The two languages are quite closely related and the dividing lines become even more blurred during the prolonged bilingual period, when a number of Old Norse appellatives and proper nouns are borrowed into Scots. These borrowed linguistic elements are all adapted to Scots in different ways. The first part of chapter 7 is an attempt to establish criteria for distinguishing between Old Norse and Scots formations. It goes on to treat various kinds of patterns and analogy in name formation and finally, the assumption that colonial names are particularly stereotypical is tested on the Orkney material.

Finally, I am interested in the development of place-names, and in the language contact aspect in particular. A place-name is coined

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at a certain point in time, but it is not static, it may be adapted and adjusted as long as it is in use. For instance, Orkney names coined in the Viking Age are now an integrated part of a Scots nomenclature, and they may have changed radically from their original form. Traditional name research tends to overlook the development phase and treat names of Old Norse origin in isolation. After the introduction of contact linguistics, Old Norse names cannot be studied independently of the Scots linguistic context in which they have been transmitted. This means that contact phenomena are emphasised throughout the book, but treated in more detail in chapters 8 and 9. Important questions include: How do general linguistic changes affect place names? Do they undergo any changes specific to place-names? In this way, processes taking place in place-names are studied in the light of general linguistic processes.

The present study is essentially linguistic. Place-names can be used as sources for various kinds of investigations, e.g. archaeological, historical or linguistic studies. I have chosen to emphasise the linguistic information.

Chronologically, the study is limited to the Old Norse and Scots periods, starting ca. 800 or somewhat later. The preceding Pictish period and contacts between Picts and Scandinavians are not treated, one obvious reason being the lack of surviving sources. The oldest source for Orkney names from this period is the Orkneyinga Saga, the first comprehensive sources are rentals from 1492 onwards, written in Scots. This means that the present study has a very different chronological focus as compared with studies of Scandinavian names in the Danelaw, which have an invaluable source in Domesday Book (1086).

Geographically, the study is limited to four parishes in West Mainland: Harray, Firth, Rendall and Evie. Name inventories with interpretations from these parishes are found in chapter 6. The limitation has some obvious advantages: it facilitates field work and the name material is in a homogeneous dialect. Certain comparative aspects may be lost, however. As a means of counterbalance, comparisons are made with names from a wider Scoto-Scandinavian context. The present work differs from Marwick's Orkney Farm-Names in including field-names and topographical names. Habita-



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tive names form the oldest and most well-documented stratum, and have thus been in focus in most onomastic studies. From an essentially linguistic point of view, however, other types of names may be equally informative.

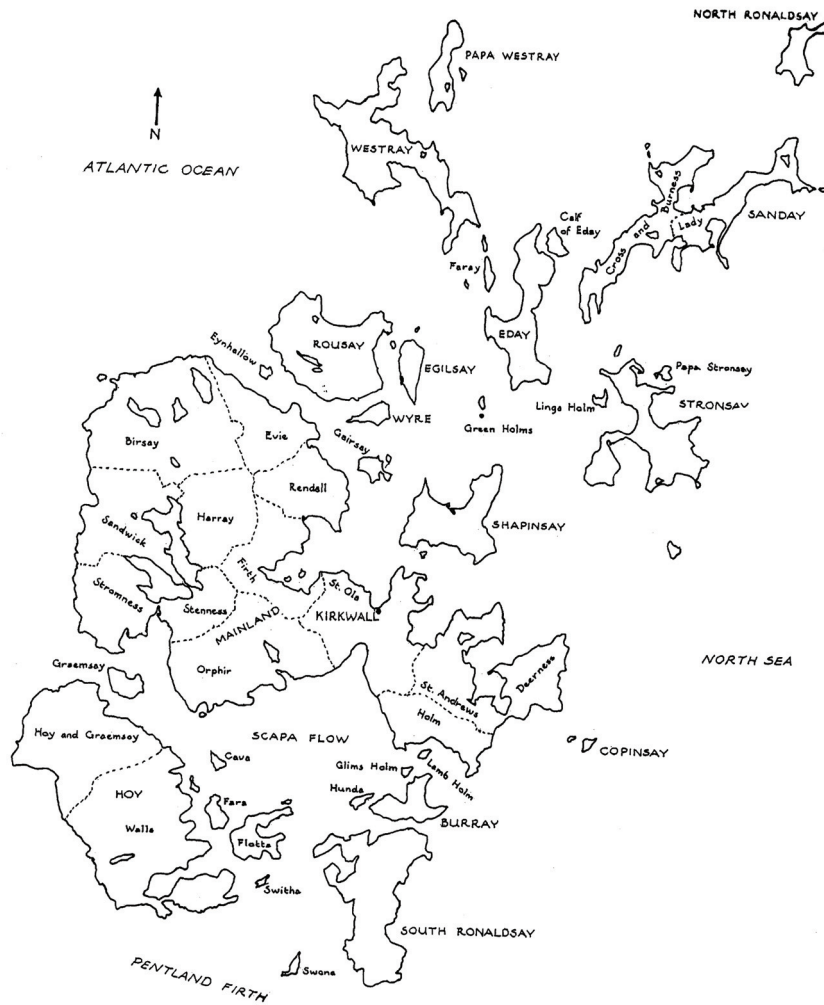


Figure 1. The parishes of Orkney. From Thomson 1987.

## Chapter 2. Historical background

This chapter constitutes a brief presentation of the historical conditions for the development and decline of the Norse<sup>1</sup> language in Orkney. The Norse-speaking period in Orkney lasts for nearly a millennium, from the Viking settlers brought their Old Norse language to the isles ca. 800–850 until the local dialect based on Old Norse, called Norn, died in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As the present study is exploring the Norse-Scots interface in particular, it is mainly concerned with the contact period, which starts in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. From this century onwards, Scots held most of the important offices in Orkney, This is the start of a scotticisation of all institutions, which eventually leads to the death of Norn. It may be added that nearly all written sources for place-names belong to the Scots-speaking period.

In the following presentation, the Norse settlement and the Norse earldom will be presented very briefly, whereas the contact period will be treated in some more detail. The available sources are insufficient for a thorough analysis of the relationship between Norn and Scots throughout the centuries, but some major points will be sketched. Important developments in the two contact languages are treated in ch. 4.

### 2.1. The Norse settlement

“Originally those islands were inhabited by Pents and Papes. Of these races, the Pents, only a little taller than pygmies, accomplished miraculous achievements by building towns morning and evenings, but at midday every ounce of strength deserted them and they hid for fear in underground chambers. [...]The Papes were so called on account of the vestments in which they clothed themselves like priests, and for this reason all priests are known as papen in the German tongue. However, as the appearance and

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<sup>1</sup> Norse is used in a wide sense, to denote different stages of the Scandinavian language in Orkney. For a definitions, see ch. 3.

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letterforms of the books that they left behind them testify, they were from Africa and clove to the Jewish faith.

In the days of Harald Fairhair, king of Norway, certain vikings, descended from the stock of that sturdiest of men, Ragnvald jarl, crossing the Solund Sea with a large fleet, totally destroyed these peoples after stripping them of their long-established dwellings and made the islands subject to themselves.”

From *Historia Norwegie*, translated by Peter Fisher, p. 66-67.

According to *Historia Norwegie*, written in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the Norse settlers came to Orkney in the days of Harald Finehair (†ca. 940), and the original people were forcefully subdued. Whereas earlier researchers tended to accept *Historia* and saga evidence at face value<sup>2</sup>, scholars now realise that accounts of incidents 300-400 years prior to the date of writing cannot be assumed to be historical truth.

Owing to the lack of reliable contemporary sources for the Northern Isles, the exact date for the Norse settlement in Scotland cannot be pinpointed, though on the base of the earliest recorded Viking raids ca 800 is a traditional estimate. Lindisfarne was raided in 793, and according to the *Annals of Ulster* “all the islands of Britain” were attacked in 794. Previously scholars have assumed that the Northern Isles were settled as bases for these raids. However, archaeologists have recently pointed out that there is no direct evidence for Norse settlement before the mid 9<sup>th</sup> century, either in written sources or from archaeological excavations.<sup>3</sup>

Nor do the sources give a clear picture of the extent of the Scandinavian immigration or the amount of contact with the native population. It is a fact, however, that the Picts lost control of Orkney and that their language (or languages) and place-names were also

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. Marwick’s chronology based on skatting under Harald Fairhair, OFN 227 ff.

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of recent theories, see Barratt 2003. Cf. Crawford 1987: 38, Thomson 1987: 17, Hunter & al 1993: 280 ff.

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800	Norse settlement of Orkney
900	Earl Sigurd, start of the Orkneyinga saga account
1000	Days of glory for the Norse earldom. The bishopric of Orkney established during Thorfinn Sigurdsson's reign (ca. 1014–1065)
1100	Earl Harald Maddadsson (1138–1206). Caithness under Scottish rule. Battle of Florvåg 1194, increased Norw. (royal) control of Orkney
1200	Jon Haraldsson, last earl of Norse ancestry (†1230). Earls of the Angus family. The defeat at Largs 1263. The Hebrides Scottish from 1266
1300	No earl, pro-Scots bishops when the Angus line dies out ca. 1320. The first preserved documents in Old Norse from 1329. Sinclair-earls from 1379. Bishops loyal to Denmark-Norway.
1400	Struggle for power following Henry II Sinclair's death ca. 1420. Last preserved Norse document 1425. Impignoration to Scotland 1468.
1500	1541: The lawthing is replaced by the Scottish Sheriff Court. 1560: Scottish Reformation, bishopric estate for sale. Robert Stewart controls both earldom and church from 1565.
1600	1611: Scottish law introduced in Orkney 1615: End of Stewart era. Orkney is rented in short term tacks.
1700	1712: First parish schools. 1750's: The latest documented use of spoken Norn 1773: Norn is dead, according to Low.

*Table 2.1. Important dates in the history of Norse and early Scots Orkney.*

## *2. Historical background*

wise lost.<sup>4</sup> The mythological account of the native people in *Historia Norwegie* merely indicates that the memory of the encounter with the indigenous population had vanished by the time of writing. The lack of sources has led to a variety of theories, ranging from genocide with very little cultural contact to a relatively peaceful integration process.<sup>5</sup> Some scholars even suggest that the settlers took over Pictish organisations.<sup>6</sup>

Archaeological excavations indicate that the Scandinavians tended to settle in existing Pictish settlements. They moved in at Skaill in Deerness, which has continuous habitation from the Bronze Age. Birsay, with its church, settlement sites and an impressive picture stone must have been a centre for the Picts and it also became a Norse centre. It is uncertain what these finds reveal about cultural continuity, however. According to Gelling (1993: 179), the Viking settlement caused a cultural break and deterioration at Skaill in Deerness, whereas Hunter & al (1993: 279) argue for a certain amount of continuity at Pool in Sanday. According to Barratt (2003: 95), there is a shift towards Norse style graves, Scandinavian style material culture and economic patterns (large-scale fishing) around the mid-ninth century. This does not mean that the population was biologically Scandinavian, but that Scandinavian culture took over completely in the Northern Isles.

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<sup>4</sup> Kenneth Jackson suggested that the Picts spoke two different languages, a Celtic and an unknown language. One reason for assuming an unknown language is the ogam-inscriptions that are decipherable, but not intelligible. Recently, scholars such as Forsyth have argued against the two language hypothesis, maintaining that the Picts probably spoke a P-Celtic language (See Nicolaisen 2001: 192, Barnes 1998: 5., Smith 2001).

<sup>5</sup> For a discussion of the various theories, see Smith 2001 and Barratt 2008.

<sup>6</sup> Raymond Lamb (1993: 260) envisages a well-organised Pictish society with a strong church, which the Vikings respected. In OFN. 205 ff, Marwick discusses whether the Vikings may have adopted the Pictish division of lands.

## **2.2. The Norse period (ca. 850 – 1350)**

From some point before 900 until the 14<sup>th</sup> century the earldom of Orkney can be seen as a purely Norse society, though always in contact with their neighbours on the Scottish mainland. Eventually Orkney earls had to balance their allegiances with the kings of Scotland and Norway. The early contacts were with Celtic and Pictish groups, however. A number of Celtic names in the Orkney earls' pedigree bear witness to mixed marriages, but the Celtic contacts scarcely left any traces in the language. In the early Norse period, English is unlikely to have been spoken north of the Firth of Forth (Nicolaisen 1976: 68).

Norse conquest in Scotland is a major topic in the first part of the Orkneyinga Saga, even though most of the conquests were short-lived. Only Katanes or Caithness remained under Norse rule. The rule of Earl Thorfinn (†1064) marks the end of southward expansion. Instead, he succeeded in transforming Orkney into a European-style principality by establishing a bishop's seat and administration centre in Birsay.

Originally, the earldom enjoyed extensive independence. This changed during the long reign of Harald Maddadsson (1138–1206). In the battle of Florvåg in 1194, the Eyjarskeggjar (islanders) supported the defeated party, King Sverre. Subsequently, the Norwegian king claimed stronger control of Orkney, whereas Shetland came under direct Norwegian rule. Harald Maddadsson's relations with Scotland were equally turbulent. He was fostered in Orkney but his father, earl Maddad of Atholl, was closely related to the Canmore dynasty. King David I helped him to gain power, but later Harald chose to support Scottish rebel kings. The conflict became aggravated when William the Lion extended his reign to Caithness and appointed loyal bishops here. This was an obvious provocation, as Caithness belonged to the bishopric of Orkney. In the end, it was agreed that Harald should hold Caithness in fief but that William was entitled to every fourth penny. Thus, all Orkney earls after Harald Maddadsson have a dual allegiance, to the Norwegian king for Orkney and to the Scottish king for Caithness. In Thomson's words (1987: 68), Harald's rule marks "the transition from the semi-

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autonomous Orkney of the sagas to the medieval earldoms of Orkney and Caithness, standing in regular feudal relationships respectively with Norway and Scotland”.

The Orkneyinga Saga account ends with a brief appendix about Harald’s son John, the last earl of the Norse lineage. After his death in 1230, the earldom passed to Magnus Angus. The Anguses’ relationship with the Norse earls is unknown but they seem to have accepted their obligations to the Norwegian king and Norse law. Håkon Håkonson’s expedition towards the west and the battle at Largs in 1263 caused a crisis in Scots-Norse relations, (and a loyalty conflict for Earl Magnus III Angus). According to the Perth treaty, Norway had to give up Man and the Hebrides, while Orkney remained under Norwegian rule. The Angus male line died out ca. 1320. In 1329, Countess Katherine, widow of the last earl of the Angus line, issued the two oldest preserved documents in Old Norse, regarding the sale of land in South Ronaldsay (DN II 168 and 170). This does not necessarily indicate that Katherine and her husband communicated in Old Norse, but it certainly proves that they accepted Old Norse as an official (written) language, as opposed to Latin, which was generally used in Scotland.

### **2.3. The early contact period (ca. 1350-1468)**

The contact period starts in the 14<sup>th</sup> century with the emergence of an influential class of Scots speakers and ends in a total scotticisation of the Isles in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In the latter part of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Orkney earls were Scots-speaking earls (see ch. 4 for a definition of languages) and the bishops had probably been Scots speakers for a while. Two dates may represent the end of the early contact phase: Linguistically, 1425 and 1438 represent turning points. 1425 is the date of the last preserved Norse document, and 1438-39 is the date of the earliest known Scots letter in Orkney. Politically, the impignoration of Orkney in 1468 marks a new relationship with Scotland. As the written evidence is scarce and does not necessarily reflect a major shift in the spoken language, I have preferred the latter.

The contact period is vital for the language situation and the development of names and will thus be treated in more detail than the Norse period. After brief political overviews, I shall present some of the documentary evidence. On this basis, I shall draw tentative conclusions on the language situation.

### ***2.3.1 Political overview***<sup>7</sup>

As elsewhere in mediaeval Europe, the crown and the church were institutions of power. The church was represented in Orkney by bishops. With few exceptions, these had been British from the time when the bishopric was established, and throughout most of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, they were actively pro-Scots. When bishop William was killed in 1382, however, the Orkney church elected Rome's candidate and not the earl's Avignon candidate.<sup>8</sup> From this point onwards the bishops are the kings' most loyal supporters.

Prior to the loyal bishops, the crown sometimes found it difficult to exercise its power in Orkney. There were long periods without an earl, and before an agreement was reached in 1369 (DN I 404, see below) the bishop seems to have had full control over the Norwegian *sysselman* or governor. In 1379, Henry Sinclair, a Scots-speaking lowlander was elected earl. Earl Henry showed an active interest in Orkney, and was eager to acquire estate in his earldom, whereas his son Henry II, who took over ca. 1400, never played an active part in Orkney politics.

Towards the end of Henry II's reign († ca. 1420) a bitter struggle for power ensued, involving bishop Thomas Tulloch, the earl's cousin Thomas Sinclair, David Menzies, guardian of Henry's son William, and William himself. The parties were all in contact with king Eric of Denmark-Norway,<sup>9</sup> and parts of the correspondence

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<sup>7</sup> The presentation is based primarily on Thomson 1987.

<sup>8</sup> Scotland supported the pope in Avignon, whereas Norway supported the one in Rome.

<sup>9</sup> There had been a union of the crowns of Denmark and Norway since 1380, when Olav, the only son of king Håkon Magnusson of Norway and princess Margaret of Denmark was elected king in both countries. He died 7 years later, and his mother assumed control. The court was always in Denmark.



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have been preserved.<sup>10</sup> In 1434, William Sinclair was elected earl. He was very active in Scots politics but utterly uncooperative towards the Dano-Norwegian king. In fact, he ignored four summonses to meet various Dano-Norwegian kings (e.g. DN V, 836), and it was bishop Tulloch who came to Denmark to negotiate the marriage which led to the pawning of the isles.

This period seems to represent a change in the relations between Orkney and Denmark-Norway in several ways. It is quite clear that Scotland and Scottish relations were William Sinclair's sphere of interest. He felt no allegiance to the Dano-Norwegian king and only one of the witnesses to his installation in 1434 (REO XX) bears a Scandinavian name. Neither William nor Henry II lived in Orkney, in touch with the local inhabitants.

However, as Thomson points out (1987: 110 ff.), internal Scandinavian changes may also have contributed towards a Scottish takeover. In fact, Orkney may not have represented the same value as it once had. In 1186, king Sverre<sup>11</sup> specifically welcomed Orcadian tradesmen, who brought goods the Norwegians could not do without, i.e. grain. However, after the Hanseatic League established a monopoly on the supply of cereals to Norway in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Orcadian deliveries were no longer welcome. We may also assume that Orkney was severely struck by the Black Death, for as in Norway, much land was abandoned. The most extreme example is South Sandwick, where only one fifth of the arable land remained under cultivation (Thomson 1987: 130). This means that the revenues must have decreased dramatically. Moreover, as the power centre shifted to Copenhagen, Orkney must have become more peripheral. All factors added together, we may assume that the mortgaged islands did not represent any significant value for Christian I.

### ***2.3.2. Written documentation of contact and conflict***

Documentation is extremely sparse after the end of the Orkneyinga Saga account ca. 1200, although from the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, letters give fragmentary glimpses of Orcadian society. Conflicts between

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<sup>10</sup> DN II 657, 670 and 676, NGL 74.

<sup>11</sup> *Sverre's saga* chapter 104

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Scotsmen and Orcadians are addressed specifically in a number of them, however. This is the case in the oldest extant letters, from Robert Bruce to the Norwegian king Håkon. In 1312, Robert Bruce offers compensation after a Scottish attack on Orkney. In 1321, king Robert demands the handing over of a Scottish traitor who has been given refuge in Orkney, and complains about the unfair treatment of Scotsmen in Orkney.<sup>12</sup>

A mere four letters in Scandinavian have survived but in fact they give a fairly clear picture of increasing Scots influence. Two letters from 1329 (DN II 168 and 170) give us a glimpse of a purely Norse upper class in close contact with Norway: Countess Katherine, widow of the last earl of the Norse line, negotiates the sale of land with the most powerful man in Norway. All other persons mentioned bear Norse names and the document is written in flawless Old Norse.

As early as 1320 the bishop is accused of bestowing offices on foreigners, which in this context has to mean Scotsmen.<sup>13</sup> His successor, another William, also seems to have favoured Scotsmen. A document from 1369 (DN I 404) actually deals with loyalty towards the Norwegian king. The treaty between the bishop and the king's governor or sysselman, Håkon Jonsson, obliges the bishop to cooperate with a council of "good, native men". The letters indicate that a number of Scotsmen held important offices in Orkney and that native (or assimilated) Orcadians were dissatisfied. However, in 1369 the Norse fraction – and the Norwegian king, through his sysselman – were still in a position to claim their rights.

Pro-Norse or anti-Scots sentiments are also expressed in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century. Various documents refer to the obligation for Orkney authorities to adhere to "St. Olaf's law" and not introduce new (i.e. Scots) law. And one of the accusations in the massive complaint against David Menzies (DN II 691) is his introduction of foreign people, who are oppressing the common people of Orkney.

It may come as no surprise that Scottish bishops and earls prefer Scottish councillors but in fact, the majority of councillors were of

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<sup>12</sup> DN II 114 = REO I and DN V 68 = REO II.

<sup>13</sup> DN IX 86, 1320, Thomson 1987: 96.

## *2. Historical background*

Scottish descent at a rather early stage. This is evident from a closer look at the names in the 1369 letter. Though the letter reinforces the rights of the Norwegian king, only four out of the 26 persons involved in the trial have unambiguously Norse names. This means that a Scots background does not prevent a person from feeling as native Orcadians or having pro-Norse affiliations, cf. the later bishops. We would certainly be wrong to assume a dividing line between people of Scottish and Norse descent at that time. Rather, there were fractions with opposing political aims and Scottish and Norse affiliations respectively.<sup>14</sup>

### **2.3.3. *The languages***

Only a few documents issued in Orkney before the impignoration have survived, possibly because the charter chest was destroyed at some stage.<sup>15</sup> The extant documents are written in Latin, Scandinavian and Scots. Latin is used in the correspondence between Robert Bruce and king Håkon but these were not issued in Orkney. The Sinclair earls, too, had most of their documents written in Latin, as was customary in Scotland. In Norway, writing in the vernacular was the norm outside the church but merely four such documents are preserved. These include two letters from Countess Katherine from 1329 and the treaty between the sysselman and the bishop in 1369. The latter is written in rather ungrammatical Old Norse, very likely by a bilingual Scots scribe, as suggested by Barnes (1998: 40 ff.). The language form in the extensive complaint about David Menzies (1425/6) is also somewhat puzzling. It contains a number of East Scandinavian features, which has made Pettersen (1988: 190 ff.) suggest a Swedish scribe. A linguistic analysis of the documents in Scandinavian language is given in ch. 4.4.

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Thomson 1987: 108. Nationality as we know it today is a concept of the Enlightenment. In the correspondence between Robert Bruce and king Håkon, one is concerned with subjects of one king or the other.

<sup>15</sup> According to REO XXI, 1466, charters were destroyed in the struggle for power following Henry Sinclair II's death ca. 1420. But Robert Stewart is also accused of destroying the contents of the charter chest upon his appointment as Provost of Kirkwall in 1569, see Thomson 1987 p 155.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

The first letter in Scots, in the name of lawman Henry Rendall, was written in 1438. His surname as well as his occupation points to a Norse background. This is a decree of the sale of land to a Scotsman, who then sells it to another Scotsman (Kirkness, Sinclair and Fraser), which explains the choice of language.<sup>16</sup> There is even a bilingual letter from 1446, where a Latin text is followed by a translation “into Scottis”.<sup>17</sup>

There are large numbers of norvagisms in the oldest Scots documents, but to my knowledge, no systematic excerption for these has been carried out. As a complicating factor, common Scots also has a number of Scandinavian loans, owing to its North English origin (cf. 4.1 below). Thus, it may be difficult to distinguish between direct loans in the contact period, and older loans, embedded in the written language. In principle, though, elements of Norse origin which are not attested elsewhere in Scotland, may be regarded as direct interference.

As for the spoken language, we have less hard evidence. We may assume, however, that most of the common people still spoke a language of Old Norse origin at the time of the impignoration. The dialect that had developed is commonly known as Norn, but we know very little about its actual form. For descriptions and discussions, see ch. 4.3–4.<sup>18</sup>

Besides the Norse-speaking peasants, there was an influential minority of Scots speakers. We know that the earls from 1379 onwards spoke Scots as their mother tongue. The same seems to be the case for the bishops and the clergy, as well as some of the major landowners.<sup>19</sup> So even if Scots speakers formed a minority, they held a majority of the important offices by 1468.

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<sup>16</sup> REO XXX. As for surnames as an indication of Scots versus Norse origin, see 4.2.1.

<sup>17</sup> The letters are found in and REO XXI.

<sup>18</sup> The term Norn is used in various senses. It may denote all linguistic material of Old Norse origin in the Northern Isles, including medieval written documents and loan words in modern Scots. Here it will be taken to denote the spoken language only.

<sup>19</sup> REO XXX, DN I 404, REO XXI, Thomson 1987: 107.

## *2. Historical background*

On the other hand, we may assume that authorities living in Orkney would learn some Norse. This is certainly the case for William Tulloch, bishop at the time of the impignoration, as king Christian asked the bilingual bishop to accompany his daughter Margaret to Scotland until she had learnt the language and settled in her new country.<sup>20</sup> We may also assume that the lawman was bilingual. Lawman Henry Rendall issued some of the earliest letters in Scots, but he also had to be able to read the Old Norse law.<sup>21</sup> For the absentee earls, Henry II and William Sinclair there was little reason to learn Norse, however.

### **2.4. The Scottish take-over**

As we have seen, Scottish influence started in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. This development seems irreversible. Scotland was close to hand, Norway was far away, weakened by the effects of the Black Death and the union with Denmark. We can assume that the pawning of Orkney, which made Scots the language of the sovereign, consolidated the position of Scots. By this time, Scots had developed a fairly stable written norm, see 4.1.

According to Thomson (1987: 142), Orkney was little altered in the first century after the impignoration in 1468. The Sinclairs, who still owned much of the land, kept much of the power, and they represented continuity. The Scottish reformation, on the other hand, caused major changes. Partly, it affected the language situation, as the vernacular was to be used in church. The Bible was never translated into Scots, however, so English was always the biblical language. Similarly, English was the language of instruction in the parish schools established from the early 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

Thomson (1987: 154 ff.) notes that the reformation in Orkney seems to be a question of land, rather than faith. Much of the bishopric estate was taken over by Scottish incomers, such as Balfours and Bellendens. With their extensive estates, they dwarfed the natives

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<sup>20</sup> Thomson 1987: 113. This is the marriage that caused the impignoration.

<sup>21</sup> REO XXI, 1438 and XXX, 1438-39.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

and formed a new Scottish upper class. The oldest of the odal<sup>22</sup> estates (also of those in Scottish hands) had been ca. 38 pennylands, whereas Gilbert Balfour acquired nearly 300 pennylands. The new owners introduced feudal ownership, which had hitherto been unknown in Orkney. The incomers soon appear in important positions, for example Patrick Bellenden, who was sheriff in 1565. In the same period, the Stewart family established themselves as earls, with close to absolute rule. In the course of the 1560s, Robert Stewart took control of the earldom and church privileges, and made himself sheriff. He was even accused of destroying the contents of Kirkwall's "charter chest".

In much the same way as in Norway, Norse traditions were most persistent in legal matters. Scottish law was introduced in 1611. The administration of the court had changed before 1611, however. In 1541, the traditional lawthing, with *lawmen* and *roithmen* was replaced by the Scottish system of sheriffs and suitors of court. This may have coincided with a change to Scots as the only language of court.<sup>23</sup> In theory, Norse law applied in Orkney for another 70 years. There are in fact examples of sentences according to Norse law, for instance a claim of the odal rights to Gairsay was tried in the Privy Council in Edinburgh in 1587. The Privy Council demanded to see Orkney's law book, and the plaintiff eventually got his odal land. This raises the question as to whether the law book was translated or a bilingual interpreter was used. In practice, however, the courts of Orkney were more or less in the hands of the Stewart earls after the 1560s. Thomson (1987: 156 ff., 179) suggests that the Stewart earls used the waning knowledge of Norse law to their own benefit, and that the introduction of Scots law in 1611 may have been a way of avoiding their arbitrary sentences.

The execution of Robert and Patrick Stewart in 1615 marks the end of the earldom. From this date, Orkney may be regarded as a fully integrated Scottish county. It is also the beginning of the succession of a series of short-term tacksmen, who were delegated the

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<sup>22</sup> Odal denotes the traditional ownership of land in Norway. The farmer owns his own land and his children inherit the right to the land.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. REO XLIV and 2.4.1 below

## 2. Historical background

power to collect skats and rents in return for an annual sum to be paid to the king. Nearly all landowners in the 17<sup>th</sup> century were Scots, the local Halcro-family being the only exception. The rest of the original inhabitants were reduced to petty odallers or tenants. This certainly affected the status of the two groups – and their languages. While the tacksmen were rigorously collecting their dues, common people in Orkney suffered famine after a series of bad harvests in the period 1625–1696. Trade was a privilege for Kirkwall merchants, who were often identical with the landowners (Thomson 1987: 207).

The period from 1770 to 1830 represents a boom in Orkney. New industries, notably kelp production but also the linen industry, fishery, straw plaiting and work for the Hudson Bay Company brought money to the isles. Towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, even the tenants were able to buy goods such as tea or manufactured clothes. In the same period, schools were established in every parish. Thanks to the schools, illiteracy was nearly overcome in 1841, according to the New Statistical Account.<sup>24</sup> For the Norn language, however, schools may have represented the final blow, since it was never used at school.

Agricultural improvement came late to Orkney. Some planking or reorganisation of the run-rig land had been going on since 1700, but the major changes, including the division of the common land, belong to the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. This may be of little relevance for the language but has great consequences for the place-name material. When the land is squared, the old rig names disappear. On the other hand, many new names are coined, in particular for all the new crofts founded after the division of the commonties.

### 2.4.1. *The languages from 1468 to the death of Norn*

As we have seen, the last surviving Orkney document in Norse was written in 1425, so by the impignoration 1468, Scots was the only *written* language. However, Norn continued to be *spoken* until some point in the latter half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Thus it is essential to dis-

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<sup>24</sup> Thomson 1987: 238, Firth & al.: 21

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

tinguish between spoken and written language in a presentation of the contact languages in this period.<sup>25</sup>

The precise date for the death of Norn has been a matter of some discussion (sometimes with a rather vague idea of what language death implies, cf. the discussion of earlier research in ch. 3.2.1.). But there are a number of other issues to be addressed pertaining to the degree of contact and the relative strength of the contact languages at different stages: For how long was Norn “the common tongue” of the Orcadian peasants? Can the spread of Scots in central and peripheral areas respectively be mapped out? Was there extensive contact between Scots and Norse speakers and was bilingualism common on an individual level? In the following section, I investigate these questions on the basis of the somewhat scanty source material available.

### *1468-1600*

We may assume that most peasants still spoke Norn during this period. Contacts with Norway were still close. This is documented in passing in a complaint from William Sinclair to the Scottish king in 1529, after the battle of Summerdale. This was actually a clash between two branches of the Sinclair family. William Sinclair, son of the deceased earl, was defeated by his cousin James Sinclair, who subsequently expelled a number of William’s supporters. As a consequence “thair wiffs and bairnis ar now thigand thair mete in England and Norway”. This is a sad fate, but it is interesting to note that Orcadians were still seeking refuge in Norway. Similarly, the man who won his odal rights in the Privy Council in 1587 (cf. above) fled to Norway after Robert Stewart forced him to leave his estate.<sup>26</sup>

In Bergen, Orcadians are recorded in all social classes. Jon Tomasson, a wealthy merchant, possibly of the Rendall family, be-

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<sup>25</sup> The fact that Scots gives way to English in a number of contexts will not be discussed here.

<sup>26</sup> William Sinclair’ complaint is found in REO XXV. REO CCXXXIX concerns the odal rights of Gairsay.



## 2. Historical background

came mayor in Bergen in 1543. He is described as pious and just.<sup>27</sup> James Hendrykisszen Randell was burgess in Bergen and landowner in Orkney (REO CLXXXII). An Effuerd Orkenøsch (Edward Orcadian) was head clerk for Henndrick, son of Jacob Skott in 1594.<sup>28</sup> A woman called Dilis Røncke was tried, though not sentenced, for witchcraft in 1594. The court protocols contain an interesting remark on her language: she is said to growl in her Orkney tongue.<sup>29</sup> This shows that Norn differed from the contemporary Bergen dialect – but it was obviously still intelligible.

The use of Norn in Orkney is reported by a 16<sup>th</sup>-century chronicler using the alias *Jo. Ben.* The islanders say “goand da boundæ” (ON *góðan dag, bóndi*) for “guid day, goodman”. Unfortunately, he gives no further examples of the language.<sup>30</sup> Orkney court documents contain a few direct references to the languages. The first record of the Sheriff Court which replaced the Lawthing in 1541 deals with a dispute over the use of a mill in Sabay, St. Andrews, ca. 8 kilometers east of Kirkwall. The records explicitly state that both the mill owner and the parishioners presented their case “in the common tongue”.<sup>31</sup> This seem to indicate that the court administration was in Scots but that evidence might still be given in Norn.

A diglossic situation, with Scots as an official language and Norn as the common or low variant for the majority of the population may have been characteristic of the situation towards the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The islanders now have to learn the high variant, i.e. Scots, for formal purposes. This conforms with a contemporary note by Sir Thomas Craig: even though nothing but Norn is spoken, the ministers now use English in church and are understood well enough (OrknN: 224).

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<sup>27</sup> [http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon\\_Tomasson](http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_Tomasson), Helle 1988: 13.

<sup>28</sup> Bergen rådstueprotokoll 1592-94 (Bergen Court records 1592-94), <http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/sab/raadstu3.htm>, Fol. 196 a

<sup>29</sup> “Knuerrett paa sit Orkenøesch maall”. Bergen rådstueprotokoll 1592-94, <http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/sab/raadstu3.htm>, Fol. 208 a.

<sup>30</sup> Quoted from OrknN: xxiii f.

<sup>31</sup> REO XLIV 1542–43, cf. Marwick 1929: xxii.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

### *1600 to the death of Norn*

In the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century connections with Norway were still close.<sup>32</sup> An excerpt from the digital version of the list of Bergen burghers proves that at least 86 Orcadians became citizens from 1612 to 1650. The numbers decreased rapidly from around 1650, with only seven more being admitted by 1672. The trade with Norway continued, however, with wooden boats as the main import article.

#### 1. Robert Monteith, 1633

The Natives are known from the Incommers by their want of surnames, having only Patronymic Names. Many of them are descended from the *Norvegians*, and speak a *Norse* Tongue, corrupted (they call *Norn*) amongst themselves, which is now much worn out. The Inclination of many of These of *Norwegian* Extract is base and Servile, Subtile and false, and Parasitick; ... The Incommers (whose residence in these Isles is not above a few Centuries of years) [...] speak the Scots language as well as the *Norse*.<sup>33</sup>

#### 2. Matthew Mackaile, ca. 1670

It is very probable that the inhabitants of the Orchades of old did only speak Noords or rude Danish; but now there are only three or four parishes (especially upon the Mainland or Pomona) wherein that language is spoken, and that chiefly when they are in their own houses, but all speak the Scots language, as the rest of the commons do.<sup>34</sup>

Bilingualism is attested in 17<sup>th</sup>-century sources. According to Robert Monteith, Laird of Egilsha and author of *Description of the Islands of Orkney and Zetland*, native Scots speakers were able to speak Norn. (His low esteem of the natives is obvious.) Some 40 years later, Mackaile claims that Norn was only spoken in 3 or 4

<sup>32</sup> As for Orcadian burghers in Bergen, see <http://digitalarkivet.uib.no/cgi-win/webcens.exe?slag=visbase&filnamn=borg1600&spraak=n&metanr=34>. Marwick mentions 78 burghers and a number other examples in OrknN: xxv.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted after Hatakka 1993: 20.

<sup>34</sup> Quoted after OrknN: 224 f.

## 2. Historical background

Mainland parishes. If this is correct, Norse is in rapid decline by 1670, and Scots is taking over as the common language. This seems to be fully in line with comparable contact situations. We remember that the reformation in 1560 prompted the use of Scots and English in church, making every parishioner acquainted with these languages. A hundred years later, it is not surprising that most of them should have chosen Scots, the official and high-status language as their spoken language.

### 3. James Wallace 1700

“All speak English, after the Scots way, with as good an Accent as any County in the Kingdom, only some of the common People amongst themselves, speak a Language they call Norns [..]”

*Favor i ir i chimeri/ Helleut ir i nam thite/  
gilla cosdum thite cumma/ Veya thine mota vara gort  
o yurn sinna gort i chimeri/Ga vus da on da dalight brow vora/  
Firgive vus sinna vora sin vee firgive sindera mutha vus/  
Lyv vus ye i tumptation, min delivra vus fro olt ilt/  
Amen. Or On sa meteth vera)*<sup>35</sup>

### 4. John Brand 1701

“There are also some who speak *Norse* especially in the *Mainland*, as in the Parish of *Hara* there are a few yet living, who can speak no other thing [..]”.<sup>36</sup>

The 18<sup>th</sup> century most certainly sees the death of Norn. It is not clear whether some groups still speak Norn as their mother tongue, as the sources do not agree on this point. According to the minister Brand there were still monolingual speakers around the turn of the century. Wallace, on the other hand, reports the use of Norn to be limited to the private sphere, and claims that everyone is bilingual. He was able to record The Lord’s Prayer in Norn, which he consid-

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<sup>35</sup> Quoted after OrknN: 225 f.

<sup>36</sup> Loc.cit.

ered to be related to Pictish, since he could detect little or no similarity to Scandinavian.

Tentatively, we may conclude that Norn was no longer a common language in the isles, though it is still used to some extent in the western parts of Mainland. In 1725, an unnamed minister of Sandwick claims that there were Norn speakers in his parish: “the old broken Danish language is still used among many people, which occasions ignorance in the place”.<sup>37</sup> This is presented as an argument for the establishment of a parish school, though he does not explicitly state that young people still spoke Norn.

On the other hand, there is also evidence that people did not understand Norn, e.g. court records from a trial in Rendall in 1703 (OA: D/31/2/6). Three witnesses, John Linnay, aged 70, from St. Ola and William Taylor, 55, from St. Andrews and an unnamed witness from the same parish testify to seeing “the Gayrsaye tennants come in and talk to one another upon norne”. They state that they do not understand this language. Of course, they may all be of Scots descent. Looking at the names, we note that *William Taylor* is purely Scots, whereas *Linnay* indicates local background. The farm-name *Linna* < ON *hlíðinna* (or another definite form of *hlíð*, ‘slope’) is found at several places in Orkney. Surnames are probably the best indication of Scots versus Norse descent, as Orcadians of Norse descent kept up the Norwegian naming practice. This means that the given name was primary. In addition, persons would be identified by their patronyms (cf. quotation 1 above), by the name of their farm, or a combination of both. At some point, these names become inherited surnames, so that farm names become surnames, just as in Norway.<sup>38</sup>

The three witnesses are all from Central Mainland, i.e. close to Kirkwall. St. Andrews was also the scene of the mill conflict recorded in 1542–43, in which the parishioners are reported to have spoken Norn (REO XLIV). John Linnay was born as early as 1633, and he is unable to *understand* Norn. This indicates that the use of

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<sup>37</sup> Quoted after Smith 1996: 33.

<sup>38</sup> For a further treatment of naming traditions in Orkney, see Sandnes 2004 and Schmidt 2006. The latter is in English.

## 2. Historical background

Norn cannot have been common in his childhood, and that Scots was the everyday language of the previous generation, born around 1600. Allowing for individual variation, we may have pinpointed the change to Scots fairly precisely in this central parish. It seems to have taken place in the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In other parts of Mainland, Norn seems to have survived into the next century.

5. Murdoch Mackenzie 1750

“Thirty or forty years ago this [Norn] was the vulgar Language of two parishes in Pomona Island; since which by means of Charity-Schools, it is so much wore out, as to be understood by none but old people; and in thirty Years more, it is probable, will not be understood there at all.”<sup>39</sup>

6. George Barry. History of Orkney, 1805

“So late as in 1756 or 1757 a respectable traveller of this country [...] had occasion to lodge all night in a House in Harra; where to his surprise, he heard two old men for an hour or more converse together in an unknown tongue; which, on inquiry, he found was the Norse language.”<sup>40</sup>

We remember the minister in Sandwick pleading for a local school to do away with Norn and ignorance in 1725. According to Mackenzie (see above), schools were successful in the former respect. The first schools in the rural districts were established in the early 1700s, though a consistent system of parochial schooling belongs to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In a trial about traditional weights in the 1750s, fairly young people attest to having heard Norn. A witness from Stenness claimed that some people in Firth and Harray still spoke the language.<sup>41</sup> A corroborating story, about two old Harray men conversing in Norn in the late 1750s is recorded by George Barry (see quotation 5 above). This seems to be the last record of spoken Norn in the isles. Finally, Walter Scott notes that the Old

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<sup>39</sup> Quoted after OrknN :225.

<sup>40</sup> Barry 1867, 2. edition: 223, note, quoted after OrknN: 227

<sup>41</sup> Pundlar Process 1757, quoted after OrknN: 226.

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Norse poem *Darraðarljóð* was still remembered in North Ronaldsay 10- 20 years later. When confronted with Gray's translation of the poem, *The Fatal Sisters*, they recognized their traditional song (OrknN: xxvi, 227). In this case, no indication is given that the islanders actually communicate in Norn.

At this time, Norn was definitely dying. In 1773, George Low writes that Norn is "so worn out that I believe there is scarce a single man in the county who can express himself on the most ordinary occasion in this language" (OrknN: xxvi, 226). By then, the Norse language had outlived Norse rule by ca 300 years.

### **2.4.2. The language shift – summary**

From a sociolinguistic point of view, the language shift in Orkney may be explained within a model of domain loss, with Norn giving way to Scots in an increasing number of spheres. A different phrasing would be more precise, however, as Scots and English gain ground in new domains where Norn had never been used, most importantly church and school. This is illustrated in figure 2.2. below. In language contact situations, the relative status of the users of the respective languages is an important factor in determining whether a language survives or not. Typically, the language of the elite enjoys high status, and thus it is likely to spread to the rest of the population (Appel & Muysken 1987: 33). This is also the case in Orkney. As we have seen, Scots held most important offices in the isles from the 14<sup>th</sup> century onwards. At this date, there was a powerful Scots minority, as opposed to a majority of Norn-speaking peasants. An increasing take-over of land by Scots immigrants, particularly after the Reformation, turned most native Norn speakers into tenants. This may have caused a fall of status, cf. Monteith's belittling evaluation of the Norn-speaking islanders.

2. Historical background

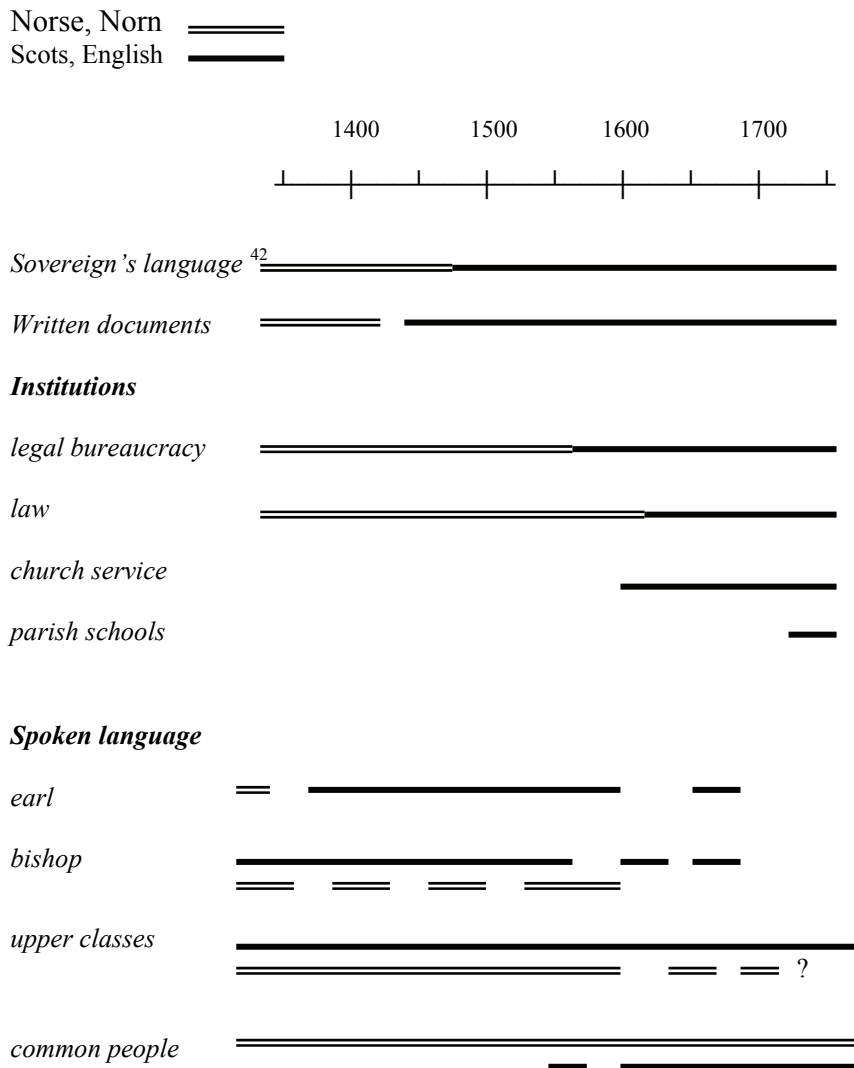


Fig. 2.2. The use of Norse and Scots/English in various domains in Orkney.

<sup>42</sup> Danish sovereigns from 1380.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

There are a number of uncertain elements regarding the use of Norn and Scots as spoken languages. Although Orkney was bilingual for ca. 500 years, we do not know to what extent individuals mastered both languages throughout the period. The language shift was gradual, probably on the individual level as well as geographically. We have seen that the language shift seems to have been completed by 1700 in the central parts of Mainland, whereas all sources point to the survival of Norn well into the 18<sup>th</sup> century in West Mainland, which is the area for this survey. In the early contact period, the Scots had to learn Norn, cf. the bilingual bishop Tulloch in 1468, and the fact that the Sheriff Court seems to understand statements in Norn in 1541. We cannot tell when this situation ended, but after the Reformation in 1560 the peasants would all have learned Scots in church. Thus, Monteith's claim that "the incommers" still spoke Norn in 1633 seems questionable. Once the commons could understand Scots, there would be little reason to learn Norn. According to Craig, passive bilingualism, with Norn being spoken and Scots being understood in church, was common around 1600.

From 1700 onwards, sources agree that Scots has become the normal spoken language. Parish schools may have promoted the use of English, even if schooling was not systematic until the 19<sup>th</sup> century (Wiggen 2002: 61). The use of Norn is now restricted to the private sphere. Phrases such as "an auld Norny body" indicate low status for Norn-speakers, who may be interesting as a rarity "but also perhaps somewhat uncanny" (OrknN: xxvi, 123). Around 1775, the language shift from Norn to Scots is completed. However, the Norse heritage is still embedded in the present-day dialect in the form of a Norse substratum, which is most conspicuous in the nomenclature and the lexicon.



## Chapter 3. Former research

### 3.1. Place-names in the Viking colonies

Gillian Fellows-Jensen's extensive studies of Scandinavian names in the Danelaw include major works on place-names in Yorkshire, East Midlands and the North-West (Fellows-Jensen 1972, 1978 and 1985). In each volume, the names are organised by their generics, and written source forms and interpretations are given. The contact aspect is treated in the chapters *Place-names in -tūn with a Scandinavian specific* and *Scandinavised and hybrid names*.

Scandinavian names in the Danelaw differ from Orkney names in several respects. They were mainly coined by Danes, and for this reason they are normally interpreted on the basis of language and names in Denmark, which even at this stage differed from Norway in some respects. The Danish settlers in the Danelaw lived side by side with English-speaking inhabitants and the Danes eventually assimilated with the English by ca. 1100 AD, whereas in Orkney, the original Pictish language and culture gave way to Old Norse. Thus Scandinavian names may have been coined till ca. 1700 in Orkney. Finally, the written records go much further back in time in England in Orkney. Fellows-Jensen delimits her studies to names recorded by 1086 in Domesday Book, which more than 100 years before the first Scandinavian name in Orkney is recorded in the Orkneyinga Saga.

The two most recent major works on Old Norse place-names both concentrate on one particular generic. Åse Kari Hansen's doctoral thesis (Hansen 1998) deals with *tuit*-names in Normandy. Here again, the specific contact situation, with Old Norse surviving only for two or three generations, is fundamentally different from Orkney. Some of the general conclusions are relevant for the present study, however, e.g. her discussion of language contact and distinction between the lexicon and the onomasticon. The French dialect in Normandy has few Old Norse borrowings, but she suggests that some Old Norse words have become productive in the onomasticon,

as name elements. This may account for the formation of place-names with ON generics when the language was no longer in use.

Gammeltoft (2001) treats the element *bólstaðr* throughout the Scandinavian-speaking areas, using a name-semantic model to establish the relation between the specific and the generic. One of his conclusions is that once a name element has become established in the colonies, local patterns may develop. The specifics of the *bólstaðr*-names in the colonies show a greater degree of variation than in the homeland. In addition, his studies reveal a younger stratum of analogical formations with *-bist(er)*.

Magne Oftedal (1980) studies place-names from the Hebrides within the framework of historical linguistics. He distinguishes between transparent names, in which all name elements can be understood by present-day Gaelic speakers, and intransparent names. Transparent name elements include borrowings from ON. However, most of the Old Norse place-names borrowed into the dialect are intransparent. A Gaelic speaker will not recognise the elements in *Carloway* (> ON *Karla-vágr*). Still the name has meaning: “it conveys the notion of a special locality and is thus clearly meaningful” (Oftedal 1980: 182).

### **3.1.1. Nicolaisen’s distribution maps**

Nicolaisen (1976: 84–120) investigates the distribution of four ON generics: *staðir*, *setr/ sætr*, *bólstaðr* plus the non-habitative *dalr* as evidence of Scandinavian settlement in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Of the habitative elements, *staðir* has the most restricted distribution and *bólstaðr* the widest. “Anybody approaching and analysing the *staðir*, *setr* and *bólstaðr* [...] must see in them a gradual progressive spreading of settlement in this order”. Nicolaisen concludes that the *staðir*-names reflect the area of the oldest Norse settlement in Scotland, whereas the *bólstaðr*-area “is the map of Scandinavian settlement in the Northern and Western Isles and on the adjacent Mainland”. *Dalr* has an even wider distribution, reflecting a Scandinavian sphere of interest, exceeding the settlement area.

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<sup>1</sup> The three former are from Marwick’s chronology, see below.

### 3. *Former research*

Nicolaisen stresses the fact that all the generics were productive when the Scandinavian settlers arrived in Scotland. Rather than presenting a chronology, he supposes a direct link between certain generics and the spread of Scandinavian settlement. Subsequently, a number of scholars have referred to the distribution maps, in some cases as an absolute truth rather than a model. For instance, some scholars refuse the idea of Scandinavian settlement in areas with no *bólstaðr*-names, although both Nicolaisen and others have later pointed out the methodological problems in equating distribution and age (Crawford 1995: 9). Unfortunately, no adjustments have been made in this chapter of the new edition of *Scottish Place-names*.

## 3.2. Orkney (and Shetland)

### 3.2.1. *The Norn language*

One major topic in the research on the language of Orkney and Shetland has been identifying the Norse element in the living dialect. The most important works in this respect are Jacobsen and Marwick's etymological dictionaries of Shetland and Orkney Norn. The titles may be somewhat misleading, as it may give the impression that Norn is still alive. In fact, these works treat the Norse substratum, the word stock of Norse origin borrowed into Scots and thus still in use in the early 1900s.

*Orkney Norn* (OrknN) contains ca. 3000 dialect words of non-Scots, mainly Norse origin. Many of the words have later become disused.<sup>2</sup> We may note that Marwick focuses the Norse element, and thus sometimes prefers a Norse etymology where another origin is more plausible, e.g. for the adjective *peerie/peedie* 'small' (OrknN: 129), which is more likely from Fr. *petit* 'small'. On a whole, however, Marwick's etymologies are well-founded and reliable, thanks to his knowledge of Old Norse. In addition to the word list, *Orkney*

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<sup>2</sup> A study by Joyce Killick reveals that only 1/3 of the words are still familiar to people in 1986 (Killick 1987: 24).

*Norn* gives a historical sketch and a valuable overview of the phonological development in the dialect.

*The death of Norn*

When – and how - did Norn die? A number of scholars have addressed these questions, a useful overview is found in Michael Barnes' *The Norn Language of Orkney and Shetland*, published in 1998. He also gives a general outline of the language – this is treated in chapter 4. Other recent studies include Laurits Rendboe's studies on Shetland Norn (1987) and Geirr Wiggen's *Norns død, især skolens rolle*.<sup>3</sup> Rather different theories as for the death of Norn have been presented, and Barnes (1998: 21) comments that this is due to the lack of data, "a lack which here, as elsewhere, encourages scholars to fill the vacuum of ignorance with educated guess-work".

Marwick does not present his own theory of the death of Norn, but refers to Jakobsen, who imagines a gradual shift from Norn to Scots.<sup>4</sup> The morphology breaks down first, followed by function words and finally adjectives, verbs and abstract nouns give way to their Scots counterparts. In this perspective, Norn is not yet dead, as part of the vocabulary remains. In fact, Jakobsen makes a point of the survival of concrete nouns referring to traditional lifestyle and jocular names and terms.

Scholars may want to extend the lifetime of a language – for various reasons. This is the case for Rendboe, who maintains that

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<sup>3</sup> I will not discuss Wiggen's work, published in 2002, as it is a hypothetical case study, based on no new research. The title ('The death of Norn, particularly the role of the school') implies that schools played an important role in the death of Norn. However, Wiggen writes that schools in every parish were not established before ca. 1840 (p. 53). This means that schools cannot have been an important factor in the death of Norn, since it probably died out in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (see 2.4.1). But according to Wiggen, the socio-historical conditions may have enhanced the survival of Norn until 1850-80 (pp. 61, 72). This is based on purely hypothetical conditions, without reference to written sources.

<sup>4</sup> "The statement that Norn died out in the previous century (i.e. 18.) must not, however, be taken too literally. The process has been a steady and gradual one, which is still continuing even at the present day". ShNorn: XIX.

### 3. *Former research*

Norn was spoken in Shetland into the 1880s. Rendboe seem to take a national romantic view on history and language. In the Norse period the Shetlanders were free men, but after the impignoration they where suppressed by the Scots. As a symbol of resistance, the Shetlanders speak pure Norn well into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rendboe bases his argumentation a few points, e.g. the fact that the people from Foula quoted sentences in Norn for Jakobsen, and that one of the informants' father reportedly "could speak the language fluently". For all fragments of Norn, he automatically assumes that "this made sense when spoken" (Rendboe 1987: 5, 1993: 389).

Rendboe's view is extreme, and is to some extent contradicted by facts. When Christian Pløyen, county governor of the Faroes came to Shetland in 1839, he searched in vain for remnants of the Norse language. He did not even find remnants of songs or prayers, which he, very sensibly, reckons to have survived longest, and he concludes that the old language is dead everywhere in Shetland.<sup>5</sup> He may not have seen all of Shetland, but in opposition to earlier visitors, he spoke both Danish and Faroese, and he remarks a number of words and place-names of Norse origin.

A modern view on Norn should be based on our knowledge on language death in other areas. Orkney is by no means unique in adopting the high-status language as its only language. Scots gradually became the language of all institutions, cf. 2.4.1. Once a language is restricted to the private sphere and a traditional lifestyle, it is endangered.

We also know that there was long-time bilingualism in Orkney, which may have lead to linguistic borrowing, particularly of lexical items. But this does not mean that the shift was as gradual as Jakobsen imagined. If a pidgin language does not develop – and we have no indication that this happened in Orkney – the morphology and syntax has to belong to one language or the other.

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<sup>5</sup> "ei heller var der at finde saameget som et Fragment af en Sang eller en Bøn, hvilke dog sædvanligen erindres længst; det gamle Sprog var uddøet (...) overalt paa Shetland..." Pløyen 1840: 57

We may note that late Norn is often described as “corrupted” and “worn out” by observers. This is somewhat curious. Most likely, Norn underwent structural simplification in its late phase,<sup>6</sup> but Scots- or English-speaking observers were hardly competent to identify such changes. For instance Wallace, who recorded the Lord’s Prayer in Orkney Norn, reckoned the language to be Pictish. The observers may have recognised a multitude of Scots/English loanwords, much the same way as Norwegians identify Norwegian loans in Sami. However, heavy borrowing does not mean that a language is dying, as long as it is still functional in all contexts. Another possible interpretation of “worn out” is that the use of Norn was restricted to a limited number of communicative situations, e.g. in the family and for domains associated with a traditional life-style. This has been observed for Irish Gaelic. When the topic changes to “modern urban topics”, speakers tend to shift to English.<sup>7</sup>

When is a language dead? A language is only alive if there are speakers able to communicate in it. Typically, the last remains of a dying language are rhymes, riddles and prayers, examples of formulaic language. This is true even in Orkney and Shetland. The last recordings of Norn are Low’s The Lord’s Prayer and The Hildina Ballad from Foula in the 1770s. There is circumstantial evidence that the ballad *Darraðarljóð* was still remembered in North Ronald-

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<sup>6</sup>There is a distinct tendency of levelling of all inflectional endings to *-a* in Jakobsens “fragments of Norn” (1928: XCII f): “Kwarna farna?” ‘where have you been?’, “Bodøna kømena rontøna Kømba” ‘the boat has come around The Kaim’ and in the little rhyme:

“<sup>s</sup>kekla komøna ri:na tu:na/swarta hæsta blæita bruna/  
fomtena hala and fomtena bjadnis a kwara hala”.

However, we cannot decide how much of this simplification had taken place while Norn was still spoken, and how much had happened as these phrases were repeated as remnants of a former language.

<sup>7</sup>“In some cases the progressive restriction can bring modern speakers to the point where only a limited selection of topics can be discussed satisfactorily by them in their own mother tongue. Thus, whenever a subject more complicated than the weather, community news, or basic farming or fishing is raised, individuals can be heard switching over into English in order to deal adequately with it.” (Watson 1989: 55).

### 3. Former research

say at this time (ON: xxvi, 227). Even if Rendboe maintains that “this made sense when spoken”, it is clear that the informant was unable to give Low a direct translation of the Hildina ballad (Hægstad 1900: 31). Significantly, all these late texts are of the formula-type, learned by heart. But even if speakers are able to quote The Lord’s Prayer or passages from an old ballad, it does not mean that they are able to communicate in the language. For instance, what Jakobsen labels “Fragments of Norn” (ShNorn: xci–cxvii) is not communicative in the normal sense. Rather, he has recorded remnants of Norn, linguistic relics.

In my opinion, Barnes is too pessimistic in describing our knowledge of the death of Norn as a vacuum, cf. chapter 2.4.1. All the records from the 1770s pertain to formalised language, and thus they cannot be taken as certain proof that Norn was still a living language. From the first part of the century, however, we have sufficient evidence that the language was still spoken, and if we can trust Barry, there were still speakers conversing in Norn in Harray as late as the 1750s. This means that the death of Norn must have taken place in the latter half (possibly the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter) of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 3.2.2. Place-names

The outstanding scholar of Orkney onomastics is Hugh Marwick. *Orkney Farm-Names* (OFN) includes most farm-names and some croft names, giving source forms and interpretations. His onomastic studies include total inventories of names from North Ronaldsay, Rousay and Birsay<sup>8</sup>. These works are in the Norwegian onomastic tradition founded by Oluf Rygh in *Norske Gaardnavne* (NG), and Marwick discussed problematic points in letters to the Norwegian professor Magnus Olsen. He was also inspired by Jakobsen’s Shetland studies, but whereas Jakobsen organised the name material by their generic, Marwick preferred a geographical organisation similar to NG. It should be pointed out that Marwick knew Old Norse and

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<sup>8</sup> The North Ronaldsay names are published in POAS I, 1923. *The Place-Names of Rousay* was published separately in 1947 and the *The Place-Names of Birsay* was edited and published by W. F. H. Nicolaisen in 1970.

could read Scandinavian. This enabled him to give well-founded etymologies for the names.<sup>9</sup>

Jakobsen worked before contact linguistics developed. His primary interest is to isolate and describe the Old Norse element in the Shetland lexicon and onomasticon. He discusses sound changes in borrowed names, but apart from this, the Scots aspect is more or less absent. Marwick follows Jakobsen in focussing on the Old Norse elements in Orkney place-names and dialect. This can also be related to a historical school based on Storer Clouston's *A History of Orkney*, which regards the Norse period depicted in the *Orkneyinga Saga* as a golden age, with powerful earls and semi-autonomous status for Orkney.

In *Orkney Farm-Names* (p. 227) Marwick states that "The vast majority of Orkney farm-names, probably about 99 per cent., are of Norse origin". This may be true if only rental names are included, but it is certainly not true if newer names like *Blinkbonnie*, *Windywalls*, *Scotts Ha'* and *Heathery Quoy*<sup>10</sup> are included. In his name chronology, Marwick excludes younger classes of generics, such as *-bigging* and *-hoose/house*. One problematic consequence of the keen interest in the Old Norse heritage is that Old Norse etymologies are sometimes preferred in cases where a Scots interpretation is more probable. One example is *Windywa(II)s*, most likely a transparent Scots name. Marwick, however, refers to Jakobsen's interpretation as ON *vinjarváll* (OFN: 51). But *Windywas* is never found as a name for an old farm unit, and this supports the Scots etymology. Similarly, for the croft name *London*, Marwick prefers an ON interpretation *lundrinn* 'the copse' (OFN 49 f). A number of other crofts are named after major cities: *York*, *Hull* and *Newcastle* and this is probably the case also for *London* (see 7.2.1) For Marwick, the early

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<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, some interpreters of ON names in Scotland today seem to lack this competence. This is obvious in some local publications, e.g. Gregor Lamb's. Other examples can easily be found, e.g. Bangor-Jones (in Crawford 1995: 86) does not realise that the combined forms *Miggeweth* 1275 with the generic *vað n* 'ford' and *Migdale* 1581 suggests a river name, possibly *Míga*, as a specific.

<sup>10</sup> This name is a Scots formation with the borrowed element *quoy* < ON *kvi* 'enclosure', see 5.5.13.



### 3. Former research

date for *Banks* is problematic. A farm-name *Banks* is recorded in Rendall 1595 and in Birsay as early as 1492 (OFN: 120, 132). Marwick presupposes an ON *bakkar* ‘slopes’, the implicit argument being that names recorded so early have to be Norse formations. By 1500, the Scots had held important offices in Orkney for more than 100 years, and Scots names formations must be possible (cf. 7.1.2).<sup>11</sup>

#### *Place-names and settlement history. Place-name chronology.*

Marwick’s place-name chronology is probably his most influential contribution to onomastic and cultural historical research. Scholars indebted to Marwick include W.F.H. Nicolaisen in *Scottish Place-names* (198, new edition 2991) and other works and Barbara Crawford, who regards place-names as a major source in *Scandinavian Scotland* (1987). In addition, Asgaut Steinnes (1995) draws on Marwick when developing his theory of *Husebys* as administrative centres. In most of these cases, place-names are used as sources for settlement history, the fundamental assumption being that there is a connection between a particular place-name element and the gradual development of the Scandinavian settlement.

Due to the influence of Marwick’s place-name chronology, a brief presentation of the theory and recent criticism is given, although my interest is mainly the linguistic aspect. In OFN Marwick suggests a chronology of the nine most frequent farm-name generics. Based on taxation, he regards *kvi* and *setr* as the youngest of the included elements. *Kvi*-farms are regularly untaxed, in fact, *quoyland* is used rentals as a term for unskatted units. Half of the *setr*-farms are also untaxed. Typically, such farms are small and peripheral. According to Marwick, they normally post-date 900. The remaining classes included in the chronology pay taxes and are consequently older. The crucial date 900 is based on the Orkneyinga saga accounts, that Harold Fairhair (or his successor) imposed skat or taxes on the isles towards the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Similar objections have been raised for some of Jakobsen’s interpretations, e.g. for an uncertain ON interpretation for *Click(h)imin*. According to Smith 1995: 27 this is a transfer of a pub name from the Scottish mainland.

<sup>12</sup> Orkn Saga ch. 4, OFN: 211.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Of the skatted classes, *land*, *garth* and *bólstaðr* represent a younger stratum, whereas *bær/býr* is taken to represent the very oldest settlements. *Staðir*, *skáli* and *bú* are treated separately, as they are often new names of established settlements. The *staðir*-names are concentrated in West Mainland, and Marwick seems to accept Storer Clouston's idea that the earl gave these farms to his "hirdmen" while Birsay was the earl's seat. The generics are interpreted as the names of the recipient hirdmen, e.g. Clouston as the farm of *Hákon Kló*, mentioned in the sagas (OFN: 110, 237). The *skáli*-names are associated with the building of large halls at the central – and presumably early – farms. Thus, they are not primary, but indirectly they are indicative of early settlements. The word *bú* is of ON origin, but in Orkney they are used in the *of*-constructions like *The Bu of Orphir*, *The Bu of Rapness*, typically of large farms under early Scots ownership (5.5.5).

This idea of imposition of skat by 900, based on passages from the *Orkneyinga Saga*, is a basic – and problematic – assumption in Marwick's theory. Today historians seem to agree that taxation cannot have taken place that early, with Harold Fairhair still busy trying to establish his power in Norway. A *leidang* naval defence system is not known from Orkney and many details of the early Orkney taxes are still obscure.<sup>13</sup> However, the administration required for tax collection cannot have been established before Earl Thorfinn's reign in the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century.

An inherent problem in Marwick original model is the attempt to establish several chronological strata from the Scandinavian settlement until the assumed taxation ca. 900 AD, a period of ca. 100 years. In this way, each place-name elements would have been productive only for a short while. A dozen or so *Kirbisters* (< *Kyrkjubólstaðr* 'church settlements' also pose problems when the *bólstaðr*-group is seen as pre-dating 900 and the christening of the isles. These questions have recently been discussed by W. Thomson (1995). In his reassessment of the Orkney farm-name chronology, he points out that several of the generics in Marwick's chronology,

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<sup>13</sup> Imsen 1999: 56, Crawford 1987 88 ff., Thomson 1996.

### 3. Former research

such as *quoy* (< *kvi*), *garth* (< *garðr*) and *bu* for major farms were borrowed into the Scots dialect, and have been productive until the present. Marwick is well aware of this, and he explicitly states that he merely includes rental names. Even so, by disregarding parts of the material in this way, his classes may seem more homogenous than they actually are.<sup>14</sup>

Thomson also uses place-names as sources. *History of Orkney* (1987, new edition 2001) includes a chapter on Norse Settlement; the place-name evidence, and in the 1995 article he lists measurable characteristics for the various generics, such as pennyland value, location and specifics in an informative table. He concludes that Marwick's chronology "is essentially a hierarchy based on size, location and status – whether the relationship is also chronological is usually more debatable." According to Thomson (1995: 50), "names primarily describe the nature of the farm, and it is only by inference that these characteristics can be translated into chronology"

Yet the criticism of Marwick mainly concerns his settlement historical conclusions, based on an untenable dating of the imposition of taxes. With the linguistic aspects in focus, this criticism is less relevant. Marwick's collections and interpretations of place-names and his dictionary of the dialect will always be an invaluable foundation for further research, due to his profound knowledge of the Old Norse language and Scandinavian naming practise, as well as Orkney place-names and dialect. What is still lacking, from a modern point of view, is an understanding of the Scots element in the material. Thus, a revision of the Orkney place-name material with the contact linguistic aspect taken into account should prove fruitful.

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<sup>14</sup> Thirdly, Marwick seems to assume a settlement in accordance with descriptions in *Landnámabók*, where the first settlers took vast areas. These were preferably called *bær*, and from these centres the settlement spread out. It is difficult to imagine that the Norse settlement could have taken place independently of Pictish settlement structures, however.

### 3.3. Contact onomastics

Where people meet, place-names are frequently borrowed, and names may live on centuries after a language is dead. In the eastern parts of Germany, Slavic names are testimony to the Slavic tribes who used to live here, just as Indian place-names in America remind us that the Europeans were not the first. One reason why names are so easily exchanged across linguistic borders is that they are monoreferential, i.e. they denote one specific location – or person. We can easily imagine the scene of a native pointing at his farm or the highest hill in the area and telling their names to an incomer. The following section is a presentation of some of the aspects of contact onomastic research, including a discussion of the problematic notion of hybrid names.

#### 3.3.1. Early contact onomastics

Kranzmayer's study *Zur Ortsnamenforschung im Grenzland* from 1934 is a pioneer work in contact onomastics. Kranzmayer develops a classification model for place-names in the German-Slavic contact area, including three types of name pairs:

1. *Phonetically related pairs*: Names borrowed in the original form, with the required phonological adaptation, e.g. Slavic *Lip'sko* > German *Leipzig*.
2. *Semantically related pairs* involves translation, e.g. German *Neudorf* > Slavic *Nova Wjes*, both meaning 'new village'.
3. *Free pairs* i.e. when places have two totally unrelated names in two languages.

To this model, Eichler (1980: 134–136) adds *mixed names* or *hybrids*, in which one element is translated and the other phonetically adapted. The term *hybrid name* is problematic, as it is defined differently by different scholars, and will be discussed separately below.

Kranzmayer intended his method to be applicable in all contact areas, and it has actually been used in Scandinavian-Finnish-Sami contact areas. Pellijeff (1980 19–23) states that mixed names are common, and that the generic is normally the translated element.

### 3. Former research

This is less linguistically demanding, since a limited range of generics are used. Moreover, the generic normally describes the locality, and the speakers of both languages can actually see the locality in question. A translation of the whole name, on the other hand, requires bilingual speakers. Kranzmayer's name pair method is of little use in areas of historic bilingualism, which have borrowed names but no name pairs, such as Orkney or Normandy. Moreover, the name pair method focuses exclusively on the borrowing process, and is not concerned with the adaptation of borrowed names in the recipient language.

#### 3.3.2. *Sociolinguistics and contact onomastics*

Weinreich's *Languages in Contact* from 1953 is the starting point of systematic contact linguistics, as well as the foundation for sociolinguistics. According to Weinreich, the two major conditioning factors in contact situations are *the sociocultural context* and *the bilingual speakers*. The sociocultural context includes the intensity and duration of the contact and the social relation between the groups. In addition, factors such as the speakers' competence in the contact languages, their linguistic loyalties and communication patterns influence the direction and degree of linguistic interference. This means that each contact area requires a separate description. In addition, Weinreich ([1953] 1979: 83) makes a methodological point of describing the various linguistic levels separately: phonology, morphology, lexicon and syntax. In this way, he obtains a much more precise instrument for describing the complex patterns of interference in contact languages than previous scholars.

Weinreich's model was intended for synchronous studies of spoken language. However, it can be applied to historical linguistics, because borrowed names are normally retained in a form that reflects interference on one or several linguistic levels. In this way, they can be seen as relics of precious contact. A recent Nordic onomastic work inspired by Weinreich is Aino Naert's study (Naert 1995) of place-names in a presently Swedish-speaking parish in coastal Finland, where a number of names have been borrowed from Finnish. She treats the various linguistic levels separately in the

same way as Weinreich, but she does not share his interest in the speakers.

### 3.3.3. *Integration of borrowed names*

Unlike Kranzmayer, Walther is concerned with the integration of borrowed names, and uses the term *hybridisation* for this process.<sup>15</sup> Early written sources enable scholars to observe the development of name. The adaptation is observed on separate linguistic levels as described by Weinreich, which seem to correspond to chronological phases. Primary hybrids are formed in the bilingual period. As a first step, phonemic adaptation may occur at the point of borrowing. In addition, lexical or grammatical morphemes may be translated or replaced. The longer the contact, the more hybrids, as both groups get familiar with their neighbours' naming practises. Transparent elements, which are common in microtoponyms, enhance translation (Walther 1980: 150).

	Primary adaptation		Secondary adaptation <sup>16</sup>
<b>Linguistic level</b>	phonemic adaptation: ON <i>Laxavatn</i> > Gael. <i>Lacsabhat</i>	morphemic adaptation: Slav. <i>-in</i> > Ger. <i>-en</i> Semantic adaptation: Slav. <i>ici</i> > Ger. <i>dorf</i> 'village'	Epexegetis: <i>Laxavatn</i> > <i>Loch of Lacsabhat</i> lexical adaptation: Sami <i>Jiimmeloufta</i> > Norw. <i>Hjemmeluft</i>

Table 3.2. Model of the integration of borrowed place-names, based on Walther.

<sup>15</sup> "Definition des onymischen Hybrids: es ist eine an das integrierende Sprachsystem adaptiertes strukturiertes onymischen Lexem, das noch phonematische, morphematische und lexematisch-semantische Spuren der Ausgangssprache erkennen läßt." Walther 1980: 154. I.e. a hybrid is a place-name adapted to the recipient language, still containing phonematic, morphematic or lexical-semantical features of the original language.

<sup>16</sup> In the model, 'adaptation' replaces 'hybridisation'.

### 3. Former research

Secondary hybridization implies later adaptation of borrowed names. This includes the addition of an epexegetic generic, such as Scots *Loch of Lacsabhat* < ON *Laxavatn* (the ON generic *vatn* means ‘lake, loch’, Cox 1989: 3. Moreover, name elements can be substituted by phonemically similar elements in the recipient language.

Walther’s model can be applied in different contact areas, for instance it covers all the types of Scandinavisation listed by Fellows-Jensen.<sup>17</sup> The various types of adaptations are also relevant for the Orkney material.<sup>18</sup> The model shows integration as a process. It starts at the point of borrowing and may continue until the name is fully integrated linguistically, though no longer semantically motivated. An example of the latter is the Sami place-name *Jiemmaloufta* which has become *Hjemmeluft* in Norwegian. The Sami name contains the generic ‘bay’, and an uncertain specific (NSL: 216); the Norwegian form is a compound of ‘home’ + ‘air’, which may sound similar, but makes no sense as a name. Phonemic adaptation stands out as being compulsory – any borrowed name must be adapted in sound to the recipient language.

Like Pellijeff, Walther points out that the generic is most liable to translation, but Walther regards function as the most important reason. The role of the specific is to identify, and this does not require linguistic transparency. The generics, on the other hand, classify names. For Walther, obtaining a transparent generic, thus defining what sort of localities names denote, is an important point in the integration process. This is no obvious tendency in the West Mainland material, however.

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<sup>17</sup> Scandinavisation includes i) replacement of an OE sound or word by a related Scandinavian one, ii) replacement of an OE element by a Scandinavian word with the same (or similar) meaning, iii) replacement of an OE or British word by an unrelated Scandinavian one of similar sound and iv) addition of a Scandinavian element to an OE or British place-names. (Fellows-Jensen 1985: 192–199).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Weinreich, Labov and Herzog 1968: 157 for changes at the point of borrowing and subsequent changes, when rules of the recipient language are transferred to the borrowed elements.

The term *primary adaptation* may be slightly misleading. In Orkney names, morphemic and semantic adaptation cannot be limited to the actual bilingual period, e.g. *Bailliefjold* (gen. < ON *fjall* ‘mountain, hill’) from the 1848 ComF-map is adapted to *Baillie Hill* on the OS-maps. It means that primary adaptations are possible as long as there are speakers with a rudimentary knowledge of Norn, whereas secondary adaptations require no bilingual competence whatsoever. This distinction, based on the speakers’ linguistic competence, is made in chapter 9.

### 3.4. Hybrid names?

The term *hybrid name* has been used of any name containing elements from more than one language.<sup>19</sup> The term is problematic, however, because it is also used in a more specific sense. Above we have seen Eichler’s definition: one element translated, one element phonetically adapted, and Walther’s: a name adapted to the recipient language, but retaining features of the original language. Pedersen (2001: 106) delimits the term hybrid name to new names compounded with an existing name of other linguistic origin.

The term hybrid name is particularly unfortunate from a name formation perspective, as it may suggest a formation of names with “one element from each language”. Fellows-Jensen (pers. comm.) reckons this as theoretically possible in the Danelaw. This would be counter to general linguistic practise, however, one would not expect code-shift within the unit of a place-name, cf. the common view in Finnish contact onomastics: “‘Mixed names’ formed in two languages can normally be ruled out”.<sup>20</sup> In her contact onomastic thesis, Naert (1995: 54–58) likewise regards monolingual formation as the rule. Names compounded of elements of different origin are either partly adapted, or contain borrowed appellatives or names.

The different definitions may reflect different scholarly focus. Traditional onomastics was mainly concerned with the etymological origin of individual elements, and the widest definition has etymo-

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<sup>19</sup> E.g. Fellows-Jensen 1985: 192–199, Hansen 1998: 28.

<sup>20</sup> “Några “blandnamn” bildade på två språk är det i varje fall inte i allmänhet fråga om”. Zilliacus 1980: 320.



### 3. Former research

logical relevance only. It is of little onomastic relevance however, i.e. it does not explain why the name actually consists of elements from different languages. Moreover, an etymological focus may result in a rather static view of the language. One may not realise that in a language contact situation, name elements that have their origin in one language may be borrowed into another language and become productive here. For instance the element *-(w)itz*, borrowed from Sorbian, becomes productive in German formations in the German-Sorbian contact areas (Walther 1980: 149).

There is an obvious parallel to the debate of the so-called Grimston- and Carlton-hybrids in the Danelaw, compounded of *-tūn* and an ON specific. According to Fellows-Jensen and other British scholars, this class evolved because the Vikings kept the English generic *tūn*, replacing the specific with ON personal names or appellatives. The major arguments for seeing these names as hybrids are the fact that *tūn* does not seem to be productive in place-name formation in Denmark when the Vikings arrives in the Danelaw (Fellows-Jensen 1972: 110), and that many of the settlements bearing *tūn*-names, pre-date the Viking Age.

These arguments represent a rather static view of language. Indeed, some of the *tūn*-names with ON specifics may be results of partial replacement, but in other contact areas, the generic is most liable to replacement. Since names in *tūn* with ON specifics are rather common, it seems more likely that the Vikings used the element in their own primary name formations. Even if the Danish Vikings may not have known the element when they arrived,<sup>21</sup> they would have become familiar with it in England, where *tūn*-names are frequent. Thus, they may have used *tūn* in their name formations just the same way as the Germans used the originally Slavic *-(w)itz*, and Scots in Orkney used *quoy* (< ON *kví* ‘enclosure’) *bu* (< ON *bú* ‘property’) or *bister* (see Gammeltoft 2001: 270 and above). The age of the settlement cannot be used as an argument for hybrid forma-

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<sup>21</sup> It is not quite clear whether Danish Vikings knew the appellative *tūn* from their homeland, Kalkar gives no examples from Denmark proper. It is common in Norway, however.

tions. The Vikings in the Danelaw may have replaced former names by their own, like the Vikings settlers did in the Northern Isles.<sup>22</sup>

As I view name formation, it is normally monolingual, and thus I will avoid the term hybrid. Instead, I am interested in determining the formation language of names, and if they contain elements of different linguistic origin, I will try to explain what processes have been at work. It is fundamentally important to distinguish between the *loan of names* and the adaptation and reuse of these, and the *formation of new names* with borrowed elements.<sup>23</sup> Once the appellative *sgeir* < *sker* ‘islet’ is established in the Gaelic language system, it may be used in new, purely Gaelic name formations. Similarly, an Orkney name is a Scots formation even if a name borrowed from Old Norse functions as a specific. This will be discussed in some detail in ch. 7.1.

### **3.5. Borrowed names – part of the recipient language**

One important aspect of Walther’s model which has not been stressed so far, is the shift of focus from the original language to the recipient language. In older contact onomastic studies, one may often note an implicit interest in isolating a linguistic stratum that is no longer in use, cf. Jakobsen and Marwick’s interest in the Old Norse element. The reconstruction of the original name form is paramount, and with this in mind, changes have often been evaluated negatively. This view is reflected in English terminology, when changes or adaptations are frequently referred to as ‘corruptions’.

One should bear in mind that borrowed names become a part of the recipient language system. From this point of view, names should not retain their original forms, but rather be adapted and become consistent with the onomasticon and lexicon of the recipient language. The language system requires phonematic adaptation of borrowed names. Additional adaptations are optional, cf. fig. 3.2. In

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Fellows-Jensen 1980: 198 ff. There are actually a few examples of name changes, e.g. *Deoraby* for former *Nordworðig*, see Fellows-Jensen 1972: 120.

<sup>23</sup> Cox 1989: 2f, Pedersen 2001: 103, 106 f..

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this way, names are adjusted to the general linguistic system of the recipient language.

In addition, names must adjust to specific rules of the onomastic system. The basic function of a name is serving as a unique reference for a specific location. For identification purposes, relation to another, familiar name is helpful. This explains why so many names are borrowed rather than replaced in contact situations, and why existing place names often function as specifying elements in new names. Moreover, a generic which helps to define or classify the locality seems to be desirable. Even if epexegetic names like *Point Scarvataing* (*taing* < ON *tangi* 'point') and *Loch Watten* (*Watten* < ON *vatn* 'lake, loch') may seem pleonastic to those with knowledge of Old Norse, they make perfect sense for Scots speakers. The added elements are locality-indicating generics. Parallels can be observed in originally uncompounded names, Norwegian examples are: ON *Njót* > Mod. Norw. *Nøtterøy* (*øy* 'island', ON *Hýi* > *Hyeffjorden* (*fjorden* 'the firth or inlet').

## Chapter 4. The languages

Whereas chapter 2 sketched the socio-cultural setting for the contact languages, this chapter deals with the actual language systems that meet in Orkney. However, there is a prolonged contact period, from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the languages are by no means static. The Norse or Norn language developed and died,<sup>1</sup> whereas Scots developed to a modern dialect. From a synchronic perspective, the two languages are not of equal status.

To interpret names of Norse origin, knowledge of both linguistic systems is necessary. We need to know the Old Norse starting point as well the development of the Norse language in Orkney. This includes changes paralleled in Norway as well as changes peculiar to Orkney. The latter may be the result of Scots interference. We also need a description of the Scots language, which may have caused influenced Norn in the contact period. Even more important is the role of Scots in the development of names. Since Scots is now the only language spoken in Orkney, there is no such thing as an Old Norse name today. Names of Old Norse origin only survive as loans in Scots, and as such, they have been adapted to the Scots linguistic system. Unfortunately, this fact is sometimes overlooked by scholars intent on identifying the Norse stratum (cf. ch. 3).

This chapter gives a linguistic foundation, an overview of features and changes that may apply in Orkney place-names, based on previous works by various scholars. In chapter 8, I discuss to what extent these features or others, actually emerge in the name material. To avoid overlap, place-name examples are not normally given in chapter 4.

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<sup>1</sup> The term Norn refers to the spoken language based on Old Norse in the Northern Isles, see below 4.3.

#### 4. The languages

##### 4.1. A brief history of the Scots language

Like the other terms designating languages, the term *Scots* requires a brief definition. In modern British language history, Scots rather than English designates the English-based dialects of Scotland. Scotland was a national state during most of the contact period, but a separate norm for written Scots only existed for a limited period, from late 14<sup>th</sup> century to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By the union with England in 1707, written Scots had already fallen into disuse. It lived on as an oral language, however. Thus, Scots<sup>2</sup> designates a language written until ca. 1700, as well as an oral language, spoken until the present. In linguistic surveys, the present dialect of Orkney is called South Insular Scots.<sup>3</sup>

Scots is based on North English dialects. Angles crossed the Tweed and won Dun Eidynd from Celtic tribes in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Subsequently, there was a steady influx from North England to South-East Scotland, increasing after the Norman conquest of England. The immigrants brought with them a language fundamentally influenced by the Scandinavian language of the Viking settlers. “These people were really Anglo-Norse, and their dialect was probably a ‘creoloid’ or ethnic koiné with extensive borrowings”.<sup>4</sup> A recent study by Kries (2003: 430) also suggests primary Scandinavian influence in southwest Scotland.

By the 11<sup>th</sup> century, this early English language was quite widespread in the Scottish South-East, and under the rule of king Malcolm Canmore, the Scottish elite was rapidly anglicized. However, King Malcolm also welcomed Normans, and this paved the way for the French language. French fell out of use in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century, but by that date, it had left its distinct stamp on the language.

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<sup>2</sup> Older Scots may sometimes be used of Scots throughout the written period. Others distinguish between Early Scots ca. 1350–1440 and Middle Scots 1440–1700, see EHSL: 34 f.

<sup>3</sup> In the Highlands, the language shift was much later, and the dialect here is a variant of Standard English rather than Scots. Murison 1980: 34 f.

<sup>4</sup> EHSL: 57. An somewhat different view, underlining the fundamental Englishness of this language, is presented in Thomason & Kaufman 1988 263-306.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

The oldest charters in Scotland are written in Latin, with the odd word and name in Scots. In *The Scone Lease* from 1350, however, the proportion of Scots is so high it is regarded as the beginning of written Scots (EHSL: 34). Subsequently, “Inglis” (i.e. Scots) was used for original literature (Barbours *Brus* from 1375) translations and documents. The Scottish Parliament had their documents written in Scots from 1398. By ca. 1450, Scots was a self-contained written language for all purposes, the national language of the Scottish kingdom, with a fairly stable norm. (EHSL:8). It differed from English on a number of points, orthographically, phonologically (development of vowels and diphthongs), morphologically and lexically. The distinction between Scots and English was accentuated in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the southern dialects became the basis for the written norm in England. Henceforward, the Scottish variant is frequently but not consistently referred to as “Scottis”.<sup>5</sup>

The Scots written language was short-lived. Anglification started at the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, increasing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (EHSL: 14 f), promoted by the Reformation and the press. The reformation fathers advocated the use of the vernacular in church, but since the Bible was never translated into Scots, the Reformation meant that English became the language of the Bible.<sup>6</sup> Printed texts were generally in English (EHSL: 15 f), probably to reach a wide audience. The union of the crowns in 1603 must have speeded up the use of English, as the Scottish elite were now in close contact with London. The union of the Parliaments in 1707 put an end to Scots as a self-contained written language. It survived as a spoken language, however, much the same way as Norwegian after the union with Denmark.

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. REO XXI, the instalment of William Sinclair in 1446, written in Latin with a translation “into Scottis”

<sup>6</sup> The situation in Norway is somewhat similar. The Bible was never translated into Norwegian, the Danish translation was used.

#### 4. The languages

### 4.2. Structural characteristics of Orkney Scots

This part is a brief overview of important structural characteristics of the Scots in general and the Orkney dialect in particular. Most features particular to both general Scots and Orkney Scots pertain to the sound system, in particular the development of vowels. In addition, there are major lexical differences.

#### 4.2.1. Phonology

##### 4.2.1.1. Quantity

According to the *Scottish Vowel Length Rule* (SVLR or *Aitken's Law*), a sound change starting in the late 1500s, the vowel quantity in Scots depends on the phonological context rather than the historical origin. Original short, non-central vowels are lengthened word finally, in front of /r/ and the voiced fricatives /v, ð, z, ʒ/. Original long vowels are shortened in front of other consonants. SVLR works most systematically on high vowels. This means that there is no opposition between long and short vowels in Scots, as no vowel is consistently long.<sup>7</sup>

According to McMahon (1994:60), /ɪ, ʌ, ε/ are always short. This is not true for /ε/ in Orkney, which can be long. We may note that SVLR does not consistently apply in Orkney dialect, as indicated by the phonetic transcriptions in *The Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* (LAS). Most vowels are lengthened according to SVLR, but long vowels also occur in other positions (e.g. in front of *d* and if English has a diphthong.) There is also individual variation, for instance *farm* and *far* is pronounced with short vowels by the Dounby informant and long vowels by the Birsay informant. In *breeze* and *grieve*, the vowel is short in Birsay, long in Dounby.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> EHSL: 67, McMahon 1994: 60 f., van Leyden 2004: 3 f.

<sup>8</sup> *Linguistic Atlas of Scotland* III (LAS): 19 f. Also see van Leyden 2004 ch. 3.

#### 4.2.1.2. Vowels

Prior to *The Great Vowel Shift*, Scots had the same vowels as Middle English, with one exception: Anglo-Saxon  $\bar{o}$  had changed to / $\emptyset$ /, *u–e* or *ui* in spelling, e.g. *gude/guid* as opposed to *good*. This development took place towards the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. / $\emptyset$ / has been lost in many Scottish dialects, but it is still extant in words like *boot* and *good* in the traditional dialects of the Northern Isles.<sup>9</sup>

The Great Vowel Shift, involving the raising and diphthongisation of long vowels, is common to Scots and English, though in Scots it only affects front vowels. Moreover, the resulting vowels are not identical in Scots and English. The vowel shift appears in written documents around 1400, but the sound change may have started earlier.<sup>10</sup> This means that it had probably started by the time Scots was gaining ground in Orkney. The vowel changes particular to Scots include:

- a) Anglo-Saxon  $\bar{a}$  > /e:/, e.g. *bān*, *tā* > /be:n/, /te:/, in spelling *bane*, *tae*, as opposed to Eng. *bone*, *toe*. Traditional Mainland dialects have /e:/, e/ in words such as *toe*, *more*, *whole*, *stone*.
- b) Anglo-Saxon  $\bar{e}$  > /i:/, so that Scots has /i:/ in *head*, *wear*, *deaf*. LAS only rarely notes /i:/ in Orkney pronunciation, notably in *head*. However, the sporadic /i:/-forms could represent the traditional pronunciation, now ousted by Standard English forms.

#### *Short vowels*

Short *i* and *u* are lowered and centralised. The centralised *i* in particular is regarded as a markedly Scottish form, sometimes reflected in spelling in forms such as *Wullie* for *Willie*<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> EHSL: 69, LAS: 12–27.

<sup>10</sup> EHSL: 69 ff., McMahon 1999: 24 f., Murison 1980: 26 ff.

<sup>11</sup> EHSL: 299 ff., 468 ff, 477 ff. In EHSL, the sign /i/ denotes centralised *i*. I have chosen the more traditional notation /ɪ/.



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##### 4.2.1.3. Vowel inventory

Present-day Orkney Scots has the following vowels phonemes:

		front	central		back		
		-r.	+r.	-r.	+r.	-r.	+r.
high	i					u	
	e    ø	ɪ				o	
	ɛ	ə				ʌ	ɔ
low	a						

In addition, there are three diphthongs: /ai ~ ei/, /au ~ ɔu/, /ɔi/. The former is a development of Anglo-Saxon long *i* like in English, but with a slightly more closed pronunciation. For Orkney, LAS normally notes [ei] in words such as *bite*, *white*, *time*. The original diphthongs in *bait/mate* and *caught* are monophthongised and become /e:/, *ɛ:/* and /a:/ (EHSL 459–464, 448f.).<sup>12</sup>

As noted above (4.2.1.1), there is no opposition between long and short vowels in Scots, as no vowel is consistently long. Instead, vowel quantity depends on the phonological environment.

Some scholars do not regard schwa /ə/ as a separate phoneme, as it is limited to unstressed positions (cf. O'Connor 1973: 153 ff.). It is included here, since it is used in transcription. In fact, short centralised *i* comes close to being a stressed variant of schwa in Orkney Scots, the pronunciation varies from centralised [e, ɛ] to [ɤ].<sup>13</sup> The transcription in EHSL is /ɪ/. I follow Marwick in using /i/, which means that /i/ does not denote exactly the same sound as in the transcriptions of Standard English. As can be seen from the figure, the Orkney dialect has some typical Scots features: There is no /ɜ/-phoneme, and only one /a/-phoneme, covering [æ~a]. In addition,

<sup>12</sup> In the modern dialect, there is a tendency to pronounce /ei/ in accordance with Standard English.

<sup>13</sup> EHSL 468 f. According to OrknN: xxxix–xlii, all short ON vowels may be centralised. o can only shift to /ʌ/, the rest may develop into /i/.

older speakers use /ø/. This phoneme is now rare in Scots and even among younger Orcadians.

#### 4.2.1.4. Consonants

##### *Vocalisation of /l/*

Vocalisation of short *l* succeeding a short, back vowel first appears in Scottish documents in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is first documented in the combinations /ul/ and *l* followed by consonant, with spellings like *fow* < *full*. Vocalisation spreads to other environments in the 15<sup>th</sup> century: *aw* < *all*, *bowster* < *bolster*<sup>14</sup>. Vocalisation of *l* is common in Orkney Scots.

##### *Affricates*

Scots sources from the 14<sup>th</sup> centuries use stops for English affricates in many words: *kirk*, *brig*, *birk*, *rig* < *church*, *bridge*, *birch*, *ridge*. This is a common Scottish feature also found in Orkney. According to EHSL (p 100), the development may have been triggered by individual Scandinavian loan words.

Later, /dʒ/ may change to /tʃ/ and /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ (EHSL: 500). The former is common to many Northern Scots dialects including Orkney. In these dialects, *job* and *John* are pronounced with initial /tʃ/. The shift from /tʃ/ to /ʃ/ is peculiar to Shetland, Orkney and Caithness. The present Orkney dialect has adapted to Standard English, according to LAS, which consistently notes /tʃ/ in words like *cheat* and *bench*. In some place-names and words of ON origin, /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ are interchangeable: /tʃɪn, ʃʌn/ < *tjörn* ‘loch’, /’tʃaldər, ’ʃalder/ < *tjaldr* ‘oyster-catcher’.

##### *Dental fricatives /θ, ð/*

In the traditional Orkney and Shetland dialects, stops replace dental fricatives. According to EHSL: 506, the development is probably related to the shift from Norn to Scots, cf.: “/t d/ replaced /θ ð/ in all

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<sup>14</sup>EHSL: 107 f. Vocalisation is also found in Northern England, and is possibly induced by contact with Norman French.

#### 4. The languages

positions at the point of adoption [...], a rule which has been largely reversed in Orkney". The place-name material offers a rather complex picture (see 8.1.2.3).

Stops are still the rule in Shetland, whereas in Orkney, fricatives have been reintroduced in most positions (cf. LAS). The shift to /ð/ seems to be completed, whereas /t/ is still used for /θ/ in consonant clusters, e.g. in *three*, *north*, *length*. The reversal to fricative is a recent development. In dialect texts from the 1950s, *t* and *d* spellings indicate stops where fricatives are used today.

##### *Palatalisation*

###### a) *ll, nn*

Older Scots had palatal *n* and *l* intervocally in French loan words, indicated by the spellings *nz/ny* and *lz/ly*: *tailyour*, *bailie* or *balze* for *bailiff*. (*Z* or rather *ȝ* is an Old Scots grapheme for /j/, see EHSL: 98, 208). In West Mainland dialects, palatal realisation of *l* and *n* is still possible in certain positions (LAS: 20).

###### b) *k, g*

Initial *k* and *g* followed by front vowels is palatalised in traditional Northern and Galloway Scots (EHSL: 503), a development paralleled in Norwegian.<sup>15</sup> Since palatalisation is typical for areas once settled by the the Norse, it could possibly be due to Norse interference. On the other hand, velars adapt to the phonological environment in many languages. In Orkney, palatalised velars are on the wane apart from the northern islands: see the LAS notations of for *king*, *kist*: /tç-, tj-, c-/).

##### *Assimilation of consonant clusters*

###### a) *mb, nd, ld* > /m, n, l/

Assimilation of /mb/ > /m/ is consistent in Old Scots documents, for instance, *lamb* is always spelt *lam*, which is also the present pronunciation (CSD: 355). Assimilation of /nd/ is attested from the 14th

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<sup>15</sup> According to Indrebø 1951: 230, palatalisation develops in Middle Norwegian or Old Norse, i.e. no later than 1400.

century, and the assimilation of /ld/ from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. These assimilations are still productive, particular in word-final position. Assimilated forms are optional in words such as *land* /lan, land/ and *field* /fil, fild/ (CSD: 195, 355).

Most Norwegian dialects have the same assimilations. This means that there is no way of telling whether assimilations in the place-name material have come from Norse or Scots. However, restitution processes in Scots may affect place-names and create non-etymologic unassimilated forms (cf. 8.1.2.8).

*rs* > /rʃ/

is pronounced much the same as in East Norwegian dialects, i.e. supradental with some retroflexion (Eliasson 2000: 39). LAS notes /rʃ, rʃ/ in *hoarse* in Birsay and Dounby in West Mainland. According to Eliasson (2000: 40, 47), supradentalisation is peculiar to Scandinavian and Scots Gaelic, where it could be due to Scandinavian interference. Both LAS and the place-name material indicate that supradentals can be found (sporadically) in Orkney Scots, where Scandinavian influence is very likely.

#### 4.2.1.5. *Consonant inventory*

The Orkney dialects have the same consonants as other Scots dialects, though /tʃ/ replaces /dʒ/ in traditional variants.

- rʃ denotes supradental, slightly retroflex pronunciation of *rs* in *Furso*, *horse* (see above).
- ʌ aspirated pronunciation of *wh* as in *white*.
- χ velar fricative as in German *ach*: *broch*, *loch*

#### 4.2.2. *Morphology*

Nouns and adjectives are the word classes most relevant to place-name research, as nearly all name elements belong to these classes. By the time Scots was established as a written language, the Old English case, gender and number system was radically simplified (cf. Middle English). For nouns, there was opposition between singular and plural and genitive versus all other cases opposition. In addition, dative case morphology occurs sporadically. Both the plu-

#### 4. *The languages*

ral and the genitive are indicated by the morpheme *-is*. A periphrastic genitive construction with *of* develops in the Old Scots period, possibly based on French and Latin patterns. (EHSL: 158, 166). This becomes very productive in Orkney place-names.

The simplification of the case system affected adjectives as well. In the oldest documents, the ending *-e* in adjectives preceded by articles seem to indicate weak inflection. However, even in the 14<sup>th</sup> century the usage inconsistent, so by that date, weak inflection can hardly have fulfilled a syntactic function. Adjectives may have a plural form in *-is*, like in Middle English.

##### 4.2.3. *Lexicon*

The lexicon is an open class, which means no general rules or brief overview can be given. But as the present study deals with language contact, the linguistic origin of lexemes (which function as name elements) is of special importance. We noted above (4.1) that Scots developed from a Northern English dialect with a massive Scandinavian stratum. This means that many Scandinavian loans belong to the common heritage of Scots. Thus, I need to find a way to distinguish between Scandinavian loans common to Scots and direct loans in Orkney in the contact period.

My method has been to consult and compare Marwick's *Orkney Norn* (OrknN) and the *Concise Scots Dictionary* (CSD). Most entries in ON are direct loans, for Marwick does not include such common Scots words that can be found in Jamieson's dictionary (OrknN: vii.). Marwick's compilation includes more than 3000 words. These may be cross-checked with CSD. If a word is not included here, or is marked as peculiar to Orkney and Shetland, it maybe regarded as a direct, local loan. For instance CSD informs us that *skerry* < ON *sker* 'islet' is only used to Orkney and Shetland (and thus probably a local loan), whereas *firth* < *ffjörðr* is common to all Scots (and most likely an early loan, cf. CSD: 197, 622).

### 4.3. The Norse language in Orkney

In this context, *Norse* is used to cover successive linguistic stages, from Old Norse to Modern Norwegian, and including written and spoken language. *Old Norse* here denotes the west Scandinavian language (Norwegian, Icelandic and Faroese) of the Viking Age and the High Middle Ages, i.e. from 700/750 to ca. 1350.<sup>16</sup> Old Norse may also be used in a wider sense, including all the Scandinavian languages. Though the Scandinavian languages stem from a common language and were still close enough in the Viking Age to be collectively labelled ‘Danish tongue’, the first dialect differences were clearly visible. For this reason, I will distinguish between *Old Norse* and *Scandinavian*. The latter includes Swedish and Danish. Old Norse was used in writing from the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, and from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a wide variety of texts, including laws, sagas, religious literature and documents were written in ON.

The period from ca. 1350 to 1525 called *Middle Norwegian* by most scholars.<sup>17</sup> In this period, the language underwent major changes, most notably extensive morphological simplifications (see 4.3). Whereas the High Middle Ages is regarded as a period of cultural and political glory for Norway, the centuries after the Black Death (1349-50) represent decline. The literary activity waned, and from 1380, the crowns of Norway and Denmark were united. The power centre moved to Copenhagen, and Norway was always the weaker partner. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, oral Norwegian had developed to its modern stage. At the same time, Danish replaced Norwegian as written language, as the union of the crowns was reinforced in 1537.<sup>18</sup> A modern Norwegian written language did not develop until the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Barnes 1999 p 1. A survey of Old Norse and later Norwegian in English can be found in Vikør 2001.

<sup>17</sup> The Norwegian scholar Magnus Rindal argues that Old Norse ought to include the whole period up to modern Norwegian.

<sup>18</sup> In 1537, King Christian III imposed the Reformation in Denmark-Norway. He also declared that Norway was to be a part of Denmark on par with the other counties. This meant that Norway was no longer to have its own “riksråd” (state council or parliament), nor a separate church and archbishop.

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In Orkney, the language also developed in this period. Only three documents survive from the period, allowing for few certain conclusions to be drawn. However, a dialect based on Old Norse was spoken into the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Here, the term *Norn* will be reserved for this dialect.<sup>19</sup> There is no way of deciding at what point Norn had developed into a distinct variant of ON, but in the contact period it is relevant to talk of Norn as opposed to Scots.

##### *Sources to the Norse language in Orkney*

There are two major groups of sources to the Norse language in Orkney: 1) four written documents 1329–1425 and some later fragments 2) The Norse substrate in the present dialect, mainly loanwords and borrowed names.

The extant documents are DN II 168 and 170, both from 1329, DN I 404 dated 1369 and DN II 691, written in 1425.<sup>20</sup> As Orkney was seat of the earl and the bishop, there has certainly been more, but these are lost, either in fire or by meditated destruction (as suggested in REO XXI from 1466). The fragments include a single phrase recorded by the chronicler *Jo. Ben.* in 1529: *Goand da, boundæ* and a much later sample, The Lord's Prayer recorded by James Wallace in 1700:

Favor i ir i chimerie, Helleur ir i nam thite, gilla cosdum thite cumma, veyá thina mota vara gort o yurn sinna gort i chimerie, ga vus da on da dalight brow vora, Firgive vus sinna vora sin vee Firgive sindara mutha vus, lyv vus ye i tumtation, min dilivra vus fro olt ilt, Amen (eller) On sa methet vera.<sup>21</sup>

As our sources to the Norse language in Orkney are limited to four documents and a limited number of more fragmentary texts, it is impossible to give an outline of Orkney Norse. The texts have been analysed by Marwick, Indrebø, Pettersen and Barnes, with some-

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<sup>19</sup> It is also used with a wider definition, e.g. in the title *Orkney Norn*, of the present-day dialect, or of all stages of the Norse language in the Northern Isles, cf. Barnes 1998: 1.

<sup>20</sup> Dated "1426 or earlier in DN". Marwick has convincingly demonstrated that it was written in 1425, OrknN: xx, note 4.

<sup>21</sup> Quoted after Barnes 1998: 48 f.

what different conclusions. The most comprehensive treatments is found in *Orkney Norn* and in Barnes' *The Norn Language of Orkney and Shetland* (1998). For presentations of Old Norse and the history of the Scandinavian languages, see Barnes 2007 and Haugen 1976.

The following brief presentation focuses on structural differences between Norse and Scots, mainly on phonological features. The most important changes in Norse in the contact period are described, and the development in Orkney (and Shetland) Norn are related to patterns of change in Scandinavia. Whereas this chapter is a general overview, based on other scholars' findings, the actual features observed in names are discussed in ch. 8. The two oldest documents are of less importance in this context, as they are written before the actual contact period in a traditional ON norm, whereas the two younger demonstrate possible developments. These are particularly important if corroborated by other sources – fragments, loanwords or names.

## **4.4. Structural characteristics**

### **4.4.1. Phonology**

#### **4.4.1.1. Quantity**

In classic Old Norse of ca. 1200, there was opposition between long and short vowels. All vowels have a long and short variant, apart from *æ* (always long) and *ö* (always short). In Old Norse, syllables could be short (VC), long (V:C or VC:) or overlong (V:C:). This changed after the Great Scandinavian Quantity Shift, which seems to have started in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century. After the quantity shift, stressed syllables are always long, containing either a long vowel or a short consonant (cf. van Leyden 2004: 24 ff).

As we see, vowel length is governed by different rules in Scots, Old Norse and modern Norwegian, and this is an obvious point to note in the development of place-names. According to Árnason the main effect of the SVLR was a general shortening of long vowels,



#### 4. The languages

whereas the Scandinavian shift seems to cause more harmony in the syllabic structure.<sup>22</sup>

##### 4.4.1.2. Vowels

Written ON has more vowels graphemes than English due to umlaut. Apart from *ö* (always short) and *æ* (always long), the vowels have a long and a short variant. In standardised texts, acute accent indicates long vowel. The graphemes not found in English were:

- œ as in French *feu*
- ø the same sound, but short
- æ as in English *hat*, but long
- ö as in English *got*

Ö is often replaced by a ligature grapheme *o* with a hook under it, but *ö* is used in Icel. and by Fritzner. Moreover, it belongs to the standard set of symbols and does not cause typological problems.

##### *The Norwegian back vowel shift*

In all Scandinavian languages, ON *á* has been rounded, and is now pronounced /ɔ/, as in English *saw*. The spelling is *å*. The shift probably started ca. 1200, as attested by the confusion of *Óz* and *á* in documents. The shift may have triggered a further chain shift in the back vowels in Norwegian and Swedish: /ɔ/ is raised to /o/ and /o/ is raised to /u/. Original /u/ was fronted to mid-*ʉ*,<sup>23</sup> giving the following vowel inventory for later stages of Norse and Modern Norwegian.

	front		central		back	
	-r.	+r.	-r.	+r.	-r.	+r.
high	i	y		ʉ		u
	e	ø				o
low	æ				a	

<sup>22</sup> Quoted after van Leyden 2004: 24.

<sup>23</sup> Indrebø 1951:116, Fjeld-Halvorsen 1984: 244, Torp & Vikør 1993: 61 f.

*Diphthong > monophthong*

One of the early dialect differences in Scandinavia pertains to the development of the diphthongs *au*, *ei*, *ey*. Diphthongs remained in the west, but changed to monophthongs in the east, including East Norwegian dialects (see Christiansen 1946–1948: 162f.). This means that West Norwegian *hawk*, *stein*, *øy* is opposed to Swedish *hök*, *sten*, *ø* ('hawk, stone, island').

Since the shift from diphthong to monophthong is characteristic of east Scandinavian dialects, it is somewhat surprising that it should appear in the Northern Isles. In Shetland, the shift is consistent, in Orkney forms fluctuate.<sup>24</sup> A comparison of the two last extant documents is interesting in this respect. In 1369, diphthongs are used consistently: *æin*, *leikmenn*, *þeir*, *skadalausar*, in 1425 all diphthongs have been replaced: *en*, *lekmæn*, *bøød*, *døde*. This can hardly reflect an actual linguistic shift, since the dialect has retained diphthongs in some words. In The Lord's Prayer in Norn, Low (1700) spells *brow* < ON *brauð*, indicative of diphthong. Thus, the consistent monophthongs in 1425 rather seems to point to a scribe born or trained in Sweden, as suggested by Pettersen (1988 190 ff).

*Lowering of short vowels*

In the 1425-document, forms such as *welja* < *vilja* and *gripin* < *gripinn* indicates lowering of short *i*. The lowering of short vowels is quite common in Norwegian dialects (Indrebø 1951: 222–25), but as noted above (4.2.1.2), it is also characteristic of Scots.

*o, ó > u*

The shift *o > u* is common to the two youngest documents: *brut*, *brutlegga* (< *brot*), *landbular* (< *bólar*), *skutt* (< *skott* 'Scotsman?') in 1369 and such examples as *hulpit*, *opburit*, *biwr* (< *holpit* 'helped', *borit* 'carried', *bjórr* 'beer') in 1425. There are even examples of the shift in Low's notation of The Lord's Prayer: *cumma* (cf. Norw. *komma*), *vus* (*oss*), *yurn* (Norw. *jorden*, ON *jörðin*).

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<sup>24</sup> Hægstad 1900: 73, ShNorm. L, OrknN: xlii.

#### 4. The languages

Pettersen regards the forms with *u* as Swedish interference in his analysis of the 1425 letter. Omlaut differences have certainly caused an opposition between *u* in Swedish and *o* in Norwegian in a number of words (cf. Haugen 1976: 200). This is not a fully satisfactory explanation, however, since the shift is neither limited to the 1425-document, nor to Orkney. Hægstad (1900: 73) sees the merger of *ó* and *ú* as a general feature of the Shetland dialect, and the pronunciation /u, u:/ of original ON *o, ó* is also rather common in Orkney. The development thus seems to be typical of the Northern Isles (cf. OrknN xli).

The apparent inconsistencies in the spelling of *o* and *u* could be a result of the back vowel shift described above. After the shift, the vowel in *bol*, *okse* and *jord* is pronounced /u/, although the traditional spelling is retained. Assuming that the same development took place in the Northern Isles, the spelling <u> can be explained as a phonetically appropriate rendering of the raised *o*. The spelling is more likely to occur if the scribe was not completely familiar with Norse spelling conventions. As for the Hildina ballad and the Lord's Prayer, we know they were recorded by Scotsmen. A number of linguistic features suggest a Scottish scribe for the 1369-document as well. (cf. Barnes 1998: 40 f.)

#### *Development of y, ý and œ*

The rounded vowels unfamiliar to Scots tend to become non-rounded. This is documented in the 1369 document: *frista* < *fyrsta*, *nita* < *nýta*, *skilde* < *skyldi*, *beta* < *bæta* and in The Lord's Prayer. *sindara* (as opposed to Norwegian *syndarar*). The same shifts, *y* > *i* and *œ* > /e, ε/, is the rule in borrowed words, though both occasionally develop into (rounded) *ø*.

The shift from *y, ý* > *i* can probably be explained as interference from Scots, which does not have rounded *y*.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Other features pointed out in previous research have not been included here, if they are not consistent. For instance, the 1425 document has progressive j-umlaut: *jærldsðomit*, *Hiætland*, *siælf* (< *jarls-*, *Hjat-*, *sjalf*). This is not found in the other documents, nor in the dialect, cf. *yackle* (< *jaxl*), *yamalt* (< *jamn-aldri*) ON: xliii. Thus, the umlaut form can probably be ascribed to the East

#### 4.4.1.3. *Consonants*

##### *Postvocalic p t k > b d g*

The voicing of *p*, *t*, *k* and *g* is typical of Danish and adjacent dialects in Sweden and Norway, constituting a dialect boundary between southern and northern Scandinavian. Somewhat surprisingly, voicing also occurs in the Northern Isles. It is found sporadically in the two latest Orkney documents: *luga* < *luka* and *skriuad* < *skrivit* (1396), *tagha*, *taghin* < *taka* and *Patrigher* < *Patrick* (1425). These cannot merely be ascribed to the scribes, since a number of Norse loanwords in Scots also undergo voicing. Thus it seems to reflect a local development.<sup>26</sup>

##### *Postvocalic g > w > loss*

This shift is only found once in the early documents: *Kærkewaw* in 1425. However, it is attested in later written sources as well as place-names and loanwords, and must thus be regarded as a regular development in Orkney. In the phrase quoted by Jo. Ben. and in Wallace's record of The Lord's Prayer we find *da*, *dalight* < *dag*- 'day'. In Norway and Shetland, postvocalic *g* is normally retained. Once more, we have to look to Denmark for parallels.

##### *Development of dental fricatives*

Norwegian has no dental fricatives. By 1350, *ð* was lost after vowels and had shifted to *d* after consonants. Somewhat later, *þ* shifted to *t* (*d* in unstressed words, Indrebø 1951: 226). In the 1425-document, fricatives are normally spelt *th*, though sporadically replaced by stops such as in *natigh* < *náðugr*, or lost like in *reskap* < *reiðskapr*. Cf. loss in the later fragments of Norn: *brow* < *brauð* in The Lord's

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Scandinavian scribe. The document from 1369 shows a shift from *þe* > *pi* in ON pronouns: *þitta* (*þetta*) and *þis* (*þess*). Traditional ON pronouns are not attested in later documents from Orkney, however.

<sup>26</sup> OrknN: xlvii., ShNorn: LII ff., cf. 8.1.2.1. Sandøy (1996: 153 f.) has pointed out that voicing is not necessarily due to Danish influence. Since there was no opposition between voiced and unvoiced stops between vowels, voicing could develop independently outside the Danish-speaking area.

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Prayer and *goand da* < *góðan dag* in Jo. Ben. A particular development, *p* > *h*, is attested in a few Orkney place-names, e.g. *Thorwald-ishow* 1502 > *Horraldshay* 1595. Parallels are found in Faroese, e.g. *þetta* > *hetta*. The Norse development of dental fricatives seems to have affected the local Scots dialect, see 4.2.1.4 above.

#### *Vocalisation and loss of l*

In the document from 1369, *l* is lost in *skide* < *skyldi*, and an extra *l* inserted in *halfua* < *hafa*. The former could be a slip of the pen, as *skilde* occur a number of times. The inverted spelling *halfua*, however, may indicate that the scribe does not know (i.e. cannot hear) where *l* is appropriate.<sup>27</sup> Above, we saw that vocalisation and loss of *l* in /al/ is first attested in Scots sources in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>28</sup> Thus, it is interesting to note that the quoted example is actually earlier, and may be the first record of the development. Moreover, it seems to support the suggestion of a Scottish scribe. Though *l*-deletion is rare in the written documents, it is common in place-names of Norse origin, as will be demonstrated in 8.1.2.2.

#### *Sporadic developments*

More sporadic developments include the shift from *m* > *n* in word-final position, the loss of initial *h* and palatalization of *ll* and *nn*.

ON *sem*, Norw. *som* is written *son* in 1425 and *sin* in The Lord's Prayer. According to Hægstad (1900: 65), this is a common devel-

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<sup>27</sup> In the 1369 and 1425 documents ON *Hjaltland* 'Shetland' is spelt without the first *l*: *Hiatland* 1369 and *Hiætland* 1425. In this case, however, the oldest sources so consistently have *l*-less forms that the saga form *Hjaltland* may be the adapted form.

The earliest recordings are: *Hetlandensis* c. 1190, DN II 2; *Heclandensi* 1221, DN XIX 134; *Nicolao Ihatlandensi* 1226, DN I 9; *af Hiatlandi* 1299, DN I 89; *Hiatlandi* 1308 DN V 109; *Syettelandie* 1312, DN XIX 481; *Hietlande* 1386, DN I 501; *af Hiatlandi* 1402, DN I 591; *i Hieltland* 1490, DN VIII 426; *j Hieltland* 1512, DN III 1056. The form *Hjaltland* may thus be a lexical adaptation to ON *hjalt* n 'hilt', cf. 9.3.2.2. Thanks to Peder Gammeltoft who made me aware of this fact and supplied the forms.

<sup>28</sup> *aw* < *all*, EHSL: 108.

opment in unstressed syllables, e.g. the dative plural forms *londen* < *löndum* and *honon* < *honom* in the Hildina ballad. This development is also discussed by Barnes (1998: 13, 15). On the other hand, Marwick does not give any examples of *m* > *n* in his introduction to *The Orkney Norn*.

*Æita* < *heita* in the 1369 document is the only recorded instance of loss of initial *h*. *H*-dropping occurs sporadically in ON documents, and in this particular verb, *h* is occasionally dropped in Norwegian dialects that do not normally lose initial *h*.<sup>29</sup> *H* is regularly dropped before *l*, *n* and *r* in Norn, like in Norwegian.

#### 4.4.1.4. Development of individual sounds

The following list of sound development in words of ON origin is based on Marwick's overview in *The Orkney Norn* (pages xxxix–xlvi) The sound developments found in loan words are fundamental in the interpretation of names; one should avoid interpretations that presuppose sound developments with no parallels in appellatives.

##### Vowels

Vowel length is generally unstable, as the Scottish Vowel Length Rule interferes with the Norse system, see 4.4.1.1., 8.1.1.1.

<i>i, í</i> >	<i>i, i:, ɪ, ai</i> (< <i>í</i> only)
<i>y, ý</i> >	<i>i, ɪ</i> (< <i>y</i> only), <i>ø, ai</i> (< <i>ý</i> only)
<i>e, é</i> >	<i>ɛ, i</i> (in front of <i>n</i> ), rarely <i>ɛ:, e:, a, ɪ</i>
<i>a</i> >	<i>a, a:, ɛ, ɛ:, ɔ</i> , in rare cases <i>ɪ, ʌ</i>
<i>á</i> >	normally <i>o:,</i> occasionally <i>a:,</i> rarely <i>u:, ø:, ɔu</i>
<i>æ</i> >	<i>ɛ:, ɛ:,</i> possibly <i>ɪ</i> in some instances
<i>ø, œ</i> >	<i>ɛ:, e:, ø, o, o:, i:</i> (Marwick gives few examples, none of <i>ø</i> .)
<i>o, ó</i> >	<i>ʌ, ø, ø:, u, u:,</i> rarely <i>o, a, a:</i>
<i>u, ú</i> >	<i>u, u:, ʌ</i> (< <i>u</i> only), <i>ø, ø:,</i> occasionally <i>ɪ</i> < <i>u</i> .

<sup>29</sup> Informed by Tor-Erik Jenstad at *Norsk ordbok* (The Norwegian Dictionary), but see Hægstad 1900: 63.

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*ö* >      *ɔ, e, ε, ʌ, ɪ, a*

##### *Diphthongs*

See 4.4.1.2 for monophthongisation of ON diphthongs. Nowadays, traditional monophthongs tend to give way to diphthongs according to Standard English patterns, e.g. /de:l/ or /deil/ for *-dale*.

*ei* >      *eɪ, ai*, occasionally *e, ε, i*

*au* >      normally *ɔu, au*, also *ʌ, ɔ, oɪ*, rarely *u, u:*

*ey, øy* > *ai, eɪ, e, ε:*

##### *Consonants*

As a general feature, voiced and unvoiced vowels often alternate: *t – d, p – b, k – g*, and *f > v*.

*b* >      normally *b*, occasionally *p*.

*d* >      normally *d*, occasionally *t*. Often dropped in *nd*

*ð* >      *ð, d*, occasionally *t* or *θ*. Often dropped, e.g. intervocally or word-finally.

*f*      *f* in word initial position, otherwise often *v* or dropped

*g*      *g*. Often dropped when spirant. Frequently palatalised *dj, gj* initially. Occasionally *k*.

*h*      *h*, dropped before *l, n* and *r* (cf. Norw.) *hv* > *w, ʌ*.

*k*      Normally *k*, occasionally *g*. Often palatalised before front vowels. Retained in *kn* till past 1900. *kv* > /*kʷ, ʌ*/.

*l*      *l*. Often dropped, e.g. between vowels and word-finally. *ll* is normally palatalised.

*m*      normally *m*, occasionally *n*. *fn/mn* > *m*.

*n*      normally *n*, occasionally *m* in front of labial consonants.

*p*      normally *p*, but *b* is not uncommon

*r*      *r*. *rn* and *rl* are occasionally assimilated to /*n:*, *l:*/.

*s*      normally *s*, occasionally /*ʃ, ʒ*/ . Dropped in three-consonant

	clusters. <sup>30</sup>
<i>t</i>	normally <i>t</i> , occasionally <i>d</i> . <i>tj</i> > /tʃ/.
<i>þ</i>	normally <i>t</i> , occasionally <i>d</i> .
<i>v</i>	normally <i>w</i> , occasionally <i>v</i> (in place-names in particular).

#### 4.4.2. Morphology

For an overview of the ON inflectional system, see tables in chapter 8.1. The four Norse documents from Orkney bear witness to the rapid changes in the language, most notably an extensive morphological simplification. The two documents from 1329 are in classical ON with the inflectional system intact. The language in the 1425-document has taken a long step towards a modern form, with mere relics of the ON case conjugation. This ties in quite well with Scandinavian documents from the same period. The 1369-document is somewhat special, in that the scribe seems to try to uphold the inflectional system. This is not too successful; he makes some rather unexpected mistakes, as demonstrated by Barnes (1998: 40). Further examples can easily be added, e.g.: *bessre dentura* (nom. sg.), *af æin halfuo*.<sup>31</sup>

In Danish, all unstressed vowels are reduced to schwa, and some vowel reduction is found in most areas in Scandinavia. In Orkney, the *a*-ending in verbs is remarkably well preserved in written sources, both in 1369 and in 1425 (*fara*, *berætta*, *thaka*, *skriua* etc., occasionally *-æ*: *faræ*). This is the case even in The Lord's Prayer: *cumma*, *vara*, even in the borrowed *delivra* < *deliver*.

However, when words and names are borrowed into Scots, they are adjusted to Scots morphology, and this means that it is difficult to determine the origin of morphological endings (see 8.2.5.).

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<sup>30</sup> One of Marwick's examples is *yackle* < *jaxl* 'molar'. The forms *jakkel* and *jakle* are also found in Norwegian dialects, according to Tor-Erik Jenstad at *Norsk ordbok* 'the Norwegian dictionary'.

<sup>31</sup> Some of the other features discussed by other scholars, e.g. the privative prefix and the possessive pronouns with reflexive function are not relevant for the study of place-names, and will not be discussed here. The latter may be due to interference either from Scots or from Danish.



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##### 4.4.3. Lexical features

Very few instances of Scots loans are found in the Norse documents, apart from Scots personal names. Possible examples include *liftima* 1425 < cf. Eng. *lifetime* and *godman* 1425. The latter is used as a general term for (odal) farmer in Orkney. It has no Norwegian parallel in this sense, and Barnes (1998: 14) assumes Scots origin. In Scots, *guidman* may denote ‘head of a household’ (CSD: 252). Even in *The Lord’s Prayer*, there is no more than three loan words: the verbs *firgive* < *forgive* and *delivra* < *deliver* and the noun *tumtation* < *temptation*.

#### 4.5. Conclusion

The scarcity of documents from Orkney means that no coherent picture of Norn can be constructed. The lack of common features may explain why diverging theories have been put forward. According to Marwick and the Norwegian scholar Magnus Olsen, with whom he corresponded, there are hardly any specific Orkney forms without parallels in Norwegian documents. This also seems to be the overall conclusion of Michael Barnes’ Norn studies (1998: 13 f.). Indrebø (1951: 279–86) states that Shetland and Orkney Norn are Southwest Norwegian dialects, albeit with a few special features. Finally, Egil Pettersen (1988: 192) gives a detailed analysis of the 1425. He argues convincingly that the letter is written in Swedish.

Some peculiarities in the two later documents may be due to Scots interference, e.g. the unrounding of *y* and the shift *o* > *u*. More importantly, however, the norm in these documents are so different that they cannot possibly be read as reflections of the actual spoken language. Sudden, systematic changes, like the consistent use of diphthongs in the 1369 document versus monophthongs in 1425 can hardly reflect an actual change, in particular when and diphthongs are found in the later fragments. Rather, they must depend on the different norms of the anonymous scribes. Most important are features which are also found in other sources.

Barnes suggests that the 1369 scribe is a bilingual Scotsman; this would explain his problems with the ON inflections. I agree with

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Barnes. In addition to the morphological problems, it would explain why the unfamiliar *y*-sound and the usage of pronouns causes problem. The spelling of *l* is a point of special interest: If we accept that the scribe is a Scotsman, the lack an insertion of *l* in this letter may actually be the first documentation of vocalisation of *l* in Scots. This is not completely unrealistic, in fact, the spoken language is more likely to interfere in written Norn than in the Latin the scribes were used to reading and writing (Scots was in its mere beginning as a written language by this date).

The 1425 document contains a number of typically East Scandinavian forms, which could be explained by a scribe trained in Sweden, as suggested by Pettersen. However, some of the features are also found in other sources and seem to be local developments, e.g. *o > u* and occasional voicing of *p t k*. We should possibly look for a Swedish-trained scribe well acquainted with the local tongue?

### *A south-west Norwegian dialect?*

From what is said so far, it is obvious that we cannot draw decisive conclusions on spoken Norn. It is also problematic to classify Norn as a south-west Norwegian dialect, as Indrebø does, based on *a*-endings in infinitives and weak feminina. We can hardly assume that the present dialect differences within Norway had developed by the Norse settlement of Orkney, and *a*-endings were probably universal in the actual classes (Skard 1976: 91). In some respects, Orkney Norn may have developed like west Norwegian, but we have also noted a number of east Scandinavian features, e.g. post-vocal *g > w*, voicing of *p, t, k > b, d, g* and the loss of diphthongs. This, combined with the geographical distance, means that Norn should rather be seen as an independent dialect with a development of its own.

## Chapter 5. Place name elements

### 5.1 Names and the lexicon

Lexemes are fundamental in place-names. Names are coined from words in the lexicon, and name interpretation means identifying and explaining the words that constitute the formation form. This chapter deals with some of the words occurring repeatedly as place-name elements, i.e. primarily generics. The function of the generic is to identify locations, and a fair amount of standardisation can be observed (Nyström 1988: 171). Appendix 3 contains a comprehensive register of generics. This chapter concentrates on elements that escape word-to-word translation, either because they develop a sense deviating from standard ON or because meanings have merged. Consequently, repeated detailed discussions can be avoided in the name interpretations in ch. 7.

### 5.2. Celtic loans in ON names

In the analysed material, no more than two or three Celtic loans appear to have become productive in ON name formations. *Erg*, *ærgi* ‘shieling’ < Gael *airigh* is recorded in the OrknSaga ch. 103 in the name *Asgrimserg*. *Ayrean* in Evie appears to be coined from the definite form of this word (cf. 5.1.3). Two Celtic loans are in general use, namely *krú* and *lón* (see the alphabetical list).

This certainly reflects the marginal position of Celtic after the Norse take-over. In spite of a brief spell of Highland earls and a few Gaelic personal names in the 1367 letter, Gaelic speakers must always have constituted a small minority in Orkney. The loans may have come from areas with more intensive contact, i.e. The Hebrides and Caithness. This may be the case for *erg*, recorded five times in the six Caithness parishes investigated by Waugh (1985: 28–30).

### 5.3. Old Scandinavian and Old Norse

The name material seems to provide examples of words of Scandinavian origin otherwise unrecorded in Old Norse. For instance, when the field name *Hoemin(g)* occurs three times in Harray and once in Evie, one would expect an underlying appellative. This could be ON *\*höfning* ‘enclosed pasture’ – all the names refer to pastures – cf. Norw *hamning* ‘grazing’ (Aasen 261). Other examples include *blett* ‘spot, patch of ground of a different colour than its surroundings’ (ON: 15). *Blaten* in Evie is probably coined of its definite form, and it occurs as a specific, too. The word is not recorded in ON, but are found in Faroese and Icelandic. Just like the Orkney word, Icel *blettur* m ‘spot’ may denote ‘a patch of ground’. At the foot of Vinquin Hill in Evie lies a farm called *Clook*, *Clouk*, resembling *Kluk* and *Kluken* in Trøndelag and neighbouring Jämtland on the Swedish side. A noun *\*kluk* ‘høyde’, related to Icel *klúka* f ‘small stack or mound’, has been suggested for the Swedish names. The element *ma(e)* occurs both as a specific and a generic, most notably in the name *Maeshowe*. Its origin is certainly the same as Dan and Swe *mad(e)* ‘meadow’, which is unattested in ON as well as in modern Norw.<sup>1</sup>

Although the bulk of ON place-name elements are common to Orkney and Norway, the above-mentioned examples demonstrate that to some extent, Orkney developed its own naming tradition. The relative frequency of place-name elements may also differ. For instance, ON *bólstaðr* and *skáli* are much more common in the Northern Isles than in Norway (see discussion below). Typically, elements that are borrowed into the Sc dialect are most frequent, since they can be productive in place-name formation in the Scots

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<sup>1</sup> Another interesting case is the mediavel MLGerm loan word *rund*, *round*. It was borrowed 1100–1500 in Scand (PEO: 535) and first recorded in English in the late 13th (OED VIII: 822f.). We find it as a place-name element in *Rounda*, a field in Harray and *Roondback*, a coastal feature in Evie. Shetland examples include *Hulin rundi* < *Hóllinn rundi* ‘the round mound’ and *Ronta*, denoting a circular meadow (Jakobsen 1921: 678). *Hulin rundi* is definitely an ON formation, so it seems most likely *rund* was borrowed via ON early enough to be part of ON name coinings.

### 5. Place-name elements

period as well as the Old Norse. *Kvi/quoy* ‘enclosure’ is the most prominent example.

#### 5.4. Old Norse and Scots

Drawing a sharp line between ON and Sc words in names. For one thing, the languages are closely related and some words are so close that the linguistic origin cannot be pinpointed, e.g. such common place-name elements as *hús/house* and *tún/town* (cf. 9.2.4.). Possibly more important, many of the ON words borrowed into the Sc dialect function as name elements in Sc formations. The influence of the local onomasticon also plays an important role. Once a word is established as a place-name element with a certain denotation, existing names will serve as a pattern for new formations (see 7.3.4.), regardless of its linguistic origin.

Our best source to ON loans in Orkney is Marwick’s *Orkney Norn* (OrknN), reflecting an early 20<sup>th</sup> century dialect vocabulary. However, even words not listed in *OrknN* occur in apparent Sc place-name coinings, for instance *ness*. The farms *Ness* in Rendall and Harray are first recorded in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and appear to be late coinings. There is also *Grit Ness*, which appears to contain a Sc generic *grit*. This suggests that *ness* was borrowed. Similarly, *lyde* < *leið* ‘way, path’ is unrecorded as an appellative, but occurs repeatedly in place names. Two names in the investigated area are unambiguous Sc formations: *The Lydes of Tingwall* and *The Lydes of Orquil*. *Of*-periphrasis and *s*-plural indicate integration into the Sc dialect. A third example is *dalr/dale* ‘valley’, not included in OrknN or CSD and seen as literary in English<sup>2</sup>. It is a rather frequent element in younger names in Orkney, both simplex *Dale* and unambiguous Sc formations such as *Dale of Cottascarth* and *Kingsdale*. These names are most easily explained if *dale* was once borrowed into the dialect and later became obsolete.

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<sup>2</sup> *Dale* is a common place-name element in Northern England. According to OED (III: 12) OEng *dæl* has survived in this area, supported by the ON word *dalr*. Moreover, Sc has *dale* ‘a part, portion, share’ (CSD: 134), which may lie behind some Orkney names, such as *Dale* in the flat brecks of Harray.

The flexibility of words should also be born in mind. Place-names chronologies such as the one presented by Marwick (1952: 227 ff.) offer tantalising picture of system and order: certain elements are used to coin names in certain periods, and every element has a precise meaning. Of course, this orderliness is an illusion. Certain words are productive in name formation over a long time-span, and their meaning may change. As McMahon remarks (1999: 176): “[W]ords are typically polysemic; each has various meanings or covers a whole range of shades of meaning. ... Words can lose or gain meanings relatively easily, due to this elasticity; and they do not have to lose an earlier sense to gain a new one”. One example is the semantic development of ON *flá* ‘natural platform on a slope’. Norw preserves the original meaning, in Orkney *flaa* denotes a ‘strip of grass standing out against a heathery background’, but has also been used of rigs in general (ON: 42, 189 under *tie*). Icel *flá* has meanings similar to Norw: ‘tilting patch of ground; side of a cliff, mossy slope’, as well as a unique meaning ‘moor, swamp’<sup>3</sup>. The meanings only partly overlap.

Such semantic adjustments are often observed in place-names. For instance, Sc *water* in the sense ‘lake’ in *Lowrie’s Water* and *Peerie Water* is probably a semantic extension influenced by ON *vatn*, which denotes both ‘water’ and ‘lake’. Similarly, *leið/lyde* ‘way, path’ clearly takes on a denotation ‘area with a way running through it’ in the names *The Lydes of Tingwall* and *Lydes of Orquil*. The common place-name element *oyce* < ON *óss* ‘river mouth’ has gained a specialised meaning ‘the opening of a lagoon to the sea’ (ON: 128). Sometimes different meanings merge. The common name element *lee* reflects ON *hlíð* ‘slope’ in most cases, though in coastal features, an alternative etymology Sc *lee* ‘shelter’ or ON *hlíf*, *hlifð* ‘lee, shelter, cover’ may be more plausible. Examples include *The Leeans Re*, *Leisburn F*, *Lee Hellia* and *Fed Geo of the Leeans E*. Jakobsen (1921: 474) suggests a similar merger in Shetland. Cf. *back* and *geo* below. Occasionally, words undergo more fundamental changes, e.g. *breck* (see below),

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<sup>3</sup> According to Jóhannesson (1956: 571) the root form is *plāq*, *p(e)lag* ‘broad and flat; to extend’.

## 5.5. Common place-name elements

### 5.5.1. *back*

*Back* is the generic of a number of nature names, none of which are recorded before 1800. The origin may be ON *bakki*, originally denoting ‘river bank’ (NSL: 83). In modern Norw, *bakke* means ‘slope’. Bakkan Swarto is the only locality on a slope. It is also close to a burn, however, and so is Goesback in Evie. Four *back*-names denote flat localities near lakes or the sea. This suggests a semantic extension and a meaning similar to Icel *bakki*: ‘the rim of land closest to the sea or a lake, burn, gorge etc. Not in the sense slope or hill’ (Jónsson 1911: 494). In Shetland place-names, *bakk* refers to ‘(steep) shore’ (ShNorn 24). OrknN (p. 7) has neither ‘slope’ nor ‘bank’ for *back*, but a number of other meanings. *Back* 6: ‘A ridge in ploughing; a division between lands’, from ON *bálkr/bölkr* or Sc *balk* is a potential place-name element.<sup>4</sup>

To sum up, *back* may have preserved an archaic ON meaning in some names, but as different words have merged in the form *back*, it is not always possible to determine the formation language.<sup>5</sup>

### 5.5.2. *bigging* /<sup>h</sup>bigin/

Theoretically, ON *bygging* ‘building’ could be the origin of *bigging*. The oldest source form, *Netherbigging* F, dates from 1642, when an ON formation with the specific *neðri* ‘lower’ is still possible. Most factors point toward Sc origin, though. The only Norw parallels are two small farms *Bygningen* in Odalen (NG 3: 176, 180) and *Bigging*-names are absent from old rentals. There are no examples of definitive ON specifics, whereas Sc specifics and morphology are

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<sup>4</sup> Both presuppose Sc vocalisation of *l* (cf. 4.2.1.4).

<sup>5</sup> Another example of the merger of different generics is the place-name element *lee*. It has its Scots meaning ‘shelter’ and is the normal reflex of ON *hlíð* ‘slope’. Moreover, it often denotes coastal features, where it could be derived from ON *hlif*, *hlifð* f ‘shelter’, see *The Leeans*, *Leisburn*, *Lee Hellia* Evie and *Fed Geo of the Leeans*. Jakobsen (1921: 474) also assumes that the two latter have merged in Shetland. Cf. *geo* 5.5.8.

quite common: *Upper Bigging*, *Biggings*. Fellows-Jensen (1985: 198) regards NEngl *bigginge* as an Eng formation from the borrowed ON verb *big* < *byggja* ‘build’.<sup>6</sup> CSD quotes the meanings ‘subsidiary buildings on an estate; cottages’ and ‘collection or cluster of houses’ for *biggin(g)*. The latter fits well for *Thickbigging* and *The Biggings* in Evie. The latter denotes a cluster of houses emerged from farm divisions (cf. note under Arwick, 6.1.). Clouston 1919: pp 39 also gives the sense ‘cluster of houses’, but adds that there is no fundamental difference between *bigging* and *house*. Cf. the opposing pair *Nisthouse* – *Upperbigging* in Overbrough, Harry.

*Bigging* always denotes habitations and normally divided farms, which is reflected in such specifics as *upper* and *lower*, *Upper Bigging(s)* – *Lower Bigging(s)* in Rendall, *Netherbigging* – *Upper Bigging* in Firth.

### 5.5.3. *bister*

*Bister* has developed from ON *bólstaðr* ‘farm’ (Gammeltoft 2001: 32 f.). The element stands out as being far more common in Scotland than in Norway (Nicolaisen 1976: 92, cf. 5.1.3.). Thomson (1995:52) lists 83 *bister*-names in Orkney. Moreover, whereas the specifics of the Norwegian names are limited to *helgi* ‘holy’ or *mykli* ‘large’, the Sc *bister*-names contain a wide range of specifics. The six *bisters* in the investigated area all have different specifics. *Kir-bister* < *Kirkjubólstaðr* ‘church-’ is a very common compound, however, proving that *bólstaðr* must have been productive into the Christian period. According to Gammeltoft (2001: 163), *bólstaðr* may have been productive into 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century, but individual *bister*-formations may be even younger. As Pamp (1991: 159) points out, the original etymology of common place-name elements may fade, whereby the element devops into a sort of suffix suitable for place-name formation. Two factors indicate that this may be true for *bólstaðr* in Orkney and Scotland. For one thing, *bólstaðr* and *staðir* exhibit more or less complementary distribution in West Mainland. Both are common when names of (secondary) farms are coined,

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<sup>6</sup> This illustrates how borrowed words, once they are integrated in the recipient language, are freely used in new formations.



## 5. Place-name elements

with clear local preferences. Firth and Rendall (each three *bisters*) belong to the *bólstaðr*-area.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, *bister*-names are absent from the neighbouring parishes Evie and Stenness. Evie has one possible *staðir*-name, whereas five of nine rental names from Stenness are *staðir*-compounds. Secondly, Gammeltoft (2001: 288) lists more than 20 *bisters* that appear to be rather late, analogical formations. *Lunabister* in Shetland is particularly interesting, as written sources allow a quite precise dating of the settlement: 1540–60 (op.cit. 291).

In analogical names, the existing onomasticon functions as a pattern. The familiar element *-bister* has the desired connotation for a farm-name, and the actual meaning is probably of subordinate importance. Gairsay *Skelbist* may be such a late analogical name. Unlike the other *bisters* recorded in the old rentals, *Skelbist* is first recorded in 1723 (Traill). There are two *Skelbisters* in Orkney, which means a name transfer is conceivable. However, both elements are found locally, and this may encourage analogy. *Skel-* may reflect the generic in *Langskaill*, the main farm in Gairsay, and there is *Isbister* and *Ellibister* in the mainland part of the parish.

The fact that *bólstaðr*-names in the Northern Isles differ from their Norwegian equivalents in terms of generics, frequency and age, demonstrates that the naming traditions in the colonies are not just a copy of the those in the old country. The islands developed their own naming patterns and eventually the local onomasticon rather than the Norwegian became the basis for new formations.

### 5.5.4. *breck(s)* /bræk/

*Breck(s)* has two different origins in Orkney place-names. For one, it is the regular development of ON *brekka* ‘slope’<sup>8</sup>. This must have been the general term denoting a slope in Orkney Norse, rather than *bakki* (see back 5.5.1.). Its ON origin is indisputable in formations with ON specifics or morphology, e.g. *Brettobreck* and *Breckan*.

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<sup>7</sup> The probable primary units of both parishes have topographic generics: *Rendall*, *Gorseness*, *Firth* and possibly *Burness*.

<sup>8</sup> Fire steder på West Mainland finnes navnet *Brockan*, av sideformen *brokka* f, see *Loch of Brockan* in Rendall.

*Breck* also occurs in Sc formations such as *Laybreck* (*lay* = ‘lea, land left untilled’) and *Brecks of Scarataing*. According to OrknN p 20, *breck(s)* denotes ‘poor, thin shallow soil’, generally applied to the land left uncultivated. Marwick suggests a connection with Dan *brak* adj. ‘fallow’. As *brak* is first recorded in Dan in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (PEO: 143), I would rather see *brecks* an innovative semantic development of *brekka* (cf. Jakobsen 1921: 68).

#### 5.5.5. *bu of X* /bu:/

*Bu* (*bull, bow, boo*) *of X* is a pattern unique for Orkney. The *of*-periphrasis is distinctly Sc, and *Bu of* is always added to the original name, e.g. *Orphir – Bu of Orphir*.<sup>9</sup> The extended form is a form of epexegetis, in which the original name functions as a specific. *Bu of* is not necessarily a fully integrated part of names, rather, it is prone to change and loss<sup>10</sup>. *Hall of Rendall* has replaced an older *Bull of Rendale* (Traill 1725) for instance. It is thus unfortunate that Marwick juxtaposes *bu* with other ON place-name elements in his chronology. *Bu* is certainly used in the OrknSaga and often denotes large farms, but it is used exclusively as an appellative, e.g. *jarls bu í Aurfuru* ‘the earl’s estate in Orphir’ (OFN: 242).

At some point, the ON appellative *bú* was borrowed in the local Sc dialect, where it gained a specialised meaning ‘large, undivided farm’ (see ON: *bow* 2). The *Bu of X*-names referring large estates is recorded in the oldest rental (1492), referring to old central farms acquired by the Scottish gentry or occasionally new large units emerging from amalgamations. In 1502 R we find *Bull of Ropness* and *Bull of Karstane* owned by close relative of the earl’s. Consequently, it is important to draw a line between old estates and newer name formations for the 30–35 *bu of X*-names. The pattern is Sc but as the names often refer to the old central farms most attractive for landowners. *Bu of* in Orkney corresponds to *Mains/Manor of*

<sup>9</sup> *The Bu*, an alternative name for Upper Inkster, is an exception. Being first recorded in 1857 it is probably a late analogical formation. The form lacks the original name as a specific, one would expect \**The Bu of Inkster*.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. *quoy* (5.5.13) which is sometimes dropped, occasionally replaced by an alternative element.

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*X* in other parts of Scotland. It is quite interesting that Scottish incomers choose an ON term carrying the connotations of 'major farm' and 'estate' and use it in a new context. It is certainly a proof of language contact and it may indicate a wish to adapt to local linguistic traditions. *Bu of* also has a practical function in readily identifying farm names and setting them apart from otherwise identical township or parish names such as *Rendall* and *Orphir*.

### 5.5.6. *cru(e)*

*Krú, kró* 'pen' is a loan from synonymous Gael *cró* (MacLennan 1979: 106). It is one of the extremely rare Celtic loans to become productive in ON place-name formations. Most examples in the material are simplex formations, but the reflex of the ON definite article in *Cruan* proves the formation to be ON. *Crue* is also borrowed into Sc (CSD: 125), and the compound noun *plantiecrue* 'stone enclosure for cabbage plants' may be a Sc coinage.

The word *kru* is appears in Norway, but with a strictly limited distribution. According to Dalen 1996: 54, it is only found in parts of Trøndelag. I was born in this area, and to me *kru* conveys the sense 'small enclosure' (used of a pen directly attached to the shieling cow-stable). The word could have been loaned directly from Gael, but an indirect loan through the Norse settlements in Scotland seems more likely.

### 5.5.7. *garth, gar*

*Gar(th)* functions as a generic in old rental farm names, in relatively new farms names as well as in field names, with 18 pennyland *Garth* in Evie and *Trundigar* near the top of Rowamo as extremes. The semantic development of ON *garðr* may explain denotation span. Its meaning changed from 'fence' to 'fenced-in area; farm' (NSL: 165). In the Northern isles dialect, *gar(th)* normally denotes 'enclosure'<sup>11</sup>, possibly even 'farm' (Jakobsen 1936: 43).

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<sup>11</sup> *Gar* may refer to the actual fence in the name *Slap of Langiegar*, where *Langiegar* may refer to the township dyke.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

When did *garth* become obsolete? According to Thomson (1995: 60), it could denote ‘enclosure’ “possibly into the twentieth century”, but it is not included in OrknN. Moreover, unequivocal instances of *garth* compounds with Sc specifics are rare. The generic of *Bradgarth* (*Braegar* 1841) is possibly Sc *brae* ‘bakke’, but alternative specifics of ON origin are suggested (see *Bradgarth* 6.1). If *garth* was borrowed into Orkney Scots as an appellative or at least a place-name element, it is methodically problematic to include it in the farm-name chronology as an ON element. To some extent, Marwick avoids the problem by including the 45 rental *garths* only, as opposed to the total of 161 listed by Thomson (1995:52).

The simplex form is usually *Garth*, pronounced /gert/ or /garθ/, the latter possibly influenced by the written form. The normal form in generics is *-gar* /gər/. The traditional palatalised *g* pronunciation /gj, dj/ (see 8.1.2.5) survives in some place-names, and is even rendered in the written form when /'brədjər, brədjər/ < *Brúgarðr* in Stenness is spelt *Brodgar*. Similarly, *Georth* may be a way of representing the palatal form /gjørt, djørt/ (cf. *geo* for /gjo, djo/). The form *Gorn* preserves reflexes of ON case morphology.



*Geos on the Birsay coast. From Ordnance Survey Landranger 6.*

### 5.5.8. *geo, gue, goe*

*Geo* /gjo, djo/ < ON *gjá* f ‘chasm, rift’ becomes the normal generic term for narrow inlets in the coastline. It is very productive in place-

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names; more than 30 names with the generic *geo* have been recorded along the coast from Costa Head to Sands of Evie (ca. 5 km). Sc specifics are common, e.g. *Sole Geo*, *Dog Geo*. In a number of names, *Geo* appears to have a different origin, however. *The Geo* or *The Du R* /gjø, djø/ is the name of burn running in a rather deep ravine. Two farms *Gue* /gjø/ in Rousay are situated close to burns running in deep rifts (Marwick 1995: 54), and the same is true for *Millgeos* and *North Gue R* and *Goesback E*. Both pronunciation and usage differ from *geo* /gjo/ 'inlet', an alternative etymology seems plausible. The origin could be the same as for modern Norw *juv* 'cleft, ravine', unrecorded in ON, but probably etymologically related to *dúfa* 'press down' (Torp 1963, see *djuv* and *duva*). Phonetically, the development *ú* > /ø/ and the initial alternation between *gj* and *dj* are regular (see 4.4.1.4., 8.1.2.5 and *garth* above).<sup>12</sup>

#### 5.5.9. *hall, ha*

The word *hall* (ON *höll*) is common to Scandinavian and Sc. But as *hall* never occurs with an ON specific or reflexes of the ON morphology in Orkney place-names, the origin is most certainly Scots. According to CSD: 256, *ha* means 'farmhouse as opposed to the farm cottages'. *Ha(ll)* is used in this sense even in Orkney, e.g. *Graemshall*, a major farm in Holm (see 7.2.1 for a treatment of name transfer). In this sense, *Hall of X* may function as an alternative to *Bu of X*, e.g. *Hall of Rendall* supersedes *Bull of Randell*, see 5.5.5. However, most of the compounds with *hall* in the material are rather young names (first recorded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century), referring to minor settlements, and one suspects an ironic or derogatory sense: *Gallowha*, *Greenhall*, *Scotts Hall*, *Sandyha*, *Stonehall*. There are one or two inverted compounds, *Ha* 'white' and possibly *Hallbreck*, and the blatantly derogatory *Drythall in Tingwell* (1722 Traill). *Drite* means 'dirt, excrement', but is chiefly a term of abuse'.

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<sup>12</sup> According to Waugh (1985: 111) *geo* and *goe* alternate in Caithness names. In modern maps, *geo* normally pronounced /gjo/ denotes coastal features, and *goe* /go/ or /gjo/ denotes inland localities. She does not suggest different origins, but it might be the case even here

*Hall* is sufficiently frequent to become a pattern for onomastic adaption of hill names where the origin is most likely *hóll* ‘rounded hill’: *Grunshall*, *Vishall*, see 9.3.2.1.

#### 5.5.10. *house*

Sc *house* /hus/ and ON *hús* /hu:s/ is also a common word. The original difference in vowel quantity is not reflected in Orkney Sc (see 8.1.1.1.), and we depend on specifics and articles to decide the formation language. *Nearhouse* and *Nisthouse*, compound with ON adj. *neðra-*, *nezta* ‘lower, lowest’ are ON formations, whereas *The Walk-erhouse* is Sc. If the generic is current in both languages, e.g. *Mid-house*, the origin must be left open (cf. 7.1.4). Written sources offer little help. Most *house*-names have emerged from the division of farms and lack early forms, as old rentals and charters rarely state the name of individual farms within a tunship. Some of the *house*-are certainly medieval, for instance *Newhouse* 1492 R and *Mydhouse* 1503 R. Occasionally, every individual farm in a tunship carries a name in *-house* or *-bigging*, whereas the original name is merely preserved as a name of the area (see *toon* 5.5.15). Directional adverbs such as *upper*, *nether* plus the adj. *new* as generics testify to the division of older units. The specific may also refer specifically to the function of the house, e.g. *Mill House*.

#### 5.5.11. *loon, lun*

*Loon*, *lun* in Orkney place-names denotes marshes or meadows. It probably derives from Gael *lòn* ‘dub, marsh, morass’ (MacLennan 1979: 213).<sup>13</sup> The element also occurs in Caithness, where Waugh renders it as ‘meadow’. It occurs repeatedly in the ON and Sc definite form: *Lunan* and *The Loons*, which suggests the element was borrowed into both languages. Its absence from OrknN shows the word is no longer current in the dialect.

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<sup>13</sup> ON *lón* ‘spot in a river with no currents’ is improbable on semantic grounds.

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### 5.5.12. *mo(r)*

In Orkney names, *mo(r)* refers both to ridges of heather (in the hills) and to marshy plots of land. In Shetland *mur* and *mor*-names denote ridges of moss or heather, and Jakobsen (1936: 82) suggests a derivation from an unrecorded ON \**mór* ‘mossy or heathery ridge’. ON *mór* normally denotes ‘flat, dry, sandy land’, which cannot be the origin of marshy localities like *Moss of Hatamo* and *Blythemo* (“marshy portion of ground”, OSNB). The hill names *Rowamo*, containing an ON specific *rauða* ‘red’ (heathery hill), and the farm name *Mossetter* (*Morsetter* 1503 R) are clearly ON formations.<sup>14</sup> For the latter, Marwick suggests the specific as *mýrr* ‘marsh, bog’, but a development *y* > /o/ is unprecedented.

Apparently, ON *mo(r)* adopted the meanings of Sc *muir* /mør, mer/ ‘rough, heathery uncultivated land’ and ‘peat moss’, a semantic extension that may have been triggered by the phonetic similarity (cf. Weinreich 1979: pp 48).<sup>15</sup> However, *mór* may have had a wider meaning even in ON, cf. Icel *mór*, Far *mógvur* ‘peat’ (Bjorvand 2000: 610). It is thus uncertain whether *mór* may have preserved a more original sense in the Northern Isles than in Norway (possibly under the influence of Scots), or whether a new sense was added because of language contact.

### 5.5.13. *quoy*

The traditional pronunciation is /kvi:/ or /mi:/ (see 8.1.2.8.), nowadays mostly /kwai/, probably influenced by the stable spelling form *quoy*. *Quoy* is the most frequent place-name element in Orkney, with at least 438 instances according to Thomson (1995: 52). To this can be added a vast number of unrecorded field names. In the present material, at least 20 habitation names and 30 field names contain the element *quoy*. The origin is undoubtedly ON *kvi* f ‘enclosure’.

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<sup>14</sup> Other ON formations include *Hviðamo*, former loch near Creya (Marwick’s papers), and *Loch of Withamo* in Rousay, ON specific *hvíta*- ‘white’. These loch names have probably been transferred from surrounding marshes. Apart from *Mossetter*, source forms are late, as is normal for non-habitative names.

<sup>15</sup> *Blythemor* E is pronounced /-mør/ as in Sc. However, the normal form is /mo/, for instance in *Blythemo* E.

*Quoy*-names refer to a wide range of localities: skatted farms, 19<sup>th</sup> century crofts and fields. *Quoy* seems to have undergone semantic extension as well as specialisation. One can easily imagine how *quoy* came to denote habitations when crofts were established in former enclosures. As most of these secondary settlements were exempt from skat (taxes), *quoy(land)* acquired a specialised meaning ‘unskatted unit’. This explains why *quoy* occurs as an optional element, added to the original name in certain sources (see 8.3.1.1.). E.g. *Crowrar* in Rendall is recorded as *Crourer* 1727 by Traill, *Crowriaquoy* in 1740 R and *Cruar* in 1841 ComR. We may presuppose that *quoy* is added in the 1740 rental because the status as unskatted unit matters in a rental.

The abundance of *quoy*-names is explained partly by its wide range of meanings, partly because it is borrowed into Sc and becomes productive in Scots formations, even though Marwick does not regard *quoy* as a current appellative in OrknN (under *kwy*). Sc formations include *Hillquoy* and a number of compounds with Sc personal names of 19<sup>th</sup> century crofts such as *Dicksquoy*, *Quoyhenry* and *Quoy Sinclair*. Some of these may have been coined as habitation names from the beginning. The specifics vary greatly. Domestic animals in *Goltsquoy* (< ‘hog’) and *Lamesquoy* (< ‘lamb’) presuppose *quoy* in its original sense. Personal names in *Quoyhenry* and *Dicksquoy* indicate ownership. *Norquoy* (< ‘north’) and *Quinamillyoar* (< ‘between burns’) give a relative location, whereas *Lerquoy* (< ‘clay’), *Mossquoy* and *Wheenobrya* (< ‘broad’) characterise the actual locality. We note that a number of the examples are inverted compounds. Inverted word order is quite common for *quoy*-names, for a further discussion see 8.3.1..

The fact that *quoy* is prolific in Sc formations makes it unsuitable for a farm-name chronology (cf. OFN: 227). A chronology presupposes a limited production period for each element, whereas *kvi/quoy* is productive for about a millennium and semantically flexible.

Finally, we should note that the popularity of *kvi/quoy* is particular to Orkney. It is less frequent in Shetland, and rare in Norway: *Hollekve* in Sogndal (NG 12: 93) is the only *kvi*-compound listed in



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NG. To me, this is another indication that the Atlantic colonies developed their own naming traditions, cf. *bister* 5.5.3.

#### 5.5.14. *skail*

The traditional pronunciation is /skil, skjil/, modern /skeil/<sup>16</sup>. The origin of *skail* is ON *skáli*, denoting ‘main building on the farm, hall’ but also ‘primitive buildings for temporary use’. The latter sense is common in the Danelaw (Ekwall 1936: 403f., Fellows-Jensen 1985: 50) and similarly in Iceland and Norway (Jónsson 1911: 495, NGIndl.: 74).<sup>17</sup> In Orkney, however, *skáli*-names (ca 35 altogether) normally refers to central farms (OFN: 238).

There is normally only one *skail*-farm in each parish, often located close to a church. But in spite of their central location, no more than one third of the *skail*-farms are skatted and *Skail* never occurs as a tunship name. Marwick suggests that the *skális* were halls erected “immediately after the first phase of ‘land-taking’ was over” (OFN: 240). Thomson (1995: 55) regards the establishment of *skális* to be contemporary with the organisation of the church, i.e. the late 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> century, and since *skális* were associated with an ON aristocratic way of life, the place-name element did not survive the saga period.<sup>18</sup> The coining of *Langskail* can possibly be dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> century, corroborating the later dating. The Orkn-Saga always referred to it as (the farm in) *Gareksey*, and *Langskail*, referring to Svein Asleivssons’ large drinking *skáli* (OrknSaga ch 105) appears to have been attached to the farm after Sveins’s death ca. 1171. (Thomson 1995: pp 56).

*Skail*-names display a large amount of stereotypy, the standard forms being simplex *Skail* or compound *Langskail*. The latter supports the reference of *skail* to an actual building, as opposed to

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<sup>16</sup> The phonetic development of *skáli* is exceptional (*á* normally gives /o:/), possibly influenced by the stable written form *Skail(l)*. Cf. the pronunciation /kil, kjil/ for Sc. *kail* ‘cabbage’.

<sup>17</sup> It is rare as a generic in Norway, the only example found in NG is *Reppeskaal* (NG 6: 348) and the parish name *Gildeskaal*.

<sup>18</sup> *Windy Skail* in Deerness is a late analogical formation. Here, *skail* is used in a derogatory sense in the same way as *hall* in *Drytha*?, *Crab Ha*’.

*house-* and *bigging-*names, in which the specific refers to the relative position of the building. Moreover, the reference is to a building of some importance (opposite *scale* in the Danelaw).<sup>19</sup> Thus, the usage of *skail*, rather than the element as such, is particular to Orkney.

#### 5.5.15. *toon, town*

The original meaning appears to ‘fence’, preserved in Ger *Zaun* (Bjorvand 2000: 963). From a secondary meaning ‘fenced-in area’ a number of specialised meanings develop, both in ON and Sc. ON *tún* n is rendered as 1 ‘arable lands’, 2 ‘farmyard’,<sup>20</sup> 3 ‘division, part of a larger farm unit’ (Heggstad & al. 1993: 443). *Town* in Sc means 1 ‘arable land occupied by a number of farmers as co-tenants’, 2 ‘cluster of houses belonging to the tenants of a town’. (CSD: 729), and the meaning ‘town, city is irrelevant i’<sup>21</sup>. For leddet isolert kan vi altså ikke avgjøre språklig opphav.

In Orkney, the *toon* or *tunship* (Clouston and Marwick prefer the latter) represents the basic agricultural unit (Clouston 1919, OFN: 216), a parallel to Dan and Swe *by*. Most resources such as pastures, peat mosses etc were common to all farms of the toon, and every farm had the right to a rig in every field of the arable land. Only a small patch next to the house was privately owned, called *toomal* (< ON *túnvöllr* m, ‘enclosed field next to a farm-house’, Fritzner add.). A turf dyke enclosed the land belonging to the tunship. Thus, *toon* may refer to the actual dyke or the land within the dyke, and the linguistic origin cannot be ascertained. The tunship was skatted as a unit, and individual farm names rarely appear in rentals. Today, most farms have individual names (frequently with generics that indicate farm division, like *-house* or *-bigging*), and the tunship name often functions as the name of a district.

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<sup>19</sup> Not necessarily a chieftain’s hall. There are no such connotations for *Skail* in Isbister; it seems Rendall was always the central farm of the parish.

<sup>20</sup> In modern usage, *tún/tun* means ‘arable lands’ in Icel, ‘farmyard’ in Norw.

<sup>21</sup> *Town* is not used in the sense ‘a farm with its buildings and the immediately surrounding area’ in the Northern Isles, and the meaning ‘town, city’ is irrelevant in place-names. Kirkwall is traditionally referred to as the toon.

## 5. Place-name elements

The appellative *toon* rarely occurs in rentals, but divided tunships may be referred to as *Overtoun* and *Nethertoun* for instance. In a farm name such as *Appietoon* (*Uppetown*, -toon 1629 wt) *toon* may also refer to the tunship. The generic ON *upp* or Sc *appie* ‘up’ suggests it may have been the upper part of the large tunship of Gorseness. In other instances, *toon* refers to fields, e.g. *Toon*, *Geordiatoon* and *Gilliestoon* in Rendall (cf. OFN: 216). Personal names with Sc *ie*-suffix as specifics indicate that the two latter are Sc formations.

### 5.6. From onomasticon to lexicon?

Above, we have discussed the meaning of words entering into names, and place-name interpretation depends on the assumption that names are coined from words carrying a specific meaning. Is it possible to imagine impulses in the opposite direction, i.e. that the use of certain words in names may affect a speaker’s idea of the meaning of these words? Nyström (1995: 83-86) shows that nouns no longer current may absorb meanings from place-name elements. This seems to be the case in Orkney, too. When islanders state that *quoy* is an old word for an enclosure and a *ness* is a broader tongue of land than a *taing* even though the two former words are not regarded as living dialect words in OrknN, we may assume that they reconstruct a meaning based on the localities designated with specific elements. An additional example of potential influence from onomasticon to lexicon is a rather creative phrasing by an old Orcadian describing the battle at Stalingrad: “The Germans were *quoyed* at Stalingrad”. If *quoy* was not a current word in 1929 when OrknN was published, it seems reasonable to assume the place-name element as the base for the verbal derivation.

### 5.7 Summary

The survey of common place-name elements shows that the Celtic influence is minimal; *lón* and *krú* are the only elements that have entered into the Orkney onomasticon. This means that salient local features can be ascribed to either Old Norse (e.g. the use of *skail* as

#### From Starafjall to Starling Hill

a generic) or Scots (e.g. *bigging*) or a blend of these (*bu of X*). Original ON words may assume another meaning in Orkney (and the Northern Isles) than in Norway. There are also differences in frequency. Place-name elements that are rare in Norway may become very frequent in Orkney, e.g. *kví*, *gjá* and *bólstaðr*. There are even examples of ON place-names that are unattested in Norway.

## Chapter 6. The place-name material

### 6.1. Habitation names

**Aikerness** /'ɛ:kərnez, 'ɛkər-/

ON

Evie. HY 38 26.

*Akirness* 1492 R.

Originally an urisland unit, still a farm. The generic is ON *nes* n 'headland' – the farm is situated on a broad headland. The specific is *akr* m 'cereal field'. The name might indicate the existence of sown fields when the Vikings arrived.

**Aittit, Ettit** R. Bakie /'ɛtɪt, 'ɛtɪd, 'ɛtɛt/

ON

Rendall. HY 42 19.

*Aetoft, Etoft* 1620 Sas., *Aithtoft* 1629 wt, 1646 Ch., *Aittitt* 1727 and *Etafft* 1728 Traill.

Two farms, South Aittit, also called *Ayre*, by the Bay of Hinderayre and North Aittit ca. 500 m to the NW. Early source forms prove the generic to be *toft* m 'building site'. The alternative name is coined with a loan word *ayre* from ON *eyrr* f 'sand, gravel(ly beach)' cf. OrknN: 3. No satisfactory interpretation can be given of the specific. *Eyrr* is unlikely with no trace of *r* in the source forms, and there is no *eið* n 'isthmus' nearby.

**Appiehouse** /'apɪhus/

Firth. HY 36 18.

*Upper House* 1848 ComF.

A house in Settiscarth. This name, along with *Midhouse* and *Netherhouse*, reflect the division of the original unit of Settiscarth. The generic is either ON *hús* n 'house' or Sc. *house* (see 5.5.10.). *Ap* is the Sc pronunciation of *up*. The form *appie* may be explained either as an addition of a Sc *y*-suffix (cf. 8.2.1) or an adaptation of ON

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*úppi* ‘up (in)’. This means that the language of formation is uncertain, though Marwick supposes *Úppi í húsi* ‘up in the house’ in line with a Faroese pattern. In fact, it seems as if *Appie-* has become the standard form in names. *Appietoon* and *Appiehouse* are frequent, whereas the register of OFN gives no example of names in *Up-*.

**Appietoon** /<sup>1</sup>apitun/ ON?

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Uppetown*, *-toon* 1629 wt, *Uppatown* 1646, *Appietoon* 1750.

Farm in Gorseness. The earlier source forms suggest an original ON formation *Uppitún* ‘up in the tunship’, which represents a division of the large Gorseness tunship. Similar names are common in Western Norway for divided farms. For a more detailed discussion of ON *tún*, see 5.5.15. The generic has adopted the Orkney standard form *Appie-*, see *Appiehouse* above.

**Arsdale** /<sup>1</sup>arʃde:l/ ON

Evie. HY 32 28.

*Arsdale* 1492 R, 1595 R, *Arisdale* 1503 R, *Airesdale* 1664 Ch.

Former pennyland unit in Costa and still a farm today. The generic is ON *dalr* m ‘valley’. The interpretation of the spec. is uncertain, but medial *s* may suggest genitive of a personal name. Genitive of the rather common masculine name *Ari* is *Ara*, *-s* occurs only by later analogy. The specific of *Arsvågen* in Rogaland is interpreted as genitive *arðs* < *arðr* m ‘(primitive) plough’ (NG 10: 433).

**Arwick** /<sup>1</sup>erək, <sup>1</sup>erwik/ ON?

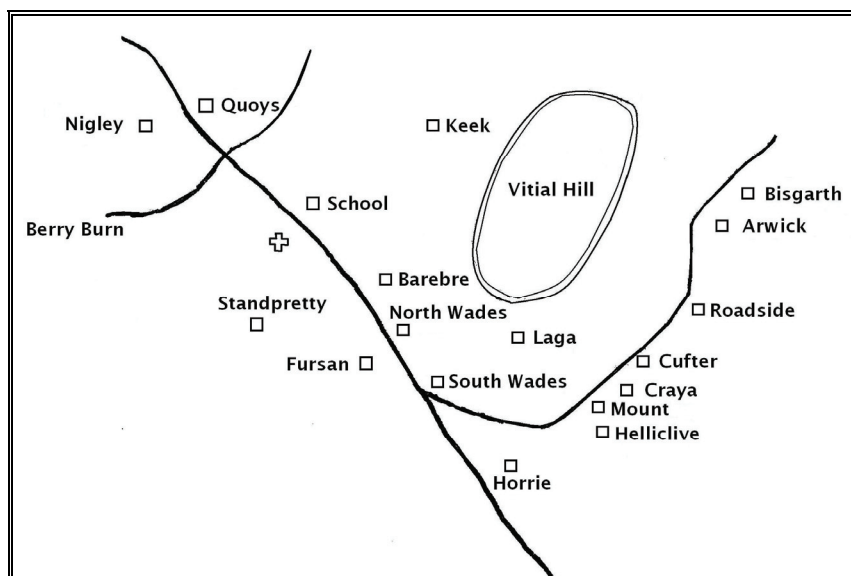
Evie. HY 38 24.

*Arwik in Widwik* 1612 Court Book, *Nethir Erweik* 1619 Sas. OSR, *Arwik* 1624 Sas.

A farm between Vishall and Hill of Dwarmo. The generic appears to be ON *vík* f, which cannot here be used in its usual sense ‘inlet, bay’. Rather, it may refer to an indentation in the hill-ridge, probably the marked gap between Vishall and Dwarmo. Cf. *Anderswick* inland in Stenness (OFN: 111) and the discussion of the name element under *Vik* in NSL: 491. The pronunciation /<sup>1</sup>erək/ may suggest

## 6. The name material

the gen. *ákr*. As a generic, the final *r* frequently drops in Norw names, e.g. *Kallak*, *Berkåk* (NSL: 510). However, the informant also has /ɔk/ from *vik* in Woodwick, and the written forms support the interpretation *vik*. The spec. is uncertain. In Norw names, *Er-* has been interpreted as either *æðr* f ‘eider’ or *elri* n ‘elder (wood)’ (NSL: 136f.). The former is unlikely owing to Arwick’s inland situation, the latter owing to the absence of trees in the isles. A third option is *ær* f ‘(female) sheep’.<sup>1</sup>



*The houses in the Vishall area, Evie, according to a map of infield common-ties from 1873 (Orkney Archives D 7/3/24). Sketch copy by the author.*

<sup>1</sup> According to a local tradition recorded by E. Marwick (D 31/1/3/2), an original farm *The Biggings* was inherited by two sisters and split up into Arwick and Bisgarth. One sister’s children got Bisgarth and Lower Bisgarth, the other line got Arwick and Cufter. The divisions led to a large number of scattered rigs. This can be seen as a condensed story of farm divisions and the development of the run-rig system, but the details are unreliable. ON *Arwick* divided by 1619 can hardly be secondary to Sc *The Biggings*.

**Aviedale, Evadale** /'ɛvədə:l/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Efeday* 1629 wt. (here?), *Avidale* 1740 R.

Farm in Gorseness. If *Efeday* 1629 refers to this farm, the *l* in *dalr* m 'valley' has been dropped at some point and later restored, cf. *Turrieday* and *Eskadale* (see 8.1.2.2). The specific may be ON *effa* f in the sense 'boggy area', cf. Jakobsen 1936: 36. The farm lies in a valley with a number of wells and a burn that is almost dried up today, and may have been waterlogged in former times.

**Backatown** /'bakətun/

ON

Firth. HY 37 17.

*Batkatown* 1848 ComF, *Badyateun* Firth 1920.

Farm at the foot of Redland Hills. The generic could be Sc *town* or ON *tún* n (see 5.5.15.). The specific appears to ON *bakki* m 'hill; bank' (cf. 5.5.1), which suggests an ON formation with an ON generic. Both senses of *bakki* may describe the location of the farm, on a slope near a burn. The somewhat curious spellings *Batka-* and *Badya-* may possibly suggest palatal pronunciation /tç/ of *k*. This traditional feature of Orkney dialect is best preserved in the northern isles (see 4.2.1.4). Mainland examples include *Batyebreck* and *Batyaloan* in Harray (Sandnes 1996: 90, 127) and *Skiddy* in Rendall. The same feature is found in Norwegian dialects, but not before *a*.

**Bailliequoy** /'bɛljəkwi/

Firth. HY 35 13.

*Belyaquoy* 1841 C.

A croft. The generic is ON *kvi* f 'enclosure' or Orkney Sc *quoy* 'enclosure; unskatted unit; croft' (see 5.5.13.). The specific may refer to a hill; cf. hill names *Baillie Hill* and *Baillieval*. *Belle* in Selbu and some Shetland place-names have been derived from ON *böllr* m 'ball' (NG 14: 377, Jakobsen 1936: 133). Considering that the element is quite common, I would rather suggest comparative use of Orkney Sc *belly*, *belya* /'bɛli, 'bɛljə/ < ON *belgr* m 'bellow, hide, skin sack' (OrknN: 12), denoting a roundish feature. If that case, the



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formation may be Sc. Sc *Baillie* ‘town magistrate’ may have influenced the spelling, but is hardly the specific of a number of hill names.

**Barebrecks**

Sc

Firth. HY 38 16.

*Barebrecks* 1848 ComF.

A croft north of Burness. The name refers to its situation in the former *breck(s)* ‘shallow soil, uncultivated land’. The word is of ON origin, but this usage is specific for the Northern Isles. Cf. 5.5.4 and OrknN: 20, which quotes the phrase “naethin .. but puir bare brecks”.

**Barm**

ON?

Firth. HY 36 16.

*Barm* 1848 ComF.

A croft in the rather steep slopes of Redland. Sc *barm* ‘yeast’ is highly unlikely as a name element. Apparently, the name is an ON formation, from *barmr* m ‘edge; chest, breasts’. *Barmr* is found in Norwegian names, particularly with reference to coastal features (NSL 85). In this case, the denotation must be different.

**Benlaw** /'benla/

Sc

Evie.

*Bendla* 1841 C, *Bendlay* 1847 list of houses in E. Marwick’s notes Farm in Costa. This seems to be a Sc formation ‘bend (the) law’, possibly denoting a settlement not strictly according to the rules. Sc pronunciation of *law* is /la:/ (CSD: 360). Verbs are rare as place-name elements (cf. 8.3.4). If the interpretation is correct, the name is a statement rather than an imperative.

**Benziaroth** /'binjəro/

ON?

Firth. HY 36 14.

*Binyereth* 1502 R, *Benuar* ca. 1524 REO 423, *Benye-*, *Benyareth* 1595 R, *Binzæreth* 1601 UB, *Benzieroth* 1794 R.

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A farm close to Bay of Firth. It forms a 3-pennyland unit in rentals, together Savil. The interpretation is uncertain. For the generic, Marwick suggests ON *rjóðr* m ‘natural clearing’. It could also be *ruð* (*ryd*) n ‘cleared land’, a common generic in Scandinavian medieval names, cf. *Redland*. Though the modern form supports Marwick’s interpretation, early source forms resemble Scanian forms of *ruð*, *ryd*, which is pronounced /rɛ(d)/. For the specific, see *Binscarth*.

**Bigging(s), Lower and Upper** /'bɪɡi:n/ Sc

Rendall. HY 39 20.

Farms in Hackland. OS-maps give the singular form, but my local informant prefers the plural form. The origin is most likely Sc *bigging* ‘building’, see 5.5.2, a common element in names of subdivided farms. Here, Scots reciprocating elements prove the formation to be Sc. The long *i* in the second syllable is unique.

**Binnaquoy** /'bɪnjəkwi, 'bɪnjəkwai, 'bɪnəkwi/ ON

Firth. HY 35 14.

*Binzequoy* 1595 R, *Binzæquoy* 1601 UB, *Beinzaquoy* 1621 Sas., *Binyaquoy* 1623 Gr, *Binaquoy* 1627, *Bingaquoy* 1794 R.

Farm east of Binscarth, formerly a 1/2 pennyland unit. The name is recorded quite early, and the medial *-a-* seems to reflect ON case morphology, which suggests ON formation. The generic is thus ON *kví f* ‘(farm in an) enclosure’ (see 5.5.13.). The interpretation of the specific is uncertain, see *Binscarth* below.

**Binscarth** /'bɪnskar, -skart/ ON

Firth. HY 34 14.

*Benyescarth* 1502 R, *Bingascart* 1587 REO, *Binze-*, *Bynzescarth* 1595 R, *Benascart* 1627, *Benyescarth* 1661, *Bingascarth* 1794 R.

Formerly a 4-pennyland unit, today a farm in the valley above Finstown. Marwick (OFN pp 114) interprets Binscarth as *bærinn í skarði* ‘the farm in the valley’ and *Binnaquoy* somewhat vaguely as ‘quoy of the bae’. In ON, *bær* would not have the definite article as the specific of a compound, however. *Binnaquoy* and *Binscarth* are situated on the same burn, *Benziaroth* lies ca. 1 km further east.

## 6. The name material

They may contain a common specific, tentatively *\*benna, binna*.<sup>2</sup> The *nz* and *ny* spellings reflect dialectal palatalisation of *nn*, see 8.1.2.5, and *e > i* sometimes occurs before *n*, e.g. *brinno, rin* (OrknN: xl.). For assimilation *nd > nn* see 8.1.2.8. The origin of the element is uncertain. A river name *Benda* ‘the bending one’ has been suggested for Norw names in *Ben-* (NG 14: 216). This may fit for *Binscarth* and *Binnaquoy*. *Benziaroth* could possibly be seen as a satellite farm settled from one of the two others. An alternative is ON adj. *beinn* ‘straight’, which may denote burns as well as other localities (*Bēn* DSA 1: 131).

**Bisgarth** /<sup>h</sup>bɪzɡər/ ?

**Lower Bisgarth** (also called **Headriggs**) Sc

Evie. HY 39 24.

*Bisgar* 1841 C.

Farms south of Hill of Dwarmo. The generic is ON *garðr* m ‘farm’ or as there are no old source forms, perhaps rather Sc *garth*, see 5.5.7. The specific could be the dialect word *bizy* /<sup>h</sup>bɪzi/ ‘box for cattle’ (OrknN: 14)<sup>3</sup>, cf. (*Slap of*) *Quoybeezie*. If the name is older than the earliest record suggests, the generic may be ON *biskup* m ‘bishop’ (cf. *Bismo*, Oppland, Norway) or even Sc *bishop*. The form *Lower Bisgarth* includes a Sc adj. and is certainly a Sc formation.

**Blinkbonnie or Blink** Sc

Rendall.

An alternative name for Scotts Hall. *Blinkbonnie* is a rather modern name, and appears to be compounded of the verb *blink* ‘shine; give a friendly look’ (CSD 48) and the Sc adj. *bonny* ‘good, nice’. Such verbal constructions are often called imperative names in Scandinavian onomastics (see 8.3.4.), but this name rather seems to express a wish that the house may blink nicely at passers-by, cf. *Standpretty*.

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<sup>2</sup> Other names possibly containing the same element include *Benyekuml*, Stronsay, *Benyecot* and *Benyasty*, Sanday, *Benyeber*, Westray, *Binyaclaith*, Harray and *Binyafea*, Walls.

<sup>3</sup> Marwick derives this word from *bys*, but it might be a development of the common term *báss*, Norw. *bås* ‘compartment for a cow in a stable’.

**Blubbersdale** /'blʌbərʃde:l, -deɪl/ ON

Rendall. HY 37 20.

*Blubersdale* 1882 OS.

Farm in a valley of the same name up in the hills. We may assume an ON formation *blábers-dalr* 'blueberry valley', as a specific with *s*-genitive is unlikely in a Sc. formation. The name originally denotes the valley and was later transferred to the rather new house (see 7.2.1). Primary ON formations are impossible after the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century. The specific has probably been lexically adapted to Sc *blubber* (see 9.3.2.2), somewhat unexpected, considering that Sc *blaeberry* and ON *bláber* are rather close.

**Boray** /'bɔ:ri/ ON?

Gairsay. HY 44 21.

*Bora* 1688 Collins, 1722 Traill, *Boray* 1762 Traill.

Croft. Probably from a form of ON *borg* f 'fortress; broch'. Marwick (OFN: 75) suggests dative *borgi*. Owing to inconsistent spellings of unstressed vowels in written sources, it is problematic to suggest case morphology based on modern forms, however (see 8.2.1, 8.2.5). The present ending could be the Sc suffix *-y* or an onomastic adaptation to *ay* > ON *ey* f 'island'. Cf. *Boray*, field name in Evie.

†**Bradgarth**

Rendall.

*Braegar* 1841 C<sup>4</sup>, *Bradgarth* 1880 OS, *Brarigar* R. Bakie.

Former croft east of Skiddy (OS 1882). The generic is ON *garðr* or borrowed *garth*, see 5.5.7. The form *Brarigar* may suggest ON origin *bræðra-garðr* 'brothers' farm'. Alternatively, the specific could be the ON adj. *breiðr* 'broad'. It could also be a Sc. compound with the specific *brae*, referring to the slopes of Hackland Hill. The spelling *dg* 1880 reflects traditional palatal pronunciation /dj/ for *g*.

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<sup>4</sup> The only individual farm mentioned in the Census, which otherwise lists townships only.

6. *The name material*

- Brendo** ON  
Firth. HY 36 16.  
*Brenda* 1848 ComF.  
Farm in Redland. Original ON *brenna* f ‘place cleared by burning’. *nn* > *nd* appears to be a case of hypercorrection. The *d* of *nd* and *ld* is often dropped (see 8.1.2.8.) but may be restituted to fit Standard English (e.g. *-land* pronounced /lən/ or /lønd/). This process occasionally affects names with no original *d*, cf. *Fiold* and *Wald*.
- Breck** /bræk/ ?  
**Breck of Rendall/Breck Farm, Breck House** Sc  
Rendall. HY 41 20, 21.  
*Brek*, *Breck* 1629 wt, *Breck* 1723 Traill (Rendall).  
Farms on the slopes above Hall of Rendall. *Breck* < ON *brekka* f ‘slope’ has been borrowed into Orkney Scots (OrknN: 20, 5.5.4). The language of formation for *Breck* is thus uncertain. Original *Breck* has been replaced by three Sc formations: *Breck Farm* or *Breck of Rendall* and *Breck House*, containing Sc generics and/or of-periphrases.
- Breckan** /<sup>h</sup>brækən/ ON  
Evie.  
(Ioannis Brek in Curquoy 1492 R, *Breck in Costa* 1656 and 1680 Ret), *Breckan* 1841 C.  
Farm in Costa. *Breckan* reflects the ON definite form *brekka-n* ‘the slope’. If the early forms quoted actually refer to this locality, the definite article is a later addition, which would be unusual (cf. 9.3.2.1.).
- Brettobreck** /<sup>h</sup>brɛto/ ON  
Rendall. HY 40 21 .  
*Brattabreck* 1729 and 1743 Traill.  
A farm. ON *Bratta-brekka* ‘steep slope’. The generic is discussed in 5.5.4. The adj. *bratt-* ‘steep’ becomes *Brett-* in several names, e.g. *Brettoval* in Harray (OFN: 144) and *Brettabister*, *Brettiberg* in Shet-

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land (Jakobsen 1936: 23, 27). Traill's forms suggest that the change is late in this name, possibly an adaptation to other names? The oral short form is *Bretto*, cf. *Freeo* for *Quoyfree*, see 8.2.1.

**Brim(s)** / (ðə) 'brɪm(s)/ Sc

Evie. HY 38 23.

*The Brim* Carfin's Rental c. 1700, *Brim* 1841 C, *Brim(s)* 1897 OSNB. Croft near Burn of Woodwick. A Sc. coining, though *brim* 'burn' (CSD: 65) is unusual in Orkney. The use of articles is inconsistent. Locals do not normally use the plural, but they may or may not use the definite article.

**Bruar** /'brø:ar, -ər/ ON

Evie. HY 38 23.

*Brooer* Carfin's Rental c. 1700, *Bruer* 1841 C. Croft near Burn of Woodwick. Probably from ON *brúar* f. pl. 'bridges', though *ar*-genitive and a dropped generic is suggested in OFN: 127. The development *ú* > /ø/ is regular in the dialect.

**Bu, The Bu** /bu:/ Sc

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Boo* 1857.

Alternative name for Upper Inkster. *Bu of X* normally denotes major farms (see 5.5.5.) This name stands out in that Bu is used alone, rather as part of *Bu of X*-formation and it seems to be a late formation. Marwick suggests that this rather marginally situated farm may have been the central farm of Gorseness (OFN: 122). This seems unlikely. I prefer to see Bu as a late analogical formation, playing ironically on the positive connotations of Bu as denoting major farms.

**Bught** /'bɔ:t/ Sc?

Rendall. HY 41 17.

*Boughts* 1841 ComR.

House near the shore in Crookness (the name is also found in Eday). The location does not contradict an origin *bukt* f 'bay', but the word

## 6. *The name material*

is a LGerm loan in Scand. Since the word is unrecorded in ON, and the name appears to be late, a Sc origin *boucht* ‘sheepfold’ (CSD: 56) seems more likely. Vacillation between singular and plural form in recent time can be observed in a handful of names, cf. 8.2.4.

### **Burgar** /<sup>h</sup>bʌrgər/

ON

Evie. HY 34 27.

*Burgar* 1618 Sas. OSR, 1624 Sas.

Marwick derives the name from ON *Borgar* f. pl. ‘fortresses’. In Orkney, *borg* normally refers to brochs, and there are actually two of them in the vicinity, Broch of Burgar and Knowe of Grugar a little to the east. Alternatively, the name could be an original compound *Borggarðr*, ‘broch farm’, cf. *Burness*.

### **Burness** /<sup>h</sup>bʌrnɛs/

ON

Firth. HY 38 15.

*Burnes* 1502 R, 1595 R, 1601 UB, *Burness* 1665 Ch., 1794 R.

Farm on a headland north of Bay of Firth, formerly a 6-pennyland unit. The ON origin is *Borgnes*, with the generic *nes* n ‘headland’. The specific refers to a broch south of the farm, cf. *Burgar*.

### **Castle(, The)**

Sc

Rendall.

*Castle* 1882.

Relatively modern house close to the road south of Layburn. Sc formation, said to have originated during the construction, when a neighbour asked “Whit kind o’ a castle are thou biggan?”

### **Clairvale**

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 40.

House north of North Hackland, formerly called *Dicksquoy*. *Clairvale* is a fashion name rather than a characterising name (see 7.2.4), coined with the archaic element *vale* ‘valley’ (OALD: 1410) and possibly the feminine name *Clair(e)*.

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**Clook, Clouk** /kløk/

ON?

HY 33 28.

*Clouk* 1503 R. *Cluik* 1594 Ch., 1618 Sas.

Farm on the steep slopes of Vinquin Hill in Costa. This name seems to contain an element *\*kluk* ‘elevation, hill’, recorded in Trøndelag and Jämtland as *Kluk* or *Kluken* (NSL: 259). The element also occurs in Shetland (Jakobsen 1936: 67), and in Icel *klúka* f means ‘small mound or stack’. The name most likely refers to Vinquin Hill. Sc *cleuk* ‘claw’, ‘cloak’ are less obvious as place-name elements. Moreover, early records support an ON origin.

**Como** /'komo/

T?

Rendall. HY 41 19.

Former croft in the brecks above Gorseness. The croft appears to have been short-lived. It does not appear on OS 1882, and was probably established after that date. For this reason, I suggest a transfer of the name of the Italian holiday resort *Como*, cf. 7.2.1. A compound of *mo* (5.5.12.) and an unknown specific seems unlikely so late.

**Costa** /'kɔsta/

ON

Evie. HY 32 28.

*Costa*, *Costay* 1492 R, *Inner & Uttircosta*, *Innercosteth*, *Costaith* 1503 R, *Costa*, *Costay* 1595 R, later always *Costa*.

An 18 pennyland (1 urisland) unit in the rentals, survives as a name of the northernmost parts of the parish. The forms *-steth* and *-staith* 1503 suggest an original ON *staðir* m. pl. ‘place, farm’, though this element normally develops into *-ston* (cf. *Yinstay*, OFN: 87). The generic is characteristic of the Viking age in Norway, and the specific is often a personal name, here possibly masc *Kollr* or *Kolli* or fem *Kolla*. Alternatively, ON *kollr* m ‘mound’ could refer to one of the two marked hills in the area, Costa Hill (151 m) or Vinquin Hill (100 m). Cf. *Kollsnes* and *Kollstad* (NSL: 261).

**Cott** /kɔt/

1. Rendall. HY 41 21.



6. *The name material*

*Cot quoyland* 1595 R, *Cotquoy* 1601 UB.

Farm under Enyas Hill, in the periphery of North End.

2. Cott (of Dale). Evie HY 37 23.

*Cot in Widweik* 1618 Sas., *Cott* 1846 ComE.

Former croft sw. of Woodwick.

The origin is either ON *kot* n ‘small house’ or its Sc cognate *cot*. ON origin is more likely, as the word *cot* is first recorded in Scots in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (CSD: 117). The added quoy(land) for Cott in Rendall indicates unskatted status, see 5.5.13.

**Cottascarth** /<sup>h</sup>kətəskarθ, -skart/

ON

Rendall HY 36 19.

*Midhouse in Cattascart*, Evie [!] 1577 Ch., *Cotscarth* 1595 R, *Cot-tascarth* 1619 Sas., *Cottascarth* 1621 Sas., 1727 Traill.

Two farms today, *Upper* and *Lower Cottascarth* on the same valley plateau as *Settiscarth*. A 3-pennyland unit according to Marwick, though the 1595 rental does not state a value. The generic is ON *skarð* n ‘gap in a hill-ridge’, the specific is *kot* n ‘small house’. Marwick suggests a prepositional phrase *kot í skarði* ‘the cot in the skarth’, cf. *Settiscarth* and 8.3.3. However, *cotta-* may well reflect gen. plural *kotta* in a regular formation *Kottaskarð* ‘the scarth (hill-gap) with the cothouses’.

**Coubister** /<sup>h</sup>kubəstər/

ON

Firth. HY 37 15.

*Cowbustir* 1502 R, *Cowbustar* 1595 R, *Cubister* 1620 Sas. (with the note “once Kirbister”), *Coubister* 1665 Ch, 1794 R.

Two farmhouses north of Bay of Firth, 1 pennyland in rentals. The generic is ON *bólstaðr*, see 5.5.3. Marwick suggests the masculine name *Kúgi* or *kúa-* gen. plural of *kú* f ‘cow’ as its specific. Gammeltoft (2001: 108) prefers the latter, as the name *Kúgi* is extremely rare. *Kúgi* in Vestrey is an OrknSaga chieftain; this may be the only reliable record of the name (Lind 1915: 722).

**Crankie**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 14.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

*Crankie* 1841 C (house), T 1931 (field).

Former croft above Millquoy in Firth. G. Lamb interprets the name as “twisted, i.e. badly built”. According to CSD, *crankie* means ‘unsteady, insecure, unreliable’, and *crank* may mean ‘a twist’. Thus, the name is a Sc derogatory coining for a badly built house.

**Creya** /'kreiə/

ON?

Evie. HY 38 24.

*Craga* 1618 Sas. OSR, *Crega* 1644 Ret., *Craya* 1841 C.

Small farm at the foot of Vishall. The name also applies to other small farms in Orkney (OFN: 104).<sup>5</sup> The origin is uncertain. *Krak/krag-* in Scandinavian place-names is derived from ‘crow’, but the simplex form of a bird’s name is unexpected as a farm name. An alternative origin is ON *kraki* m ‘pole’ with uncertain reference.

**Crismo** /'krizmo/

Sc?

Evie. HY 31 28.

*Chrismo* 1882 OS

Farm right on the border between Costa and Birsay. The generic *mo* is ambiguous (cf. 5.5.12.) and the language of formation is uncertain. The specific is hardly *Christ*, as suggested in OFN. It is rather a personal name *Criste* recorded in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century: *Criste Cragy*, *David Cristesone* (REO: 193, 423), probably a short form of *Christopher*. Late records support Sc origin. An alternative is *grass*, cf. the pronunciation of *Gressy Geo*.

**Croan, Cruan** /'krɔən, 'krɔ:n/, /'kruən/

ON

1. Croan. Evie HY 32 27.

*Crone* 1841 C, *Crown* 1864 ComE.

Croft in ruins, Costa.

2. Cruan

Firth. HY 36 12.

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<sup>5</sup> Orphir *Crya* is the only early rental name, first spelt with initial *g*: *Gregay* 1492 R, *Grega* 1503 R, *Crega* 1595 R. For *c/g*-vacillation, see OrknN: xlv f. Cf *Cara* – *Garay* (OFN: 171), and *Corsnes* for *Gorseness* in Sasines.

6. *The name material*

*Cruan* 1868 OA D 7/3/25, 1897 OSNB.

Croft far up in the hillside in Grimbister.

The noun *krú*, *kró* f ‘pen’ is a Celtic loan word in ON, see 5.5.6. The language of formation is clearly ON, as can be seen from the ON post-positioned def. article. *Króin*, *Krúin* thus meant ‘the enclosure’. Both houses lack old source forms and may be rather new. This means the names are most likely denotation shifts, transfers of original field names (see 7.2.1).

**Crook** /krøk, kruk/ OFN, R. Bakie.

Rendall. HY 40 22.

*Cruik* 1595 R, *Crook* 1629 wt, 1727 Traill, *Cruck* 1722 Traill.

Farm near the shore south of Tingwall. The origin may be ON *krókr* m ‘hook, bend’ or its Sc cognate *cruik*. Either way, the name would refer to a curve in the coastline.

**Crowrar** /'krəurər, 'kruər/

ON

Upper, Lower Crowrar

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 22.

*Crouer* 1727 Traill, *Crowriaquoy* 1740 R, *Cruar* 1841 ComR.

Two farms today, *Upper* and *Lower Crowrar*. The written and spoken forms vary considerably, but the origin appears to be ON f. pl. *krúar* ‘enclosures’, see 5.5.6. The addition of *quoy* in a rental form means the farm is unskatted, see 5.5.13.

**Cruanbreck** /'kruənbrek/

Sc

Rendall. HY 37 18.

A house near the border to Firth. It is not on the 1882 OS map, which suggests that the name is a modern Sc compound of local elements. The area is called *Breck of Cruan*. In ON constructions, the specific loses its definite article (*\*Krúbrekk*); in the Sc formation *Cruan* is used in its original, unanalysed form (see 7.2.2). The generic *breck* probably carries its dialectal meaning ‘shallow, uncultivated soil’ (5.5.4).

**Cufter** /'køftər, 'kʌftər/

Evie.

*Cufter* 1841 C.

Former croft under Hill of Dwarmo. The origin is uncertain, but the ending *-er* points to an ON pl. No ON or Sc lexeme can easily explain this name.<sup>6</sup>

**Cupper** /'kʌpər/

ON

Evie. HY 38 23.

*Cuper* 1841 C.

1. Deserted croft above Woodwick. ON *koppr* m 'cup', here in the plural form *koppar*, is a common place-name element in Orkney. It originally denotes small, rounded hollows, and was later transferred to houses.

2. 1841 C has *Cupper* in Outer Evie, alongside *Couppin* and *Cuppin*. All the names are ON formations, showing reflexes of ON case morphology, but their use as house names may be secondary.

**Curcabreck** /'kʌrkəbræk, 'kɪrkə-/

ON

Rendall.

*Curcabreck* 1723 Traill.

Small farm NE of Quoyblackie. The generic is ON *brekka* f 'slope' (5.4.4.). The specific may be ON *kirkja* f 'church', with reference to *kirkland*, land owned by the church, as there is no tradition of a church in the area. Alternatively, the specific may be ON loan word *korki* m 'oats,' see Curquoy below.

**Curquoy** /'kʌrkwi/

ON

Evie.

*Curquy* 1492 R, *Curquoy* 1503 R, 1595 R, 1601 UB.

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<sup>6</sup> P. Gammeltoft has drawn my attention to some instances of *coft*-spellings for *toft* in names, e.g. Tafts in Westray spelt *Cofta* in 1500 R and Toft in Fetlar, Shetland spelt *Coft* 1604 (Ballantyne & Smith 1994: 377). However, these may be confusion of graphemes rather than actual pronunciation forms.

## 6. *The name material*

4 ½-pennyland unit in rentals, now lost as a farm-name. The generic is ON *kví* f ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13). Curquoy was unusually large for a *quoy*-unit, and it stands out as being udall land (cf. the Uthell Buik entry). The specific is uncertain. For *Cursetter* Marwick suggests *kýr* f ‘cow’, but *y* > /ʌ/ is not attested in appellatives. /’kʌrk-, kørk-/ in names are interpreted either as *kirkja* f ‘church’ or *korki* m ‘oats’, also applied to green lichen, traditionally used for dyeing. The word is a loan from Celt *coerce* (cf. Curcabreck).<sup>7</sup> The fact that there is no tradition of a church in Outer Evie and the farm is udall land may support the latter interpretation.

**Cursetter, -siter** /’kʌ(r)sətər/

ON

Firth. HY 37 12.

*Cursetter* 1502 R, 1578 REO, 1595 R, *Cursater* 1665 Ch, 1794 R.

3-pennyland unit of in the rentals, farms on the shore south of Bay of Firth today. The name is an ON formation with the generic *setr* m ‘seat, habitation’. The specific is uncertain. Marwick’s proposal *kýr* f ‘cow’ is problematic for phonological reasons (see *Curquoy*). The element *Kur-* is also puzzling in Norw place-names (see NSL: 269 and NG 1: 341)

**Cuthsgarth** /’kʊsgər/

Gairsay.

*Cusger* 1722 and 1732 Traill.

Formerly a farm in Gairsay. The generic is ON *garðr* m ‘farm’ or dialect *garth* (5.5.7). The formation may well be Sc, considering the relatively late records. The specific is uncertain, possibly genitive of Sc *coo* ‘cow’. Cf. *Coubister*.

**Dale** /dɛil/

1. Evie HY 36 25.

*Deal* 1600 Ch., *Dail* 1619 Sas. OSR.

Farm in Georth tunship. A 3-pennyland unit in the 1600 Ch.

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<sup>7</sup> Low records *courka coust* ‘oat bread’ ca 1770 (Hægstad 1900: 10), *korkikost* was a fishermen’s taboo term for bread in Shetland (Jakobsen 1921: 425).

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

2. Rendall. HY 36 19.

Former croft NW of Cottiscarth.

3. Evie. HY31 27.

Two farms near Loch of Swannay. Both names were given by a crofter (twice evicted), commemorating his original home *Dale* in Birsay (Marwick 1970: 44).

It is not clear whether *dale* ‘valley’ is a current appellative in Sc, it is not listed in ON or CSD. It is frequent as a place-name element, however. In most cases, the origin is ON *dalr* m ‘valley’, which may have been borrowed into Orkney Scots (see 5.4). When *dale* appears on flat land, ON *deild* f ‘part, portion, share’ or its Sc cognate *dale* (CSD: 134) is a more likely origin. The latter may apply to Dale in Georth, situated on a slope, but hardly near a valley. Dale in Rendall, on the other hand, lies in a marked valley called *Dale of Cottascarth*.

**Damaschool**

Sc

Evie. HY 36 24.

*Damaschool*, Lower D. 1885<sup>8</sup>, *Upper Damaschool* 1897 OSNB.

Croft somewhat up in the hill in Redland. Sc *Dame schools* refers to early schools for girls (18<sup>th</sup> century onwards), run by women in their own homes. The lessons included handicraft and some reading and spelling as well as ‘moral lessons’ (Wiggen 2002: 42). There is no local tradition of a school here.

**Dicksquoy**

Sc

Rendall.

An older name for *Clairvale*, see above. Most likely a Sc formation with the borrowed generic *quoy* (5.5.13) and a personal name as its specific. *Dick* is a family name in Orkney.

†**Dirlings**

Sc?

Evie.

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<sup>8</sup> Tunship map, OA D 7/3/17.

## 6. The name material

A former cot house in the Burn of Woodwick valley, supposedly haunted by a terrible ghost dog. CSD has *dirl* v ‘(cause to) vibrate, shake’, ‘a knock or blow causing sby to dirl; a vibratory motion; a gust (of wind)’. The name formation, its motivation and precise meaning is still unclear.

**Durrisdale** /<sup>h</sup>dʌrɪsde:l/ ON?

**Lower Durrisdale, †Upper Durrisdale** Sc

Evie. HY 37 24.

*Durisdale* 1841 C.

Farm on the steep slopes of a burn west of Woodwick. The generic is ON *dalr* m ‘dal’ or dialect *dale* (cf. *Dale* above). The specific is uncertain. If the name is an ON formation, it could be gen. of a masculine name *Þórir* or some compound with *Þor-*. *Upper* and *Lower Durrisdale* with Sc directional adjectives are Sc formations, cf. epexegetic names 9.3.3.

**Dyke** /deik/ Sc

Evie. HY 36 26. *Dyk* 1618 Sas. OSR, *Dyk* 1644 Ret.

Farm in Stenso. A Sc formation, *dyke* is the standard term for ‘wall, fence’. There is no evidence for Marwick’s suggestion that the name was translated from ON.

**Ellibister** /<sup>h</sup>elɪbɪstər/ ON

Rendall. HY 38 21.

*Ellibustar* 1503 R, *Alibustar* 1595 R, *Elzeabuster*, *Alibuster* 1601 UB, *Elebuster* 1727 OFN, *Allibister* 1728 Traill.

Two farms today, formerly a 5-pennyland tunship. The generic is ON *bólstaðr*, see 5.5.3. The specific is uncertain. Marwick suggests a personal name. According to Gammeltoft (2001: 113), both *Elli* m and *Ella* f are rare, whereas *Alli* is typically East Scand. Apart from *Elzea-* 1601, there is no indication of palatalisation, which suggests original short *l*. Two words denoting flowing water have been suggested: *elfr* f ‘river’ or *íla* f ‘well’. *Elv* is the standard term for river in Norw, but in ON *elfr* was only applied to Norway’s three largest rivers and thus seems unlikely to occur in Orkney. *Íla* ‘well’ fits the

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

location: strong wells in the area form two burns that never dry up, even in the driest summers. Similarly, Stewart (1987: 243) derives *Ellister* in Shetland from *ílustr*. What speaks against this interpretation is the phonetic development, the lowering of long *í* is irregular (OrknN: xli).

**Estaben** /<sup>h</sup>estəbən/

ON

Firth. HY 37 17.

*Eastaban* 1848 ComF.

Farm in Redland. The 1848 map also has a *Nistaban*. We may thus assume an ON opposing pair *Øfsti-* and *Neztibærinn*. The specifics are the directional adjectives ‘upper’ and ‘lower’, the generic is the def form of ON *bær* m ‘farm’. *Eastabin* (in a pair with *Nistaban*) in Stenness is certainly the same, even if Marwick suggests ‘East Bigging’ (OFN 112). The reason why Marwick overlooks the rather obvious interpretation *bær* for these names may be his desire to delimit *bær* to the very oldest ON farm names, see OFN: 243. His assumption is problematic, considering that the element lived on in ON and was used for coining secondary names in Norway, similar to the Orcadian examples (cf. Schmidt 2000:99).

**Evie** /<sup>h</sup>e:vi/

ON

Evie. HY 35 25.

*til Efiusunds* OrknSaga, *Evy* 1492 R, *Evie* 1503 R, 1595 R.

Parish name. Evie borders in NE on Eynhallow or Evie Sound, i.e. Efiusund of the saga. *Efja* has various meanings in ON, but in this case the modern Norw meaning ‘back-current’ fits well. Strong tidal currents between Evie and Rousay cause impressive back-currents in the sound. The strongest currents near Eynhallow are called *The Roost*, ON *röst* f ‘whirlpool, maelstrom’ (cf. *Röst* NSL: 377).

**Fealquoy** /<sup>h</sup>fjalkwi/

ON

Evie.

*Feaquy* 1492 R, *Feawquoy* 1503 R, *Fealtquoy* 1595 R, *Foulquoy* 1841 C.



## 6. The name material

Farm in Outer Evie, a 3-penny udall land in the rentals. The name occurs repeatedly in Orkney. The specific may be ON *ffall* n ‘hill, mountain’, as suggested by Marwick. However, it may also be ON *fé* n ‘cattle’, which fits in very well with the generic *kvi* f ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13). Sc vocalisation of *l* and later restitution (see 4.2.1.4) may cause confusion of the two elements. In this case, early rental forms support the interpretation *fé*.

### **Fiold** /fjöld/

ON

Firth. HY 36 17.

*Feold* 1848 ComF.

Farm in the hillside in Settiscarth. The origin is ON *ffall* n ‘mountain’ Hyper-restitution *ld* and *nd* of original *ll* and *nn* is discussed under *Brendo* above. The element *Fiold* occurs in a number of hill names, and as a habitation name in Westray.

### **Firth** /firθ/

ON

Firth. HY35 14.

*i Fiaurþ* OrknSaga, *Firth* 1502 R, 1595 R, *Firthe* 1601 UB.

Formerly a 4 ½-pennyland tunship, which gave its name to the parish. The tunship lies in the centre of the parish at the inner end of Bay of Firth, and is now a part of Finstown village.<sup>9</sup> The ON original name *Fjörðr* m ‘fjord’ has been adapted in the same way as the appellative, Sc *firth* (CSD: 197). This may be a translation (see 9.2.2) or an instance of immediate understanding on the part of the name users (see 9.2.4).

### **Flaws** /fla:z/

Sc?

Evie. HY 37 25. *Flawis* 1656 Ret., 1680 Ret.

Farm in Redland. ON *flá* f ‘ledge or terrace on a hillside’ undergoes semantic extension. In Orkney Sc it denotes ‘a strip of green grass in heather’ (OrknN: 42) and possibly ‘a rig, strip of land’ in general.

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<sup>9</sup> Bay of Firth = OrknSaga *Aurriðafjörðr* ‘trout firth’. *Finstown* is named after an Irish soldier *Phin* who established a public house here ca. 1820. A small village soon emerged around *Phin*’s (Firth 1974: 138).

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The Sc plural morpheme suggests Sc formation. The development of long *á* is irregular, *á* is normally rounded as in Norw (4.4.1.4., OrknN: xxxix).

### **Fursan** /<sup>l</sup>fʌrʃən/

Evie. HY 37 24.

*Fursen* 1841 C, *Fursan* ca. 1860.<sup>10</sup>

Farm west of Vishall. The name could be an ON formation, coined from the definite form of ON *fors* m ‘rapids; waterfall’. The present location is somewhat removed from burns, however. A Sc formation from *furze* ‘gorse’ seems unlikely from a name-typological point of view, as there is no identifiable generic.

### **Gallowha** /<sup>l</sup>galə,ha/

Sc

Evie. HY 37 23.

*Gallowa* 1846 ComE.

House on the slopes of Hill of Huntis, also called *Golderhall* (see *Goldero*). The name is a Sc compound of *gallow(s)* and *ha(ll)*. In newer names, *ha*’ tends to be used in a derogatory sense (see 5.5.9.). There is no tradition of gallows here.<sup>11</sup>

### **Garson** /<sup>l</sup>gafən/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 23.

*Garsent* 1492 R, 1503 R, *Garsetter*, *-satter* 1595 R, *Garson* 1727 OFN.

Farm NE of Midland, near the border to Evie. In rentals, Midland and Garson make up a 6-pennyland unit. The name, originally an ON compound noun *garðsendi* m ‘dyke’s end’, is quite common in Orkney. *Garðr* in this case refers to a dyke (5.5.7.), e.g. the turf dyke surrounding the tunship or possibly pre-Norse structures (see *Gorse-*

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<sup>10</sup> Tunship map OA D 7/3/21.

<sup>11</sup> According to local tradition, the original *Gallowha* was close to Cufter. A boy from this house was tragically strangled in the reins while riding a horse. After the accident, his mother moved to the new place, transferring the name. There is no evidence for another *Gallowha* or gallows in the area to substantiate the story, but the association of gallows and strangling is conspicuous.

6. *The name material*

ness below). Unstressed *-endi* merges with the reflex of ON suffixed def. art., e.g. *Grandon* < *grandinn*, see 9.3.2.1. Note the palato-alveolar pronunciation of *rs* (see 8.1.2.8.)

**Geo** /djø, gjø/

ON

Firth. HY 36 18.

*Goe* 1848 ComF.

Farm in a steep burn valley above Holland. The origin cannot be *geo* ‘inlet’, since this term always applies to coastal locations and is pronounced differently. It might be of the same origin as Norw *juv*, ‘cleft, ravine’ (see 5.5.8).

**Georth** /gjørt, djørt/

ON?

*Garith* 1492 R, *Garth* 1503 R, 1665 Ret., *Gairth* 1664 Ch.

1. Inner Evie. HY 36 25.

Formerly a 18-pennyland unit, now a district name.

2. Outer Evie. HY 35 26.

A farm.

The rental forms normally refer to tunships, but later source forms could refer to either of the two. ON *garðr* m ‘farm’ was borrowed into the dialect (5.5.7.), but considering the early records, we may assume the tunship name to be of ON origin. The unusual spelling reflects palatalisation of *g*, which is normal in the dialect (cf. *Grudgar* below). The shift *a* > *ɔ* has parallels in Scand.

**Gitter-, Gutterpitten**, /'gɪtəpɪtn, 'gʌtər-/ ON?

Rendall. HY 39 20.

*Gutterpitten* 1841 ComR, *Gutterpitten* 1862 OA D 7/3/57.

Farm in Hackland. The name form is interesting in that it seems to combine a Sc specific *gutter* and an ON generic *pyttrinn* or *pyttarnir* m. pl. ‘the pool(s)’, showing ON case morphology. An estate map from 1862, depicting a series of small pools or mud holes supports this interpretation. How can the Sc specific be explained? As I see it, there are two options. Either Sc *gutter* was borrowed into the Norn dialect, in which case the name is a regular ON formation. Alternatively, *gutter* may be a translation or phonetic adaptation of an origi-

nal ON name element. If that is the case, the bilingual form is a result of partial adaptation.

**Goltsquoy** /<sup>l</sup>gøltskwai/

Rendall. HY 38 20.

Alternative name for Layburn in Ellibister. The specific may be ON *galtr*, *göltr* m ‘male pig’ or the synonymous Orkney Sc loan word *golt* (OrknN: 59).<sup>12</sup> The generic *quoy* ‘enclosure’ was also borrowed into the dialect (5.5.13.), so even if both elements are ultimately of ON origin, the language of formation is uncertain.

**Gorn** /gørn/

ON

Rendall. HY 40 18. *Gorn* 1627 wt, 1662 Blaeu.

Farm in Isbister. An ON formation, as it reflects a definite form of *garðr*, probably *garð(r)inn*. Cf 5.5.7.

**Gorseness** /<sup>l</sup>gɔʃnes/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Goryssness* 1492 R, *Goirisnes* 1503 R<sup>13</sup>, *Gorseness*, *Gorsnes* 1595 R, *Gorisnes* 1601 UB, *Goirsnes* 1627.

A 24-pennyland unit in the rentals, the largest and most fertile township in Rendall. Today, *Gorseness* is the name of a district embracing a number of farms with individual names. The generic is ON *nes* n ‘headland’. The specific is most likely ON *garðr* m ‘farm, dyke’ (5.5.7.), though the masculine name *Garðr* is also a possibility. In such a nuclear settlement, a specific farm or dyke might refer to pre-Norse structures.

**Graemshall** /<sup>l</sup>grɛimshəl/

Sc/T

Rendall. HY 38 22.

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<sup>12</sup> *Göltr* is an u-stem and does not normally take *s*-genitive. There are hardly any reflexes of *ar*-genitive in the material, however (see 8.2.2.)

<sup>13</sup> *ys/is* (1492/1503) is a conventional Sc spelling of the genitive morpheme and does indicate an extra syllable. The shift *a* > *ɔ* in *garðr* is discussed in 5.7.7.

6. *The name material*

*Graemshall* 1882 OS.

Farm at the foot of Hammars Hill, in a valley called *Grimis Dale* (OS). The farm and the name are rather young. It could be a compound of *hall* (cf. 5.5.9) and the specific of the valley name, but I would rather suggest a transfer of the name *Graemshall*, which denotes a large farm in Holm, see 7.2.1.

**Grandon** /<sup>h</sup>grandøn/ ON

Firth. HY 35 14.

*Granding*(?) 1642 Gr<sup>14</sup>, *Grandon* 1754 Gr, *Grandan* 1841 C.

Small farm on the shore in Finstown. The origin is the ON m definite *Grandinn* ‘the sand/gravel shore’.

**Greenhall** Sc

Rendall. HY 39 21.

A small farm north of Hackland. The formation is Sc, with the generic *hall* used ironically of a small farm (see 5.5.9.).

**Grimbister** /<sup>h</sup>grimbistər/ ON

Firth. HY 37 12.

*Grymbustar* 1502 R, 1595 R, *Grynbister* 1509 REO, *Grymbuster* 1560–61 REO, *Gremibuster* 1601 UB, *Grumbuster* 1655 Ret.

An old 4 ½-pennyland tunship on the shore of Bay of Firth, split up into a number of farms. The generic is ON *bólstaðr* m ‘farm’ (see 5.5.3.). The specific is possibly the masculine name *Grímr*, or considering the lack of genitive morpheme, the adj. *grænn* ‘green’. In the latter case, the shift *nb* > *mb* is regular (OrknN: lxvi), but the development of the vowel is more problematic, cf. Gammeltoft (2001: 118).

**Grind** /<sup>h</sup>grind/ ON

Rendall. HY 39 18.

*Grind* 1740 R.

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<sup>14</sup> The reading of the 1642 source form is uncertain. However, *-ing* is a normal hypercorrection of /in/.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Farm at crossroads in Isbister. The origin is ON *grind* f ‘gate’. *Grindamira* ‘the marsh of Grind’, recorded in 1740 R and 1841 ComR seems to be an ON secondary formation.

**Grudgar, Grugar** /<sup>h</sup>grudjer/

ON

Evie. HY 35 26.

*Growagarth* 1492 R, 1503 R, *Growgarth* 1503 R, *Growagair* 1595 R, *Growgar* 1624 Sas.

Recorded 1492, this is probably an ON formation with the generic *garðr* m ‘farm’, see 5.5.7. Palatal pronunciation of *g* is quite common in Evie. Marwick suggests a feminine name *Gróa* as its specific, and the same for *Grobister* in Stronsay. Since feminine names are quite rare in place-names, ON *gröf* f ‘hollow’ appears to be more likely (cf. *Grue*, NSL: 184).

**Habreck, Hallbreck** /<sup>h</sup>ha:bræk/

Sc

Rendall.

*Hallbreck* 1882 OS.

Croft under Gorseness Hill. Late records and a peripheral location suggest late settlement and a Sc name formation. ON *Hábrekka* f ‘high hill’ can probably be ruled out, even if it fits the location. Moreover, ON *á* normally develops into /ɔ/. For these reasons, I am inclined to interpret the name as a Sc inverted compound name with the generic *ha(ll)* (8.3.1, 5.5.9,) and the dialect loan word *breck* ‘shallow, uncultivated land’ (5.5.4.) as its specific. Cf. *Ha’white* below.

**Hacco** /<sup>h</sup>høko/ OFN, /<sup>h</sup>huko, <sup>h</sup>hako/

ON

Rendall. HY 40 22.

*Howaquoy* 1595 R<sup>15</sup>, *Howakow* 1629 wt, *Hucco* 1841 ComR.

A small farm south of Tingwall. The name has undergone quite an extreme reduction from the original ON *Haugakví* attested in the oldest records. The 1629 form can be read as a mutual adaptation of

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<sup>15</sup> *Howaquoy* is listed along with *Tingwall* and *Midgarth* in the rental, which suggests that it actually refers to this farm.

## 6. *The name material*

the generic *kvi* f (5.5.13) and the specific *haugr* m ‘mound’. For a discussion of this kind of adaptation, see 9.3.4. The modern form has undergone further reduction as well as morphological adaptation to Sc, see 8.2.1.

### **Hackland** /<sup>h</sup>hakløn, -lønd/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 20.

*Halkland* 1503 R, 1595 R, 1601 UB, *Haukland* 1664 Ch.

A former 6-pennyland tunship, split into a number of farms. Marwick suggests an ON origin *axlarland*. *Aksla* f def ‘the shoulder’ is a common hill name in Norway, and here it could refer to Enyas Hill. However, this etymology does not fit for *Hackland* on flat land in Sandwick, and I would suggest an alternative interpretation ON *haukr* m ‘hawk’. *Haukland* is a rather common name in Norway. Moreover, the rentals that have *Halkland* also write *halk* for ‘hawk’, cf. CSD: 273 *halk*, *hawk* /hak/. *Halkhens* (to feed the royal hawks and falcons) were part of the tribute (see Thomson 1987: 127). *au* > *a* is not a regular phonetic development (OrknN: xliii), but lexical adaptation ON *Hauk-* > Sc *halk* seems reasonable (see 9.2.2). *Hauk-* in Norw names is derived either from river names or from the bird’s name directly (NSL: 199). The same etymology could be suggested for *Hacksness* in Sanday (OFN: 9).

### **Hammeron**

ON

Rendall. HY 39 23.

*Hammerin* 1727, *Hammeron* 1799 OA D 34 E1/2/2 and D 34 E/5.

House SW of Midland, under Hammars Hill. The reflex of the suffixed ON definite article proves the language of formation to be ON *hamarrinn* m def ‘the hammer’, i.e. the cliff, referring primarily to Hammars Hill.

### **Hammiger** /<sup>h</sup>hamigər/

ON

Evie.

*Hamagarth* 1492 R, *Hammagarth* 1503 R, *Hamigair* 1595 R.

Once a 3-pennyland unit in the Georth tunship (still a farm?). As for Grugar, early records suggest an ON coining with the generic *garðr*

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m ‘farm’. The specific is probably *hafnar*, gen. of *höfn* in the sense ‘pasture’, since Hammiger is not on the shore. *fn* > *m* appears to be the normal development see 8.1.2.8.

**Ha’white** /ha<sup>1</sup>ˌmeɪt/

Sc

Evie

*Hallwhite* 1847.

Former croft near Niggly. A Sc inverted compound formation. The generic is *ha* ‘hall’, see 5.5.9, the specific is *white*. Most inverted compound names in the material are coined with *quoy*; *Ha’white* and *Habreck* being the only examples with the generic *hall* (see 8.3.1.2).

**Hayon** /<sup>h</sup>heɪɔn/

ON

Rendall.

Croft in ruins in the hills above Ellibister, supposedly named after Birsay *Hayon*. ON fem def. *heiðrin* ‘the moor’ suits both locations (cf. OFN: 139), which may have been named independently. Alternatively, the origin may be ON *haginn* m def ‘the enclosed pasture’, since *g* regularly disappears between vowels (8.1.2.1). Cf. *Moss of Hyon* 6.2.

**Heddle** /hɛdl/

ON

Firth. HY 35 12.

*Hedal* 1425 DN II 691, *Hadale* 1502 R, *Haddale* 1595 R, *Heddell* 1600 Ch, 1601 UB, *Heddle* 1794 R.

A 3-pennyland unit in rentals, today a number of farms in a valley opening towards Stenness. The generic is ON *dalr* m ‘valley’, the specific is probably *hey* n ‘hay’ (cf. OFN: 115). *ey* > /ɛ/ is a normal development (OrknN: xliii), and the spelling *e* is to be assumed in the 1425 document, which renders all ON diphthongs as monophthongs (see 4.4.1.2). The reduction *dalr* > *dl* seems to follow a Sc pattern, e.g. *fiddle*, *paddle*, and is also found in *Liddale* /<sup>l</sup>lidl/, South Ronaldsay.

**Hellicliff** /<sup>h</sup>heljɪklɪf, -klɪv/

ON

Evie. HY 38 24.



## 6. The name material

*Helliekloiff* 1618 Sas. OSR, *Helliclive* 1799 OA D 34 E/5.

Farm below Vishall, near Creya. Appears to be an ON formation containing the generic *kleif* f ‘steep road’ (borrowed into the dialect in the form *klivvy*, OrknN: 90). The specific could be *hella* f ‘flat rock’. The compound can thus be rendered ‘steep road paved with rocks’. A personal name masc *Helgi* or fem *Helga* or the adj. *helga* ‘holy’ as the generic seem less likely. *ll* (and *lg*) is often palatalised (see 4.2.1.4), cf. *Hellian Kellian* ‘the holy well’ in Sandwick.

### **Henley** /<sup>h</sup>henli/

Evie.

T?

*Henley* 1841 C.

A small farm south of Lower Durrisdale, also a field name in Har-ray. Possibly transferred from England, where *Henley* occurs repeatedly as a habitation name, and as a family name (Ekwall 1966: 135, Hanks & Hodges 1988: 250). In Scotland, it is neither recorded in the OS gazetteer, nor as a family name by Black. A Sc compound of *ley* ‘fallow land’ (CSD: 362 *lea*) and *hen* seems less likely.

### **Hestavel**

ON

Evie.

*Hastaval* 1841 C, *Hestawell* 1846 ComE, *Hestivall* 1897 OSNB.

Once a cluster of crofts in a valley above Georth, today only one deserted croft remains. Originally ON *Hestavöllr*. The generic *völlr* m means ‘(natural, fertile) field’, the specific is gen. pl. *hesta* of *hestr* m ‘horse’. The name also occurs in Shapansay and Rousay.

### **Hewin** /<sup>h</sup>euin/

ON

Evie. HY 33 27.

*Hewin* 1841 C.

Former croft near Peerie Water. ON formation with suffixed def. art. *haug(r)inn* ‘the mound’. The croft and the croft name are probably rather late, the ON form indicating the transfer of an existing nature name, see 7.2.1

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**Hewing** /'hju:in/

ON?

Firth. HY 36 16.

*Howa* 1846 mF, *Haween* 1848 ComF.

A farm between Redland and Holland. The form on the 1846 map suggests a form of ON *haugr* m ‘mound’, but the pronunciation and the 1848 record render the interpretation uncertain.

**Hinderayre** /'hinərə:ɪ, 'hindərə:ɪ/

ON

Rendall. HY 42 19.

*Inerair* 1594 Ch., *Innerair* 1625 Sas.

Farm in Gorseness, south of South Aittit or *Ayre*. The generic of Hinderayre is ON *eyrr* f ‘sand, gravel(ly beach)’, referring to the shingly bay in which both farms are situated. The oldest records tell us that the specific is the ON adj. *innri* ‘inner’ rather than *hindri* ‘farther’, suggested in OFN 122. *Hinder-* is probably an adaptation to the Sc word *hinder* ‘behind’ (CSD: 288), see 9.3.2.2.

**Hogar(th)** /'hɔgər, -gər/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Hogar* 1841 ComR.

A farm in Hackland, somewhat up in Gorseness Hill. The origin is possibly ON *Hágarðr* m ‘the high farm’. *Gar(th)* is discussed in 5.5.7. The adj. *hár* ‘high’ also occurs in *Holland*, see below.

**Holland** /'hɔlənd, -lən/

ON

Firth. HY 36 15.

*Holland* 1502 R, 1551 REO, 1601 UB, *Howland* 1662 Blaeu.

A 6-pennyland unit in rentals, still a farm today, situated on the shoulder of a hill above Coubister. This very frequent name is usually interpreted as ON *Háland*, with the generic *hár* ‘high’. An interpretation ‘land/farm on high grounds’ is suitable here. A few of the Holland farms are situated on low land, e.g. those in Sanday (see OFN: 10) and St. Ola. Blaeu’s form suggests that *haugr* m ‘mound, howe’ may be the specific for some of the *Hollands*. Thus, different ON specifics may have merged in the form *Holland*, just as *Eystri-* and *Óssbólstaðr* both become *Isbister*. *Holland* is the standard form

6. *The name material*

from the first rentals and must have had a normative effect. Such onomastic adaptation is discussed in 9.3.2.1.<sup>16</sup>

**Holodyke**

Sc

Firth. HY 36 12.

House above Grimbister. A number of crofts are called *Holodyke* or *Hole o' Dyke*, with reference to some opening in the (tunship) dyke.

**Horrals(h)ay** /'hɔrəldzə, 'hɔrənʃi, 'hɔrldʃi, -si/

ON

Firth. HY 36 14.

*Thorwaldishow* 1502 R, *Horrals(h)ay* 1595 R, *Horralsay* 1619 Sas. A 3-pennyland unit in the rentals, today a farm north of Bay of Firth. The 1502 form makes it clear that the origin is ON *Þorvaldshaugr* 'Thorvald's mound'. An identical development ON *þ* > /h/ occurs in a few farm-names: *Thurstainshow* (Holm) 1492 R > *Hurteso* 1595 R, *Thurkingisgarth*, *Thurkynsgarth* (Sandwick) 1492 R > *Hurkisgair* 1595 R. The development appears only to occur in proper names, see 8.1.2.3.

**Horrie** /'hɔri/

Evie.

*Horrie* 1841 C.

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<sup>16</sup> Based on Steinnes' somewhat controversial theory of *Huseby* farms as administrative centres, Liv K. Schei (1998: 343) has recently suggested an alternative interpretation of the Orkney *Hollands*. According to Schei, they are simplex formations coined from *\*hollandi* 'helper', denoting farms belonging to subordinate administrative helpers. The idea that all farms with a specific function should have a certain name is fundamentally problematic. In the case of *Holland*, it would imply a rather massive renaming in the 11th century. Moreover, Schei's assumed simplex formation 'helper' without a generic denoting the location is typologically problematic from a name-formation point of view.

Considering some late *Holland* coinings, e.g. two in Harray, it rather looks as if the namers perceived a semantic content 'farm on high ground' well into modern times, or that *Holland* becomes a standard name for farms located on high land, see 7.3.3.

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Former croft, amalgamated with Laga. Situated on low-lying brecks, according to a map from 1873. *Horrie*, St. Andrews and *Horraquoy*, Harray are also close to marshes. One is thus inclined to suggest some word denoting marshy land, possibly ON *horr* m ‘muddy ground’ (literally ‘snot’), as suggested for *Horr* in Rogaland (NG 10: 122). Alternatively, the name could be derived from ON *hörgr* ‘heap of stones’. The suffix is Scots (see 8.2.1).

**Hoversta** /hɔvərsta/ T?

Rendall. HY 41 17.

House in the Crookness area. Since it is not on the 1882 OS-map, we may rule out an ON *staðir*-formation. The name could possibly have been transferred from Shetland. There is *Hoversta* in Unst and Bressay (Stewart 1987: 253, 256, cf. 7.2.1 on name transfer).

**Howa** /hɔuə, hauə/ ON

Evie.

*Howa* 1595 R, 1601 UB, 1841 C.

A 2 ½-pennyland unit in the 1595 rental, exceptional in Evie for being udall land. A farm in the north part of Costa on the 1846 Commonly map, only preserved as a field name today. The name is coined from some form of ON *haugr* m ‘mound’.

**Howe** /hɔu, hau/ ON

Evie. HY 35 26.

*How* 1624 Sas.

Farm name, coined from ON *haugr* m ‘mound’.

**Hull** T

Evie. HY 35 25.

*Hull* 1841.

Former croft, now in ruins. The name seems to be transferred from *Hull* in England.

**Huntis** Sc?

Evie. HY 36 24. *Highhuntas* 1841 C.

6. *The name material*

House above Redland, under Hill of Huntis (cf. 6.2.). The origin is uncertain. It could be a Sc formation referring to hunting, but it could also be a hill-name containing the ON generic *þúfa* f ‘hillock, mound’.

**Ing(a)showe** /'iŋzəu, 'iŋəzu, 'iŋəʃəu/ ON

Firth. HY 38 12.

*Ingiswall* 1846 mF, *Ingshowe* 1897 OSNB.

Farm on a headland with a broch ruin. In spite of the 1846 form, the origin of the generic is fairly certainly ON *haugr* m ‘mound’, referring to the broch ruin. The specific may be ON *eng* f ‘meadow’, though rare as a place-name element in Orkney. Ingshowe lies in “the Meadow betwixt Ranybustar and Cursetter” which was skatted in the 1595 rental. Alternatively, the specific could be a personal name masc *Ingi* or fem *Inga*. Neither *eng* nor the personal names take *s*-genitive in classical ON, but this may be a secondary development.

**Inkster** /'iŋstər/ ON

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Incksetter*, *-satter* 1723 Traill.

Two farms today, *Inkster* and *Upper Inkster* or *(The) Bu* (see above). There is another Inkster in Orphir. The generic is ON *setr* m ‘seat, dwelling-place’, the specific is *eng* f ‘meadow’. Both in Orkney and Norway, *setr*-farms are typically peripheral farms (far from the sea, near the hills, cf. Thomson 1995:52, 60, NSL: 388). The specifics often refer to pasture and marginal agriculture. The three *setter*-farms in the investigated area fit into the pattern, all being rather marginal farms (cf. *Mossetter* and *Seater*).

**Isbister** /'aɪsbɪstər/ ON

Rendall. HY 39 18.

*Ossbustir* 1492 R, *Osbustare* 1503 R, *Osbuster*, *-bustar* 1595 R, *Ysbust* 1601 UB, *Isbuster* 1664 Ch, 1723 Traill.

A former tunship of 12-pennyland on low-lying grounds near the sea, preserved as a district name. The oldest records leave no doubts

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as to its origin, ON *Óssbólstaðr*. The generic *bólstaðr* is discussed in 5.5.3. ON *óss* m ‘river mouth’ has gained a specialised meaning ‘the opening of a lagoon to the sea’ (OrknN: 128, cf. 5.4). Here, it refers to the lagoon formed at the confluence of Burn of Sweenalay and Burn of Cruan. The name *Isbister* occurs elsewhere in Orkney, with a different origin. In Birsay, the specific is *eystri* ‘eastern’, cf. *Est-*, *Esterbuster* 1492 R, in South Ronaldsay it may be *eystri* or *yzti* ‘outer’ cf. *Estirbuster* 1492 R, *Ystabustare* 1500. Apparently, *Isbister* in Rendall has developed in analogy with the two others, *óss* > /’eis / is an irregular phonetic development. Cf. 9.3.2.1.

**Iverhouse** /’ivərus, ’evər-/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Iverhouse* 1856.

A former croft in Hackland. *Iverhouse* is opposed to *Nearhouse*. For *house* alone, we cannot determine the linguistic origin (see 5.5.10), but here the specifics tell of ON origin. *Øfrahús* ‘upper house’ and *neðrahús* ‘nether house’ both contain an ON directional adj.

**Kewin, Kewing** /’kjuin, ’kuin, ’kluin/

ON?

Rendall.

*Kewan* 1841 ComR.

A farm west of Quoyblackie. An element /kju, ku/ occurs in a number of names; cf. *Cuween* in Firth and *Knowes of Cuean* /’kjuən/ in Birsay (Marwick 1970: 34). The origin is uncertain, but some form of ON *kýr* f ‘cow’ is possible. In this case, the ending may have another origin than the ON suffixed article, which is normally pronounced /ən/. *Kúakvín* ‘the cow enclosure’ or *kúaeng* f ‘cow meadow’ could be suggested.

**Kingsdale** /-deil, -de:l/

Sc

Firth. HY 37 11.

*Kingsdale* 1848 ComF, 1868 (*Orkney Herald* 3.3.).

6. *The name material*

A farm and a valley south of Grimbister. The first source form refers to the valley. With a Sc specific, this appears to be a late Sc (or Eng) formation.

**Kirkatoft** /<sup>h</sup>kɪrkətɔft/

Evie. HY 37 25.

House west of Lower Quoys. What appears to be an ON formation with ON case morphology actually applies to a former gospel hall converted into a dwelling house. This semantically appropriate, but somewhat anachronistic name, was coined in the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the folklorist Ernest Marwick. See 7.2.2.

**Laga, Lagie** /<sup>h</sup>lagi/

Sc?

Evie. HY 38 24. *Lagie* 1841 C.

Farm on the south-westerly slopes of Vishall. The lack of early records combined with intervocalic *g* in pronunciation suggests a relatively young farm with a Sc name. If the origin were ON, we would expect vocalisation or loss of postvocalic *g* (see 8.1.2.1.). The name is possibly derived from Sc *lagger* ‘mire, mud’ (CSD: 352). There is a marshy area south of Vishall, which may also have motivated the name *Horrie* (see above).

**Langalour** /<sup>h</sup>laŋəlʊər/

ON?

Firth. HY 26 16.

*Longaloo?* 1848 ComF (the reading is uncertain).

Farm in Redland. The specific seems to be an ON case marked form of *langr* ‘long’, suggesting an ON coining. The generic is uncertain, but might be ON pl. *lóar*. *Ló* f/n originally denotes ‘flat meadow bordering on water’ (Fritzner 550), in modern Norw ‘flat meadow’ in general. Cf *Luan*. The land below Langalour is flat.

**Langskail** /<sup>h</sup>laŋskeil/

ON

Gairsay. HY 43 21.

*Langskail* 1882 OS.

The only inhabited farm in Gairsay today. ON origin *Langskáli* m ‘the long hall’, which may refer to Viking chieftain Svein Ásleivs-

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son's large drinking hall (cf. OrknSaga chap. 105), see 5.5.14. There are remains of a Viking-age house near the farm.

**Layburn** /'leibʌrn/

Sc

Rendall. HY 38 20.

*Layburn* 1882 OS.

Alternative name for *Goltsquoy*. *Layburn* is a transfer of a burn name (see 7.2.1.). On the 1841 ComR-map, *Leyburn* denotes Ellibister Burn. The formation is Sc, the specific *lay* means 'ground left untilled' (see *lea* 2 CSD: 362).

**Lettaly** /'letəli/

ON

Firth. HY 36 18.

*Clettaley in Settiscarth* 1665 Ch, *Lattalie* 1796.

Farm in Settiscarth. Situated on high grounds with a good view. For this reason it makes sense to interpret the name as a compound of *leiti* n 'place from where one can see far' and *hlið* f 'slope', cf. OFN 117. However, the oldest recorded form suggests an origin *Klettahlíð*, with gen. pl. of *klettr* m 'protrusion, mound' as a specific. Still, one would not expect *k* to drop in this name, when *kl-* is otherwise preserved in the dialect.

**Leuan** /'luən/

ON

Rendall. HY 40 18.

*Luan* 1882 OS.

House right on the shore of Bay of Isbister. Remains of the ON suffixed def. art. suggest ON origin, possibly f/n def. *lóin*. 'The flat meadow bordering on the sea' (cf. *Langalour*) is most appropriate in this case, since the area is flooded at high tide. Cf. the Faroese usage of *logv* (< *ló*) 'the lowermost part of the shore, washed by the sea' (Jakobsen 1921: 468 under *le*).<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Clouston makes a note of a "Meadow called *Luon* or Bissue" in Corston in Hurray 1817(?). *Luon* is possibly of the same origin as *Leuan*.



6. *The name material*

**Lyde** /laid/ ON

Firth. HY 36 18.

A small farm near the highest point on the old hill road between Firth and Harray. ON *leið* f means ‘road’. The road, which is called *Lyde Road* today, was obviously the primary name-bearer in the area. The croft name is first recorded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and is certainly a transfer (cf. 7.2.1.). *Chair of Lyde* (1848 ComF, see 6.2) and *Lyde Burn* are also secondary formations to the road name. The semantic extension of *leið* ‘road’ into ‘area with a road’ is discussed in 5.4.

**Lyking** /'leikin/ ON

Rendall. HY 40 21.

*Lyking* 1841 ComR.

A small farm a km south of Tingwall. The name occurs three times in Orkney, but only the one in Sandwick is recorded in the rentals: *Lyking* 1492 R, 1500, *Lykin* 1579 REO, 1595 R. The origin may be ON *Leikvin* ‘sports-field’, as suggested in OFN (p. 153). Marwick regards these as (the only) instances of the archaic generic *vin* in Orkney, and suggests that *Windbreck* (see 6.2.) may contain the same word as its specific. However, *Lyking* in Holm and Rendall (as well as most *Windbrecks*) are late habitation names, unlikely to be coined with archaic words. More likely, the names are coined from the ON compound noun *leikvin* (Fritzner add. 426). In addition, *Lyking* in Rendall is a rather unlikely sports-field, as it is situated on a rather steep slope, which suggests that the name may have been transferred from one of the other *Lyking* localities.

**Lyron** /'leirɔn/ ON

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Lyren* 1724 Traill, *Lyron* 1856 OA D 7/3/67.

House in Hackland. The origin is certainly ON f definite *leirin*, meaning ‘the clayey area’.

**Midgarth** /'mɪdʒər/ ON?

Rendall. HY 39 23.

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*Midgarth* 1492 R, *Midgair* 1629 wt, *Miger*, 1729 Traill.

A 3-pennyland unit in rentals and still a farm today. The elements *mið/mid* and *garðr/garth* (5.5.7.) are common to ON and Orkney Sc, but early records suggest an ON origin *Miðgarðr* ‘mid-farm’. The farm is ca. halfway between Tingwall and Midland. If this is the naming motive, it means that Midgarth is secondary to Midland.

**Midhouse**

1. Evie. HY 32 29. /'miθus/

*Midhouse* 1655 Ret, 1841 C, *Mythies* 1846 ComE.

*Midhouse* and *Upper Midhouse*, farms in Costa. The 1846 spelling reflects the pronunciation. Costa appears to function as a district name rather than a farm name from the first rentals and Midhouse may testify to a rather early division.

2. Firth. HY 36 18. /'midus/

*Mid House* 1848 ComF.

Farm in Settiscarth, cf. *Appiehouse*.

3. Vanished farm in Georth, Evie. *Mydhouse* (3 pennyland) in 1503 R, *Midhous* 1665.

The etymology is unproblematic, ‘mid house’, but since both elements are common to ON and Sc, the language of formation is uncertain. (For a treatment of *house*, see 5.5.10.) Early records for the Evie Midhouses may suggest ON origin.

**Midland** /'midlən, -lənd/

ON?

Rendall. HY 39 23.

*Mydland* 1492 R, 1503 R, *Midland* 1595 R, 1629 wt.

The northernmost farm in the parish; forms a 6-pennyland along with Garson in the rentals. Again, both elements are common to ON and Sc, but early records seem to indicate ON origin *Miðland* ‘mid-land’. The generic could refer to its situation between Tingwall and Woodwick in Evie, which may suggest a name dating before the organisation of the parishes.

**Millbrig**

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 18.

6. *The name material*

*Millbridge* 1740 R.

Farm near the mill in Isbister. A Sc formation, ‘mill bridge’.

**Millgoes**

Sc?

Rendall. HY 38 18.

Former house west of the burn opposite Mill House. The burn runs in a rather deep ravine here. The element *goe* may have another origin than *geo* /qjo, djo/ ‘inlet’, possibly the same as Norw *juv* n ‘cleft, ravine’, see 5.5.8. Sc. plural marking may suggest that *gue/goe* has been a current appellative in Orkney Sc.

**Mill House**

Sc

1. Evie. HY 34 28.

*Millhouse* 1841.

House next to the water mill in Costa. “Molendino et quoy de Costa” is mentioned in 1696 Ret.

2. Rendall. HY 39 18.

*Millhouse* 1882 OS.

This is the old mill in Isbister.

The present form is Sc. In theory, it could be an adaptation of the ON cognate *mylnuhús*.

**Millquoy**

Firth. HY 35 14.

*Milnquoy* 1595 R, *Millquoy* 1665 Ch, *Mill-*, *Milnquoy* 1841 C.

A small farm near the mouth of the burn flowing into the Ouse, where there was once a mill. The language of formation cannot be ascertained, since Sc *mill*, *miln* and ON *mylna* are so close and *quoy* < ON *kví* f ‘enclosure’ was borrowed into Orkney Sc (5.5.13).

**Mirk** /mɪrk/

ON?

*Merks* 1786 Sas.

Former croft in Gorseness (near Bu), valued at “3½ merks” in 1786. Thomson suggests a derivation from *merk* < ON *mörk*, the value used when land was sold. Such names certainly occur, but it seems unlikely for a 3½ merk-unit. The name of a peripheral croft could

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

possibly be derived from ON *mark*, *merki* n ‘(border) mark’, cf. *mark-sten* ‘march-stone’ (OrknN: 112). In Norway, *mörk* also denotes uninhabited land between settlements. Cf. *The Mark* 6.2.

**Moa** /mo:/

Rendall. HY 42 18–19.

*Moa* ca. 1850 OA D 7/3/54

Two farms, *North* and *South Moa*, in Gorseness. The element *mo(r)* refers to heathery land or mosses, see 5.5.12. The origin is possibly ON, but it appears to be productive in Orkney Sc, which means that we cannot determine the language of formation.

**Mossetter** /<sup>h</sup>mostər/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Morsettir* 1492 R, *Marsatter* 1595 R, 1664, *Marsetter* 1595 R, 1601 UB, *Myrsetter* 1662 Blaeu, *Masatter* 1722 Traill.

An abandoned farm between Hackland and Isbister, a 1½-pennyland unit in the rentals. According to the 1503 rental, most of Mossetter was “mure & quoyland”. The generic is ON *setr* m ‘seat, dwelling-place’, typical for peripheral farms, cf. *Inkster*. The specific is hardly *mýrrar*- f gen ‘marsh, bog’ as suggested in OFN: 121, as *y* > /o/ is an unlikely development (OrknN: xlii). It is rather the element *mó(r)* moss or heather discussed in 5.5.12, cf. *Moa*. In this case, the formation is most likely ON, though *setter* was also borrowed into the dialect (Thomson 1995: 48)

**Nabban** /<sup>h</sup>nabən/

ON

Firth. HY 39 11.

*Nabban* 1848 ComF.

A small farm south of Rennibister. The name appears to be an ON coining with suffixed def. art., most likely from *nabbi* m ‘knoll, protrusion’, though there is no marked protrusion in the vicinity. For a late croft, an ON name can be explained by transfer, see 7.1.1, 7.2.1.

6. *The name material*

**Netherbigging**

Sc

Firth. HY 37 12.

*Netherbigging* 1642 Gr.

*Netherbigging* and *Upper Bigging* are farms in Grimbister. *Bigging* is a common generic for individual farms in a split-up tunship, probably of Sc origin (see 5.5.2.). The division is even reflected in the specifics, which are often pairs of directional adj. as here. *Nether-* ‘lower’ might reflect ON *neðri*, but Upper is clearly Sc.

**Nearhouse** /'ni:rus/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Nearhouse* 1856 OA D 7/3/64.

Croft in ruins in Hackland. ON *neðrahús* n ‘the lower house, as opposed to *Iverhouse* (see above).

**Neigar(th)** /'nigjer, 'nedjer/

ON

Evie. HY 35 26.

*Ne garth* 1492 R, 1503 R, *Ne gair* 1595 R.

A 3-pennyland unit in the rentals, today a farm in Outer Evie. The specific is probably ON adj. *nýr* ‘new’, which means the formation is ON *nýgarðr* ‘nygård’. Palatalisation of *g* in *garðr/garth* is typical of Evie) cf. 5.5.7.

**Neigly, Niggly** /'nigli/

Sc?

Evie. HY 37 25.

*Neiglay* 1841 C.

Farm in Redland, a public house around 1900. Marwick prefers an ON derivation *knykli*, dative of *knykill* m ‘small mound’. This is a very unusual place-name element, and the *k* in *kn* should not have dropped by 1841 (OrknN xlvi). Moreover, it is notoriously difficult to determine the ON case form based on the modern form, and -y is an extremely productive suffix in Scots. CSD 440 has *nickle* ‘nothing’ (in a game of chance), which is conceivable as a derogatory croft name. Jakobsen (1936: 604) lists *niggel* ‘hard substance’, and *nigli* ‘hard, tough, e.g. of soil’. These make sense as place-name elements, provided that they were also current in Orkney.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

**Ness**

Sc

Rendall. HY 41 17.

*Ness* 1882 OS.

House on the protruding headland of Crookness. The origin is no doubt ON *nes* n ‘headland’. Both this name and *Ness* in Harray, outside the township dyke on a map from 1854, appear to be quite modern names. This suggests that *ness* may have been a productive dialect word, even if it is not included in OrknN, see 7.1.1.

**Newark**

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 21.

*Newark* 1882 OS.

House in Hackland. A modern Sc name, ‘new work’, which occurs in a number of places.

**Newhouse** /<sup>1</sup>njuus/

Sc?

Evie.

*Newhouss*, *-house* 1492 R, *Newhous* 1503 R, *Newarhouse* 1595 R, *Newhouse* 1664 Ch.

3-pennyland unit in Outer Evie in the rentals, not a separate unit on modern maps. The form is Sc from the first rental. It may certainly be an early Sc coining, but it might even be an adaptation of ON *Nýhús*. The languages are so close that immediate understanding and spontaneous scribal translation may occur (see 9.2.4.). *Newar-* in 1595 R could suggest the ON comparative form *ný(ja)ra-*, but we can hardly assign great weight to an isolated form.

**Nisthouse** /<sup>1</sup>nestus/

ON

Evie. HY 39 24.

*Nisthouse* Carfin’s Rental c. 1700, 1841 C.

The lowermost farm in a cluster of houses below Dwarmo, called *Biggings*. The generic is *house*, see 5.7.7. In this case, the specific *nezta* ‘lowermost’ proves the formation to be ON *Neztahús*.

6. *The name material*

**Nistoo** /<sup>h</sup>nɪstu:, <sup>h</sup>nestu/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Nestahou* 1577 Ch, *Nest(a)how* 1594 Sas., *Nestow* 1652 (OFN), *Nestahall* 1656 Ret., *Nistahow* 1679 Ret., *Stoo* ca. 1850 OA D 7/3/54, *Nistoo* 1857, *Stow* 1882 OS, *Stow*, *Nestown* OSNB 1900.

Former farm in Gorseness below (and now amalgamated with) Appietoon. The specific is ON adj. *neztr* 'lowermost'. Vacillating spellings render the interpretation of the generic uncertain. Marwick suggests *Neðstatún* n 'lower town' as opposed to *Appietoon* (OFN: 123, 5.5.15.). If we consider the oldest forms, the generic seems to be *haugr* m 'mound', however. There is no marked mound in the area, but a small mound may have been abolished. *Nistoo* may be a regular development of *Neðstihaugr*, but the form *Stow* is definitely a result of a non-etymological partition (see 9.3.2.1.) possibly influenced by the farm-name *Stove*.

**North Breck, South Breck**

Sc

Firth. HY 39 16.

The names are first recorded in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and are certainly Sc formations with the borrowed appellative *breck* (see 5.5.4.), cf. *Barebrecks*.

**Orquill** /<sup>h</sup>ɔrkwəl/

ON

1. Evie.

*Orquill* 1600 Ch., *Orquheill* 1618 Sas. OSR, *Orqueill* 1624 Sas., *Orquele* 1644 Ret.

Farm in Georth tunship. A largish burn runs through the area.

2. Rendall. HY 40 21.

*Orquhill* 1629 wt, *Orquell* 1734 Traill.

Farm north of Enyas Hill.

The origin is certainly ON *árkvísl* f 'burn fork', with an assimilation of the consonant cluster *sl*. Orquill in Rendall is situated close to a burn which forks below the farm. There is also a fork below the chapel in Georth. The name is also found in St. Ola.

**Ouraquoy** /'ɔurəkwi, -kwai/

Firth. HY 34 12.

*Oweraquoy* 1848 ComF.

Farm in Heddle. Possibly a Sc formation with the borrowed element *quoy* (5.5.13). *Over*, Orkn Sc /'ɔuər/, is used in the sense 'upper' in Sc place-names (see *uver* CSD: 756). Alternatively, the specific could be an adaptation of ON *øfri* 'upper', which would explain the medial /ə/. This would imply an ON formation (see 7.1.1).

**Owar** /'ɔuər/

ON?

Rendall. HY 42 19.

*Ore*, *Owre* 1675 Ch., *Oue* 1734 Traill, *Owr* 1740 R.

Former croft between Hinderayre and North Moa. Pronounced like the Sc prep./adv. *over*, which may be a lexical adaptation (cf. 9.3.2.2), a preposition on its own is unlikely as a name. Thus, I would rather suggest ON origin *aurr* m 'gravel'. Cf. *Ayre* and *Hinderayre* from the related ON word *eyrr* f 'sand, gravel(ly beach)' in the same area.

**Park** /pɜrk, park/

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Park* 1856 OA D 7/3/64.

House NW of Loch of Brockan. Sc name, *park* is the common generic term for a field.

**Park of Heddle**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 12.

*Park of Heddle* 1848 ComF.

A farm in the district of Heddle. Originally a field name, as can be seen from the generic *park* 'field'. *Of*-periphrasis is the normal pattern when a Sc appellative is specified by an existing place-name, see 7.1.3.

**Pow, Muckle Pow** /pɔu, pau/

Sc?

Evie. HY 33 28.

*Pow* 1618 Sas. OSR, 1664 Ch.



## 6. The name material

Farm in Costa, the colloquial form is *Muckle Pow*. The form is Sc, containing *pow* ‘pool’ and an optional specific *muckle* ‘big’. *Muckle* suggests that there has been another farm (*Little*) *Pow* at some stage. With rather early records, *Pow* may even be an adaptation of the ON cognate *pollr*. The Sc and ON words are so close that spontaneous translation or semi-communication is possible (9.2.4).<sup>18</sup>

### **Pullaland**

ON?

*Pullaland* 1882 OS.

A former croft, now in ruins, under Gorseness Hill. The generic *land* ‘land’ is common to ON and Sc. Since the specific appears to be gen. pl. *polla-*, of ON *pollr* m ‘pool’, the language of formation is fairly certainly ON, see 7.1. OS 1882 has a well near the croft and another somewhat up the hill. These may formerly have been pools.

### **Puldrite** /pʌl'drit, pʌl'rit, pʌl'reit/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 18.

*Poldrite* 1629 wt, *Puldreet* and *Pulldreitt* 1723 Traill.

Farm directly on the shore in Gorseness. The name seems to be an ON inverted compound containing the generic *pollr* m ‘pool’ and a specific *drítr* m ‘shit’. In a Sc formation, we would expect the vocalised form *pow* (cf. *Pow* above). Post-positioned generics are by no means unusual in Orkney. It is an ON formation pattern, as can be seen from names in which the elements show ON case morphology, e.g. *Queenamuckle* < *kvin mikla*. Other instances lack case marking and may be Sc formations. For a further discussion, see 8.3.1. According to G. Lamb, there is a conspicuous number of “dirty words” in Orkney place-names, e.g. *horr* m ‘snot’, *skítr* and *drítr* m ‘dirt’. In most cases, they refer to waterlogged soils, but here ‘dirt’ may refer to stagnant pools on the beach where seaweed rots.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> A John Pow is tacksman of a ½-pennyland in Costa 1492 R, suggesting that Pow was a farm by then. *Pow* in Sandwick is spelt *Poll* in 1492 and 1503 R.

<sup>19</sup> A vanished *Drythall in Tingwell* (Traill 1722) may be a derogatory name.

**Pulkitto** /,pʌlˈkɪto, ˈkɪto/

Evie. HY 38 23.

*Tumal of Poall Cutto* Carfin's Rental c. 1700, *Pulcitto* 1841 C.

Farm in Woodwick. An inverted compound name (see 8.3.1.), the colloquial form is *Kitto*<sup>20</sup>. The name is puzzling, as the generic appears to be ON *pollr* (no vocalisation of *ll*, cf. *Pow* above), whereas the specific seems to be a Sc feminine name. In West Mainland, *-o* is the common diminutive suffix (8.2.1), so *Kitto* corresponds to *Kitty*. Based on Carfin's form, the specific could even be *cut*, which occasionally refers to straightened burns.

**Quatquoy** /ˈkwatkwi/, formerly /ˈmatmi/

ON

Firth. HY 37 15.

*Quhytquoy* 1502 R, 1595 R, 1601 UB, *Quytquoy* 1627, *Qtquoy* 1642 Gr, *Whitquoy* 1794 R.

A pennyland unit in rentals. Three farms today, situated near the sea between Burness and Coubister. Old records suggest an original ON formation *Hvít(a)kvi* 'white quoy', even if the development *i* > /a/ in the specific is irregular. The generic *kvi/quoy* is discussed in 5.5.13. The old pronunciation reflects the merger of *hv* and *kv* into /ʌ/ in traditional NW Mainland dialect, see 8.1.2.8.

**Queena**

ON

1. Firth. HY 37 15. /ˈkwɪnə/

*Queena* 1848 ComF.

A small farm near Holland.

2. Rendall. HY 41 19. /ˈkwɪnə/, formerly /ˈmɪnə/

*Quinni* 1882 OS.

A small farm in Gorseness.

A very common name. There is a *Quena* in Grimbuster on the 1848 ComF map, for instance. The origin is clearly an ON case-marked form of *kvi* f, probably the f accusative *kvína* 'the enclosure', see

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<sup>20</sup> There is a tendency for pre-positioned generics to be dropped. *Quoy-* is optional in some names (cf 8.3.1), and *Cotfeggie* is also known as *Faegie*.

6. *The name material*

5.5.13.<sup>21</sup> Rendall *Queena* may be a rather modern farm-name, but the ON name form may have been transferred from a field (7.2.1).

**Queenamidda** /,kwinə'midə/ ON?

Rendall. HY 37 40.

*Quinnimidda* 1882 OS.

Farm under Fibla Fiold. Locally, the name is derived from the plant name *queen of the meadow* or meadowsweet. I would rather suggest an inverted compound formation with the generic *kvína* 'the enclosure' cf. *Queena* above. The specific is possibly acc. *miðja* 'the middle one'. A Sc preposition phrase *quoy in (the) meadow* seems less likely.

**Queenamuckle** /,kwinə'mʌkl, kwin'mɪkl/, formerly /,ʌin-/ ON

Rendall. HY 41 21.

*Quyna-mekle* 1492 R, *Quoynameikill* 1503 R, *Quoynamekle, -mickle* 1595 R, *Quinamikill* 1601 UB.

A 3-pennyland unit in the rentals and still a large farm. *Queenamuckle* stands out as a large *kví*-unit. This is reflected in the name, originally ON f acc. *kvín miklu* 'the large enclosure'. *Quyna-mekle* 1492 is the oldest record of an inverted compound name in the material, and the ON pattern and case morphology is easily identifiable (see 8.3.1).

**Quoyblackie** /'blaki/ Sc

Rendall. HY 40 22.

*Quoyblacke in Tingwell* 1722 Traill.

A small farm south of Tingwall. Probably a Sc formation with the borrowed element *quoy* 'enclosure', see 5.5.13., and the family name *Black*. As for the generic *kví/quoy* in pre-position, see 8.3.1.1. The farm is known as *Blackie* locally. The suffix *-ie* is used to derive short forms of place-names, see 8.2.1.

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<sup>21</sup> Modern WNorw dialects also retain acc *-na* in the def. form of fem one-syllable words: *øy-na*, *bru-na* (> standard *øya*, *brua*, cf. Særheim 1989: 22–23).

**Quoyfree** /<sup>h</sup>frio/

Rendall. HY 41 40.

*Quoyfree* 1882 OS.

A small farm on the ridge between Gorseness and Rendall, called *Freeo* locally. The generic is *quoy* ‘enclosure’. For its specific, R. Bakie suggests ON *fríðr* m ‘peace, safe haven’. But as the farm is marginally situated and records are late the name may be a Sc formation with *free*, referring to land free of rent for instance. The colloquial short form is formed with *-o*, which functions as a suffix in the local dialect, see 8.2.1. Thus, *Freeo* corresponds to *Blackie*.

**Quoyhenry** /<sub>1</sub>kwei'henri/

Sc

Rendall. HY 38 20. *Quoyhendrie* 1733 Traill.

A small farm in the meadows in Hackland. This is another instance of inverted compound *quoy*-names (see above and 8.3.1.1, 5.5.13.). The specific is a Sc masculine name or family name (Black 1974: 353), which means that the language of formation is fairly certainly Sc.

**Quoys** /kweiz/

1. Evie. HY 37 25.

*Quoyis* 1492 R, 1503 R, *Quoyis* 1595 R, 1618 Sas., *Quoyas* 1600 Ch.

A farm in Inner Evie. 4 ½-pennyland in rentals, which is rather large for a *kvi*-farm.

2. Evie. HY 35 26.

*Quoys* 1841 C.

Sc

Farm SE of Neigarth.

Orkney Sc *Quoy* < ON *kvi* f ‘enclosure’ was productive for more than a millennium (see 5.5.13.), and the records illustrate that the two identical names may be of very different age. Quoys near Neigarth appears to be a rather late Sc formation whereas Quoys in inner Evie is a medieval name. For this reason, one may suspect the Sc plural marker to be a translation of the pl. morpheme in ON *KvÍar*, cf. 9.2.1.

6. *The name material*

**Redland** /<sup>h</sup>redløn, -lønd/

ON

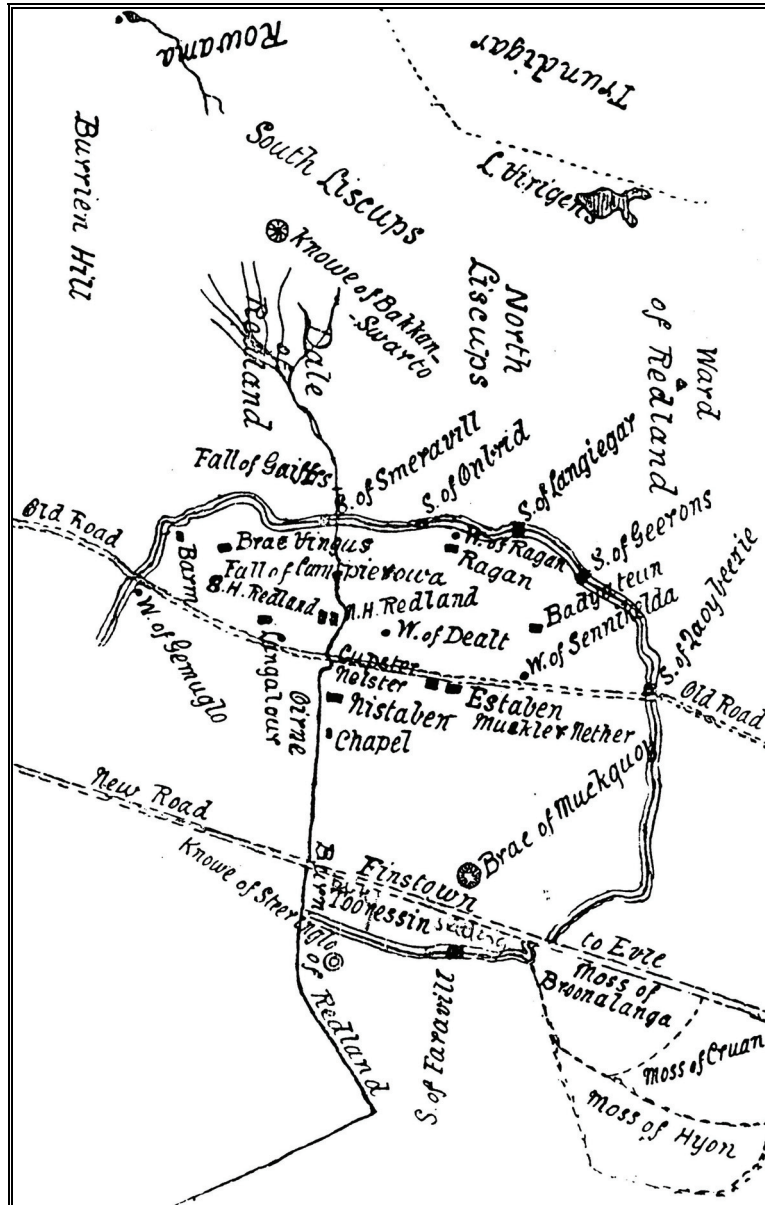
1. Evie. HY 37 24.

*Roithland, Rothland* 1492 R, *Rochland, Rothland* 1503 R.

An urisland unit in Inner Evie in rentals. The name is no longer in common use. The origin may be an ON compound noun *ruðland* n ‘cleared land’ or a name with the ON specific *rjóðr* m ‘natural clearing’ as Marwick suggests. He generally prefers *rjóðr* to *ruð* n ‘cleared land’, which is a common element in medieval Scand names (cf. *Benziaroth*). Early source forms support his interpretation, since *u* > /o/ is no common shift.

2. Firth. HY 37 17.

*Raynland* 1502 R, *Redland* 1595 R, 1601 UB, 1613 Sas., 1665 Ch. *Renaland* 1425 (DN II 691) most likely refers to this farm.



Plan of the Township of Redland, Firth, Orkney as it was before the Division of the Commony. Constructed and delineated by John Firth. From Firth 1974.

## 6. The name material

Formerly a 6-pennyland unit under Redland Hill, split up into a number of farms today (see fig. 6.3.). The specific is uncertain, partly due to diverging source forms. It could be an ON name referring to Burn of Redland, *Reina* or *Renna*, if *Renaland* actually denotes this tunship (cf. *Rendall*). In Norway, *Renna* has been derived from *renna* v ‘flow’ or *renne* f ‘groove, furrow’ (cf. *Rennibister*), whereas *Reinal/Rena* may originate from *rein* f ‘the edge that builds up at the end of a ploughed field’ or *reinn* adj. ‘clean, pure’ (NSL: 359, 361). *Renna* is an unusual element in Norw river names but may have been an appellative in the Northern Isles. Cf *rinnick* ‘drain’ OrknN: 142, and *rinnek* ‘small burn’<sup>22</sup> (ShNorn: 700). Without the Sc diminutive suffix, the element occurs in a number of burn names, e.g. *Rinners of Breckan*, *Harray* and *Rinnan*, *Rendall*.

The two Redlands certainly have different origins, and Redland in Stromness (*Raland* 1492, 1503) may have a third one. There are other examples of common standardisation for different names (e.g. *Isbister*, cf. 9.3.2.1.). It is still puzzling why the three forms here should merge into *Red-*, however.

**Rendall** /ˈrɛndəl/

ON

Rendall.

*Til Rennudals*, *i Rennadali* OrknSaga<sup>23</sup>, *i Reinadali* Hakon Hakonson’s saga<sup>24</sup>, *Rayndal* DN VII 107 1325–26, *Randale* 1492 R, 1503 R, 1595 R, *Rendale*, *Ranidale* 1601 UB. *Bull of Randell* 1503, *Bou of Rendell* 1723 Traill.

Formerly a 9-pennyland unit, which has lent its name to the parish. There are two major farms in the area today, *Breck (of Rendall)* and *Hall of Rendall*, formerly *Bu(ll) of Rendall* (cf. 5.5.5, 5.5.9.).<sup>25</sup>

The generic is *dalr* m ‘valley’. The specific appears to be the ON name of the burn that flows through it, *Renna* or *Reina*, correspond-

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<sup>22</sup> The shift *e > i* may occur after nasals, OrknN: xl.

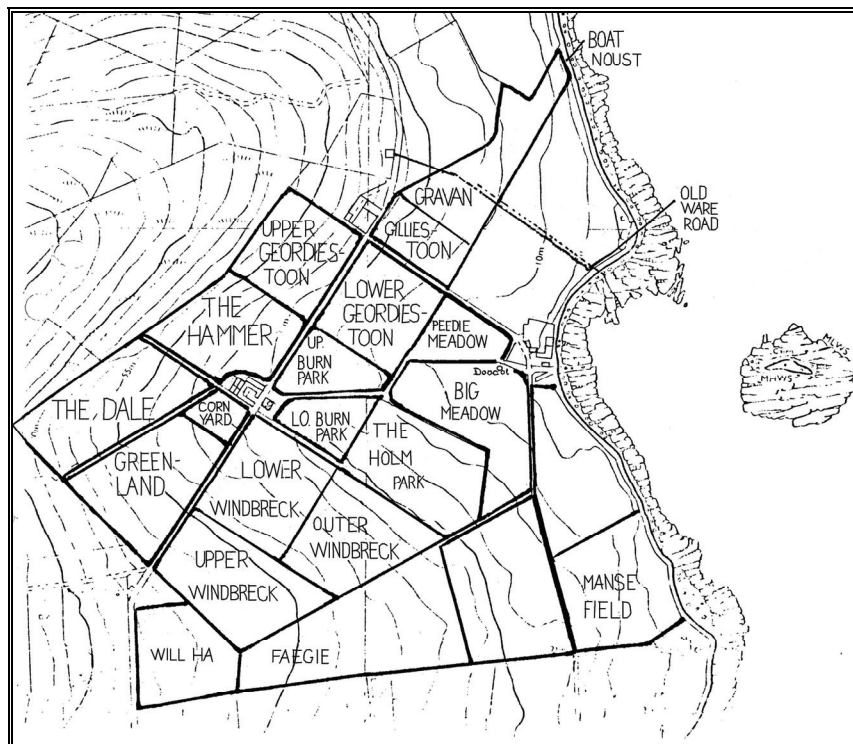
<sup>23</sup> Quoted after OFN.

<sup>24</sup> Quoted after OFN.

<sup>25</sup> A number of former crofts are remembered in field names in the tunship: *Gravan*, *Smerhouse*, *Windbreck*, *Quoyfegie* and *Rigga*, see 6.2.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

ing to the standard Norw pattern. No ON burn names seem to survive in Orkney. Rather, burns are named after the nearest farm, e.g. the burn in Rendall is called *Burn of Breck* today. It is not very large, but forms a rather marked valley. The etymology of the burn name is uncertain, partly due to the variation *e/ei/ay* in the oldest forms. See the suggestions for Redland 2 above, however.



*Field names in the tunship of Rendall. An adaption of a map by Robert Bakie.*

**Rennibister** /ˈrɛnəbɪstər/

ON

Firth. HY 39 12.

*Rannebustar* 1502 R, *Ranybustar* 1595 R, *Ranibuster* 1618 Sas., *Rennibister* 1794 R.

A 6-pennyland tunship in the rentals and still a farm. An ON formation with the generic *bólstaðr* (see 5.5.3.). Marwick suggests an ON



## 6. The name material

burn name *Renna* for its specific, and Gammeltoft seems to agree (2001: 142–43). Cf. *Redland 2* and *Rendall*. What makes assuming a common origin for these names problematic is the fact that the latter are spelt with *e* or a diphthong in old records, whereas Rennibister is spelt with an *a* into the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This means that we should look for alternative origins for Rennibister; either *ranna-*, gen. pl. of *rann* n ‘hus’ (cf. *Rennebu*, NSL: 361) or a personal name compounded with *Ragn-* or *Rann-*. (Cf. the patronymic *Ranyson*, REO: 422).

### **Riff** /rif/

Sc?

Rendall. HY 41 18.

*Riff* 1841 ComR.

Farm on Bay of Puldrite. The name is coined from OrknSc *rif* ‘reef of rocks’ < ON *rif* (OrknN 141), referring to rocks in the sea close to the farm. Probably a late Sc formation.

### **Rossmyre** /'rɔsmaɪər/

ON

Firth. HY 38 12.

*Meadows of Rosmyre* 1587 REO, *Bridge of Rossmire* 1848 ComF.

Farm name *Rossmyre* 1868 (*Orkney Herald* 3.3.).

A farm SE in the parish. An ON formation with the generic *mýrr* f ‘marsh’ and the specific *hross* m ‘horse’. Rossmyre originally denoted the marsh (cf. the 1587 form); its use as a farm name is clearly secondary (see 7.2.1.). The pronunciation *mýrr* is normally /mi:r/ (cf. *Baramira* 6.2.). In this name, it may have been influenced by the Sc form *mire*.

### **Rushabreck** /'rʌʃəbræk/

Sc?

Evie.

*Rushabrake* 1841 C.

An old croft in the hills above Howe. The generic *breck* is borrowed into the dialect (5.5.4). Here it could be used in its ON sense ‘slope’, and the medial vowel suggests ON morphology, too. For this reason it seems unlikely that the specific should be the Sc botanical term *rush(es)*. It might be m gen. pl. *hrossa-* ‘horses’, *s* occasionally develops into /ʃ/ (OrknN: xlvii).

**Sandyha**

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 19.

*Sandyhall* 1882 OS.

A croft north of Loch of Brockan. The name appears to be a Sc formation with the *ha(ll)* used ironically (5.5.9.). The specific could be the masculine name *Sandy* or possibly *sandy* adj. referring to soil quality. *Sundiehouse* is mentioned in 1629 wt. This may denote the same location if we posit a substitution of *house* by the nearly synonymous word *hall*, see 9.2.3.

**Savil(le)** /'savəl/

ON

Firth. HY 36 15.

*Savale* 1595 R, 1612 Court Book, *Savell* 1601 UB, *Sauiel* 1627.

A farm today, formed a 3-pennyland unit with Benziaroth in the rentals. The interpretation is uncertain. The element /vəl/ in Orkney place-names can often be derived from ON *völlr* m ‘natural grassland’. For its specific, Marwick suggests *sáð* m ‘seed’ (OFN: 21), which may seem to contradict the generic (cf. Fritzner’s definition “mods. akr” “as opposed to ploughed field”). Alternatively, the generic may be some form of *sjór*, *sjár*, *sær* m ‘sea’. The farm is situated ca. 800 m from the shore.

**Scotts Hall**

Sc

Rendall.

*Scotshall* 1882 OS.

House west of Quoyhenry, alias *Blink(bonny)*. Both are typical modern Sc house-name formations. The generic is *hall*, see 5.5.9., the specific is a family name *Scott*.

**Seater, Setter** /'setər, 'sitər/

ON

Firth. HY 34 15.

*Seater* 1502 R, *Setter* 1587 REO, *Seter* 1595 R, 1794 R.

An isolated farm in the hills above the brecks of Harray, forming a 2-pennyland unit with Wasdale in rentals. The origin is most likely ON *setr* m ‘seat, dwelling-place’, indicating marginal agriculture, cf.

6. *The name material*

*Inkster* and *Mossetter*. ON *sætr* n ‘shieling’ is also semantically appropriate for this marginal farm but the word is not otherwise recorded in Orkney. The latter pronunciation is influenced by the written form.

**Seekaboot**

Sc

Evie.

*Seekabout* 1841.

Old cot house near Burn of Woodwick west of Pulkitto. The name is a Sc compound of a verb and an adverb, see 8.3.4. The motive behind the naming is uncertain, but it may refer to someone looking around for a suitable place for a house.

**Settiscarth** /'setəskarθ/

ON

Firth. HY 36 18.

*Setscarth* 1502 R, 1595 R, *Settiscarth* 1595 R, *Setskairth* 1601 UB, *Settascart* 1627, *Settiscarth* 1665 Ch, 1794 R.

A 3-pennyland unit in rentals and a district name today. Settiscarth is situated on a shelf in a valley leading to Hundscarth in Harray. Marwick suggests an ON prepositional phrase as its origin: *Setr í skarði* ‘the dwelling in the scarth (gap in the hill-ridge)’. Such phrasal names are unusual in Norw, but quite common in the Faroe Islands. (Matras 1963: 141, cf. 8.3.3.). A normal ON compound *Setaskarð* containing the specific *seti* m ‘seat; terrace’ would also fit the topography. There are arguments in favour of Marwick’s interpretation, however. *Scarth* appears to be an old district name for the Settiscarth – Cottascarth area, e.g. 1846 mF, cf. *Scarf* 1524? (REO: 423), *Skart* 1642 Gr. Moreover, the name of the neighbouring farm *Cot(ti)scarth*, *Cottiscarth* can be seen as a parallel formation, *Kot í skarði*.

**Sinnakilda**

ON

Firth. HY 37 17.

*Sinnakild* 1848 ComF.

A croft and a well in Redland. The name primarily denotes the latter, see *Well of Sinnakelda* in 6.2.

**Skaill** OFN /ske:l, skeil/

ON

Rendall. HY 39 18.

*Sceal in Isbuster* 1723 Traill, Skeal 1740.

A farm near the sea in Isbister. The origin is ON *skáli*. In Orkney, *skali* refers to halls, and Skaill-farms often occur near churches and chieftain farms (see 5.5.14 and *Langskaill* above). There has been a chapel between Skaill and Gorn – in a place locally known as *Mary Kirk*. There is no tradition of a chieftain seat, however, so Isbister and Skaill do not fully conform to Thomson and Marwick’s theories.

**Skelbist** /<sup>h</sup>skɛlbist/

Rendall. HY 44 22.

*Scelbister* 1723 Traill.

A farm in Gairsay. The name is also found in Sanday and Orphir, and Marwick (OFN: 13) derives it from ON *skálabólstað*. The elements *bólstaðr* m ‘farm’ and *skáli* m ‘hall’ are treated in 5.5.3. and 5.5.9. respectively. In contrast to most other *bólstaðr*-names, Skelbist is not recorded in the rentals and is thus a candidate for what Gammeltoft terms “late analogical formations in *-bist(er)*” (2001: 288, cf. 7.2.2). Both elements are found in other place-names in the parish. In this case, a name transfer is also possible.

**Skiddy** /<sup>h</sup>stçidi, <sup>h</sup>skidi, <sup>h</sup>skidi/

Rendall. HY 39 21.

*Skiddie* 1841 ComR.

Farm on the main road north of Ellibister. Marwick derives the name from dative *skeiði* of ON *skeið* n ‘race-court, track’, but *ei* does not normally develop into /i, ɪ/ (OrknN: xlii). Moreover, it is problematic to ascribe *-y* to an ON case form when it is a very productive suffix in Sc, see 8.2.1. The initial consonant combination clearly suggests an original ON word, possibly ON *skítr* m ‘dirt’? *Skít* is borrowed in Sc (ShNorn: 788, CSD: 624), so the name could be a Sc formation with a borrowed word. The shift *t* > /d/ is rather common (3.3.3., OrknN: xlvii).

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**Smogarth** /smogər, -dʒər/

Firth. HY 36 15.

*Smogarth* 1841 C, *Smogar* and Upper *Smogar* 1848 ComF.

A farm between Savil and Horraldshay. For the generic *garðr/garth*, see 5.5.7. The specific and language of formation is uncertain for the lack of old records. Marwick suggests ON *smár* adj. ‘small’. It could also be *smuga* f ‘narrow passage’. Cf. *smoo*, *smyoo* v. in OrknN: 169, *smoga* ShNorn: 844. The latter means ‘narrow passage between two fences’. *Smoan* is the name of a farm in Harray.

**Snaba**

Sc?

Firth. HY 34 14.

*Snaba* 1841 C, 1848 ComF, T 1931. *Snowball* 1846 mF.

House in ruins in the hills north of Binscarth. Sc *Snaba* ‘snowball’ is probably a lexical adaptation (9.3.2.2), it seems unlikely as a place-name. In Shetland, *snaa-buil* denotes a “stone-built C-, T-, S-, or Y-shaped ... place where sheep might shelter in bad weather” (Baldwin 1996: 210). *Buil* ‘lair for cattle’ is recorded in OrknN but not the compound. However, a shelter for cattle makes sense in these hills, which were used for pasture in former times. An alternative is S. Scand. *snape*, *snabe* ‘gore’, triangular piece’, common in names.

**Spithasquoy, Spithersquoy** /ˈspiθərskwi/ ON

Evie. HY 35 26.

*Spittalisquy* 1492 R, *Spittasquoy* 1503 R, *Spithisquoy* 1595 R.

A former 4-pennyland tunship in Outer Evie, and still a farm. The generic is *kví* f, see 5.5.13. The specific is ON *spítali*, *spítall* m, which denotes both hospital and hostel. Such institutions are often associated with monasteries; in this case, some kind of connection with the monastery in Eynhallow could be suggested.

**Springrose**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 12.

*Springrose* 1848 ComF.

A farm in Heddle. A rather young Sc formation. It is a “fashion name” in the sense that it does not really describe the locality.

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Rather, it is compounded of two words that both have positive connotations (see 7.2.4).

**Standpretty**

Sc

Evie. HY 37 24.

*Standpretty* 1841 C.

A small farm in Inner Evie. Sc compound of a verb and an adjective, cf. *Blinkbonny*, *Seekaboot*, see 8.3.4. Like *Blinkbonny*, this name seems to express a wish on the part of the namer.

†**Stanesakir**

ON

Evie.

*Stanesakir* 1492 R, *Stanissakir* 1503 R.

An 18-pennyland unit in the rentals. The name has vanished but there is a possible connection with *Stenso* (see below). The generic is ON *akr* m ‘ploughed field’.

**Stonehall, Stony Hall**

Sc/Eng

Firth. HY 36 12.

*Stoney h* 1848 ComF.

Two small farms in the hills above Grimbister. A Sc, or rather an English formation, as the specific is Eng *stone*, *stony* rather than Sc *stane* and *stany*. For a discussion of the generic *hall*, see 5.5.9. The colloquial name is *Hillside*

**Stenso** /<sup>1</sup>stenso/

ON

Evie. HY 35 25.

*Stenso* 1846 ComE.

*Stenso* seems to be a habitation name in 1846 but is not included in the 1841 census. At the present time, it is a district name. Marwick reckons the name to be a successor to the vanished *Stanesakir* but hardly the same name (OFN 126). The specific of both names is ON *steinn* m ‘stone’, which is also a masculine personal name.<sup>26</sup> The

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<sup>26</sup> In Orkney place-names, *steinn* often refers to standing stones, and a standing stone could explain the common generic of the two names. There is no standing stone in the area today but of course, it may have been removed.

## 6. The name material

generic of *Stenso* could be *haugr* m ‘mound’ or *á f* ‘burn’, both develop into *-o* as place-name generics.<sup>27</sup> We should consider a third option as well: *Stenso* could be a short name derived with an *-o*-suffix, in the same way as *Bretto* < *Brettobreck* and *Freeo* < *Quoy-free* (see 8.2.1.).

### **Sty**

Rendall.

*Staye* 1882 OS.

A vanished croft in Isbister, between Park and Sweenalay on the 1882 map. The origin is either ON *stí* or its Sc cognate *sty*. The latter is more likely for a comparatively modern name.

### **Stymbro** /<sup>1</sup>stɛimbro, <sup>1</sup>stembro/

ON

Evie.

*Stimbro* 1841 C.

A small farm in Inner Evie. The origin of the name ON *Stein-brú* ‘stone bridge’.

### **Sweenalay** /<sup>1</sup>swinəli/

ON?

Rendall. HY 38 18.

*Sweenalay* 1882 OS.

A farm in Isbister. A reflex of ON case morphology suggests an ON origin *Svína-* n gen. ‘pig-’ for the specific. The etymology of the generic is uncertain. In this flat area, it can hardly be *hlið* f ‘slope’, and Sc *lea* ‘fallow land’ is improbable if the specific is ON. Another option is ON *hlið* n ‘gate’.

### **Thickbigging**

Sc?

Firth. HY 36 13.

*Thickbigging* 1841 C.

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<sup>27</sup> In an early note, Marwick describes *Staenso* as a mound near the shore (possibly the broch mound called *Knowe of Stenso*). This may support an interpretation *haugr*, but there are also a number of burns in the area.

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An area near the sea in Finstown, possibly the nucleus of the old tunship of Firth, which is now absorbed by Finstown. According to Firth (1974: 138), the buildings were in ruins by 1900, but the names *Thickbigging* or *Toun o' Firth* were still in use. The generic *bigging* is discussed in 5.5.2.; the sense 'cluster of houses' would seem to fit here. Marwick suggests an origin ON *þykkva-bygging* 'thick building', denoting a squat or broad house. I would rather suggest Sc origin, with the specific denoting a tight cluster of houses. The name *Þykkvibær* in Iceland has been interpreted this way.

**Tingwall** /'tiŋwəl, -wəl/

ON

Rendall. HY 40 22.

á *þingavöll* OrknSaga, *Tyngwell* 1492 R, *Tyngwale* 1503 R, *Tini-*, *Tingwall* 1595 R, *Tingwell* 1662.

A 6-pennyland unit in the rentals, a farm and ferry port today. The origin is clearly ON *þingvöllr* m 'thing field', *p* > /t/ is the normal development (see 4.4.1.3). Next to the houses there is a large mound that may have served as a thing mound. According to the saga, the main thing for Orkney was held in Kirkwall. Thingwall, easily accessible from Northwest-Mainland, Gairsay, Rousay, Egilsay and Wyre, has probably served as a local thing. Cf. *Dingishowe* in Deerness.<sup>28</sup>

**Tower** /tu:r/

Rendall. HY 38 18.

*Tuer* 1853, *Tour* 1860 OA D 7/3/62 and 63.

A small farm on flat land west of Oyce of Isbister.<sup>29</sup> The name may have purely Sc origin *tower*, but could also be an adaptation of ON f pl *þúfar* 'mounds, tussocks' eller *tóar* 'strips of grass'. *Þúfa* is included in a number of hill names, which have often undergone lexical adaptation into *tower*. This area is flat, though.

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<sup>28</sup> Thomson (1987: 45-46) discusses the influence of Orkney things, and seems to conclude that the presence of an earl left less power to the things.

<sup>29</sup> The farm has been moved westwards compared to the situation on the 1853 and 1860 maps.



6. *The name material*

**Trundigar, Troondie** /<sup>h</sup>trundigər, <sup>h</sup>trundi/ ON?

Rendall.

*Trundigar* c. 1850 OAD 7/3/54.

*Trundigar* denotes a house between Gorseness and Rendall on the 1850 map. A new house on the same spot was given the same name, after the field *Trundigar* or *Troondie* in which it was built. (Short forms of names derived with the suffixes *-ie* or *-o* is discussed in 8.2.1.) This is an interesting example of the reuse of established names (see 7.2.1.). Here the name has been transferred twice, from a house to a field to a house.

The name *Trundigar* occurs twice in the hills between Firth and Harray. The generic is *garðr* or *garth* (see 5.5.7.). The specific is uncertain. Jakobsen (1936: 243) notes that *Tron(n)-* is too common in Shetlands names to be derived from the masc. name *Þrándr*. The origin could be ON *þróndr* m ‘pig’, as suggested for Norw hill-names containing *Tron-*. *Trundigar* was possibly a standard term for ‘pigsty’, which would explain its repeated occurrence.

**Turriedale** /<sup>h</sup>tʌriːdeɪl/ ON

Evie. 35 26.

*Thurisdale* 1492 R, *Thorodale* 1503 R, *Thurridaill* 1595 R, *Thurriadale* 1841 C.

A pennyland unit in the rentals. Not a farm anymore, but the OS 1903 map locates Turriedale between Grugar and Neigarth. The generic most likely refers to the valley formed by the burn nearby, ON *dalr* m. As the valley is not really conspicuous, it could also be ON *deild* f ‘part, portion, share’, cf. *Dale* above. The specific is uncertain, partly owing to vacillating spellings, but could possibly be a personal name containing *Þor-*.

**Turrieday** /<sup>h</sup>tʌriːdeɪl, -deɪl/ ON

Firth. HY 35 12.

*Turiady* 1848 ComF.

A farm in Heddle. Perhaps of the same origin as *Turriedale* (see above), or even a name transfer. The pronunciation /de(i)l/ suggests the generic *dalr/dale* ‘valley’ (cf. 5.4.), which suits the location in a

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valley. Today, the *l* in *dale* is normally pronounced, but *Turrieday* and the old spelling *Eskadae* for *Eskadale* demonstrate former vocalisation of *l* in this word (cf. 8.1.2.2.).

**Upper Bigging** Sc?  
Firth. HY 36 12.  
*Upper Bigging* 1848 ComF.  
A farm in Grimbister, see *Netherbigging* above.

**Upper Jubidee** /<sup>h</sup>tʃubədi/ Sc  
Evie. HY 37 24.  
*Jubaday* 1841 C.  
A farm on a ridge north of Burn of Woodwick. On old maps, *Jubidee* refers to a pool that is now a marsh. The name also occurs in Harray and Firth. Marwick suggests an ON origin *Djúpadý* n ‘deep marsh’, which may apply here and in Harray. In Firth, the origin appears to be *Djúpidalr* ‘deep valley’. The name refers to a rather steep valley and is spelt *Jewa Dale* in 1846. *Dypdal* etc. is a common name in Scand. Since the name occurs three times in neighbouring parishes, the possibility of name transfer should also be taken into account. *Upper Jubidee*, specified with a Sc adj., should be regarded as a new Sc formation cf. 9.3.3.

**Urigar** /<sup>h</sup>ørigər/ ON?  
Evie. HY 33 28.  
*Urigar* 1624 Sas.  
Farm near the mill in Costa. The generic is *garðr/garth* (5.5.7.). The origin of the specific is uncertain. Jakobsen (1936: 125) derives /øri/ in names from ON *eyrr* f ‘sand, gravel(ly beach)’, though it becomes /ɛ:r/ as an appellative (OrknN 3: *air*). *Eyrr* normally denotes coastal features but here it might refer to sand or gravel by the burn.

**Vinquin** /<sup>h</sup>vɪnkwin, <sup>h</sup>vɛn-/ ON  
Evie. HY 32 28.  
*Vinquin* 1841 C.

## 6. The name material

Crofts in Costa. Even if records are late, the name seems to be of ON origin, with the definite article added to the generic *kví f* (see 5.5.13.). Marwick (OFN: 129) interprets the specific as *vin f*, an archaic word for pasture or natural grassland. The word definitely occurs as a specific in Shetland in the genitive form *Vinja(r)-*. Some of Marwick's *vin*-names have alternative and more satisfactory explanations, however. As for Vinquin, the location on top of a marshy hill does not support a very early settlement and name formation. However, both *vindr m* 'wind' and *fen n* 'marsh' fit the location. *Vind-* > *vin* is a regular development, the *-d* often drops in *nd*-combinations, see 8.1.2.8. A shift *f* > *v* in *\*fen(jar)kvin* is somewhat more unusual. However, the next-door croft in 1841 C is called *Finty*, possibly from *fen(jar)teigr*.

**Velzian** /<sup>h</sup>veljøn/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 19.

*Vellione* 1729, *Wellione* 1731 Traill.

A farm in Gorseness. The name also occurs in Birsay and Harray. The origin is most likely a definite form of ON *völlr m* 'natural grass'.<sup>30</sup> *z* in the written form is a reflection of the Sc grapheme *ʒ*, and indicates palatalised pronunciation of *ll*.

**Vinden** /<sup>h</sup>vɪndən/

ON?

Firth. HY 36 16.

*Vinden* 1848 ComF.

A small farm NW of Holland. The etymology is uncertain. Marwick suggests the archaic word *vin f* 'pasture' (cf. *Vinquin*), in which case the ending remains unexplained, or alternatively an imperative name *Vendom* 'turn round'. This is definitely a post-medieval pattern in Norway (NGIndl. 19–20), so an imperative name of Scand origin is unlikely in Orkney. The initial *v* and the ending *-en* (normally reflecting the suffixed def. article) still indicate ON origin. A river name *Vinda*, coined from ON *vinda v*. 'turn, twist' occurs in Nor-

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<sup>30</sup> Marwick (OFN: 123) suggests pl. *Vellirnir*. Some form of *völl-* is also possible, since the shift from *ö* > /*ɛ*/ is rather common (see 3.3.1.).

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way. The farm lies near the confluence of two burns but this interpretation also leaves the ending /ɔn/ unexplained.

**Wades, North & South** /wadz/ Sc

Evie.

*Northwads, Southwads* 1841 C.

Two small farms near Fursan. With no early records, the names are most likely Sc compounds, containing the borrowed appellative *wad(die)* < ON *vað* n ‘ford’<sup>31</sup> and the directional adverbs *north* and *south*. Hypothetically, the names may have been translated from ON *Norðvað* and *Suðvað* ‘north ford’ and ‘south ford’.

**Wald** /wald/ ON

Firth. 38–39 17.

*Wathill* 1502 R, *Wale* 1595 R, 1662 Blaeu, *Vaill* 1627, *Wald* 1750 Mackenzie, *Wall* 1841 C.

Two farms, *North W.* and *South W.* Mackenzie’s map has *Wald* right next to the mouth of Burn of Cruan, north of the present farms. This confirms a derivation from ON *vaðill* m ‘ford’ suggested by the form in 1502 R. The written forms indicate that the dental fricative dropped in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. *ll* was retained initially, but later “hyper-corrected” to *ld*, cf. *Fiold* above and 8.1.2.8.

**Walkerhouse** /ðə 'wakərus/ Sc

Evie. HY 38 23.

*Walkerhouse* 1799 OA D 34 E/5, 1841 C.

A farm in Woodwick. The specific is *walker* ‘fuller (of cloth)’. A document from 1727 (OA D 34 E 1/2/2) refers to a “Cornmiln and Walkmiln” in Woodwick. When the specific is Sc, we may assume a Sc formation with the generic house (cf. 5.5.10. and 7.1.3.)

**Wasdale** /'wazdeil/ ON

Firth. HY 34 14.

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<sup>31</sup> OrknN 205 has *waddie* but the name form lacks the *-ie*-suffix, see 8.2.1.

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*Wasdale* 1502 R, 1595 R, 1794 R, *Wasdeall* 1587 REO, *Wesdale* 1601 UB, *Waisdell* 1627, *Wasedale* 1665 Ch.

Farm in the interior parts of the parish, which forms a 2-pennyland-unit with Seater in the rentals. The origin is certainly ON *Vazdalr* ‘loch valley’, the farm is situated in a valley near a loch.

**Wateries** Sc

Evie HY 33 27. *Watereyes* 1841.

A small farm near Burn of Millhouse, ca. 200 m above the mill. This is clearly a Sc formation containing the word *water*, which could refer to the water supplies to the mill in some way.

**Westshore** Sc

Rendall. HY 41 17.

*Westshore* 1882 OS.

A farm SW in Crookness. A self-explanatory Sc formation.

**Woo** /u:/ ON

Evie HY 36 26.

*Ow* 1624 Sas.

The origin of the name is ON *á f* ‘burn’. The farm lies close to a burn called *Burn of Woo*.

**Woodwick** /<sup>h</sup>wudwik, <sup>h</sup>widuk/ ON

Evie. HY 38 24.

*Withwit* (*t* is probably a mistake for *k*) 1492 R, *Weithweik* 1503 R, *Widwick* 1594 Ch., *Widweik* 1618 Sas. OSR, *Widwick* 1727, *Woodwick* 1600 Ch.

A tunship of 18 pennyland or an urisland in the rentals. Today, *Woodwick* is used as a district name and there is a farm called *Woodwick House*. The generic is ON *vik* f ‘inlet, bay’, with reference to the broad bay called Wood Wick on OS. The specific could thus be adj. *viðr* ‘wide’, but also *viðr* m ‘wood, timber’ as suggested

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by Marwick.<sup>32</sup> The form *Woodwick*, which appears in the sources in 1600, may suggest that the name users interpreted the name in the latter sense and translated it into Sc, see 9.2.2. However, the Sc adaptation may be due to Sc pronunciation /wɪd/ of *wood* (CSD: 804), rather than the original ON form.

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<sup>32</sup> According to Marwick (OFN: 127), the specific is likely to refer to driftwood. However, Woodwick has a sheltered situation and is a good candidate for the growth of trees. There are a number of place-names in Orkney referring to forest (or brushwood), e.g. *Scuan*, *Scows* < *skóg*- ‘forest’.

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### 6.2. Non-habitation names

The first records for these names are generally late. Some nature names are found on mid-19<sup>th</sup> century maps depicting the division of the commonities. Such maps were drawn for Rendall 1841 (ComR 1841), Evie 1846 (ComE 1846) and Firth 1848 (ComF 1848). OS-maps (the first series covering the area was published 1882) and the Ordnance Survey name book (OSNB, Evie and Firth 1897, Rendall 1900) are other important sources for nature names. OS 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. contains a wealth of coastal names from Evie.

Apart from these, the sources vary from one parish to the other. Robert Bakie has allowed me to use the field-name material that he has collected in Rendall, including maps and pronunciation. From Firth, I have had access to two lists of field-names from 1868 and 1931 respectively (Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931). For these names, precise localisation or pronunciation forms cannot be given. The same goes for the lists of names from Evie and Rendall compiled by Gregor Lamb. From Redland tunship in Firth there is a valuable compilation of names from 1920 by John Firth. In his notes, (OA D 31/1/3/2.), the folklorist Ernest Marwick gives a detailed account of the names in the Arian area. Finally, Alistair Marwick of Whitemire has provided information about various names in Evie as well as the oral forms. On a whole, the source forms for non-habitation names are late and in many cases, no information about the precise localisation and the pronunciation is given. This means less support for the interpretations of names. For this reason, I try to keep the name articles brief, avoiding exceedingly loose speculations.

#### **Agloth, Braes of & Foot of**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 18.

*Braes of Aglair* 1848 ComF, *Braes of Aglar* (Map D 7/3/23).

*Braes of Agloth* denotes the steep north-western slope of Ward of Redland, *Foot of Agloth* is the spur or foot of the hill. Both names are Sc formations with Sc generics. The specific is probably *öxl* f 'shoulder' as suggested by Marwick, a rather common comparative

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name for hills in Norway. Simplification of the consonant cluster *xl* is quite regular in the dial. (see 8.1.2.8). Here *s* is dropped (cf. *yacle* < *jaxl* ‘molar tooth’, OrknN: 213), whereas *l* is dropped in *The Auks* or *Axe* in Eday. Addition of word-final dentals is discussed in 8.2.2.2. Here the addition seems to be late. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century forms ending in *-r* rather suggest original ON plural.

**Annie's (Aanies) Rig** /'anizrig/ Sc

A field below Brettobreck, belonging to Crook, R. *Rig* is the Sc term for the smallest unit of land in the rig-a-rental system. The specific is the feminine name *Annie*.

**Appietoon Burn** Sc

A Sc formation containing the generic *burn* and the name of the farm it passes by as a generic. This is a typical pattern for burn names in Orkney (cf. *Burn of ..*).

**Apron o' Fedgeo** /'eprən ə 'fidjo/ Sc

Coastal feature. There are several locations called *Fidgeo*, all clefts where stagnant pools of rotting water and seaweed are formed. The generic is *geo* < ON *gjá* n ‘rift, chasm’, which becomes the standard term for a narrow inlet (5.5.8). The specific is probably *fíu* ‘putrification, something rotting’ (cf. Marwick 1970: 3) In Norw. dial. *fu*, *fud* even denotes ‘arse’ (NO). Either way, the name refers to rottenness and stench. The periphrastic formation *Apron of F.* is Sc. *Apron* is a plumbers’ term for a strip of lead conducting rainwater away (CSD: 16), probably used as a comparison.

**Ayrean, Arian** /'erjən/ ON

HY 36 22. *Ayrean* 1897.

An area far up in the valley of Burn of Woodwick. The name is derived from ON *ærgin* def. ‘the shieling(s)’. Palatalisation of *g* before the def. article is common in Orkney Norn (cf. *Burrian*, *Hayon*) and in Norw. dialects. The word *erg*, *ærgi* is one of the rare loans from Gael (< *airigh*, see 5.2). Fellows-Jensen (2002) suggests that *ærgi*



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means ‘grazing land’ rather than shieling since so many are settlements in *Domesday Book* (1086).

Hugh Marwick rejects the idea of shielings in Orkney (under *setr* OFN: 229): “In Orkney [...] there is no evidences of sæters”. He identifies the loan word *erg*, *ærgi* in place-names, however (OFN: 165, 227). In Arian, the sties show that the area has been used for some sort of pasture away from the farms (the distance from Aikerness to the Styes of Aikerness is ca. 3 kilometres). There is also a place called *Nethabooth* described in OSNB as a former shieling. The precise nature of the summer grazing in the area and whether people stayed here for the summer or came up sporadically to look after the cattle cannot be ascertained. Nor do we know whether similar seasonal pastures once existed elsewhere in Orkney to be converted into farms in times of increased population pressure.

### **Aversquoy** /<sup>1</sup>ɛvɛrsmi/

Field in Costa, E. The generic is ON *kvi* or Orkney Scots *quoy* ‘enclosure, field’ (cf. 5.5.13). /mi/ is the traditional West Mainland pronunciation (see 8.1.2.8., 5.5.13.). The specific is uncertain. The Sc appellative *aver* ‘horse’ (CSD: 9) seems foreign to Orkney. The generic could be the genitive of ON *hafr* m ‘male goat’ with loss of the initial *h* and thus an ON formation.

### **Back Geo of Clett**

Sc

Inlet below the school in Costa, with a portal in the rocks. A Sc *of*-periphrasis with the farm name *Clett* as specific. The latter part of the generic is *geo* ‘inlet’ (cf. 5.5.8.) As the formation is Scots, *back* should probably be interpreted as the Sc adj. and not as ON *bakki* (see 5.5.1, cf. *Backaquoy* below).

### **Backaquoy**

ON

*Pt of Backaquoy* 1848 ComF, *Backaquoy* Ffn 1931.

A field in Burness, Firth, 1931. Both elements are found in ON as well as Sc, but the final *-a* in the specific suggests ON case morphology and thus ON origin. The generic is *kvi* f ‘enclosure’ (see

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5.5.13). The specific *bakki* m apparently denotes ‘strip of land close to the sea’, for the area is flat (see 5.5.1.).

**Backhose**

*Backhose* Ffn 1931.

Field in Binscarth, Firth. In spite of the spelling, the generic is most likely house or its ON cognate *hús*. *Backhose* may be a prepositional name in either language: ON *bak húsi* or Sc *back of the house* ‘behind the house’.

**Baillie Hill, Baillieval**

ON

**1) Baillie Hill.**

Firth. HY 36 19.

*Belly Hill* 1841 ComR, *Bailliefiold* 1848 ComF.

Rounded hill north of Settiscarth.

**2) Baillieval**

Firth. HY 36 11.

*Baileyfiold* 1848 ComF.

Spur of a hill east of Heddle

Both names have the same origin, cf. the forms from 1848. The generics are two different developments of ON *fjall* n ‘mountain, hill’. The former is a rare example of translation (cf. 9.2.2) The development *fjall* > *-val* is attested in other names, e.g. *Brettoval* in Harray (OFN: 144). The specific *baillie* is probably derived from ON *belgr* m ‘bellow’. It denotes rounded features in a number of names, see *Bailliequoy* 6.1. and *Bellia Fiold* below.

**Bakegar**

ON?

*Bakegar* Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931.

Field in Binscarth. Possibly from ON *bakkagarðr* ‘hill field’, but both elements are found in both languages. See 5.5.1. and 5.5.7.

**Ballantyne Field, Ballantynes**

Sc

Field in Lower Ellibister, Rendall. A Sc formation with a family name as its specific. In the latter form, the generic is omitted.

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**Banks** /baŋks/

Sc

Rendall. HY 40 22.

*Bankis* 1595 R, *Banks* 1664.

Formerly a farm near Crook, the name now refers to a headland. *Banks* in Birsay is recorded in 1492. Since this is very early for a Sc name, Marwick suggests a translation of ON *bakkar* m pl. (OFN: 120, cf. 7.1.2). According to Jakobsen (1921: 26), Sc *bank* has replaced ON *bakki* in Shetland, but the denotation ‘steep coast’ that is also found in the Faroes has been retained. This interpretation could apply even to *Banks* in Rendall. Alternatively, one could posit the survival of an unassimilated form in Orkney Norn parallel to East Scand. *banke*. *Climpers* below seem to be another example.

**Baramira**

ON

*Baramira* Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931, *Baramero* Ffn 1931.

Listed under Binscarth and Wasdale respectively, but probably referring to a locality shared by the neighbouring farms. It is an ON formation with the generic *mýrr* f ‘marsh, bog’ in def. form. Whereas most names derived from ON feminine nouns retain the older form of the def. art. *-in, -an* (*Breckan, Tooin, Gravan*), *mýrr* is always found with the modern form *-a* (cf. 8.2.2.1.). The specific is probably *berr* ‘bare, without vegetation’.

**Barneysheet**

Sc

*Barneysheet* Ffn 1931.

A field in Coubister, Firth. The generic is Sc *sheet/sheed* ‘field, strip of land’ (OrknN: 153, CSD: 603 *shed*). The specific is a personal name, possibly of ON origin. *Barnie* < *Bjarni* (or rather *Bjarnason*) is recorded in Caithness (Black 1974: 56).

**Bay of ..**

Sc

**1) B. of Hinderayre**

Rendall. HY 42 19.

**2) B. of Isbister**

Rendall. HY 40 17.

**3) B. of Puldrite**

Rendall. HY 42 18.

These are all Scots formations with the names of a neighbouring farm as their specifics. The farm names are treated in 6.1. *Of*-periphrasis is extremely common in such secondary name formations (see 7.1.3, 8.3.2.)

**Beeniesfield**

Sc

*Beeniesfield* Ffn 1931.

A field in Settiscarth, F. The generic and thus the formation is Sc. The specific is possibly gen. of a pet form of a personal name *Benjamin* or *Benedict* (see Black 1974: 65).

**Beetho** /'bi:θo/

An uneven field in Crook, R, in an area described as “unfit for the plough”. *Beetho* also denotes a spring in the far end of the field and supposedly a vanished house. This means its original denotatum is uncertain, and so is its etymology.

**Berry Burn**

Sc

Evie. HY 38 25.

A burn in Redland tunship. The generic and formation is Sc. The specific is more likely dial. *berry* ‘rock’ < ON *berg* (OrknN: 12) than Sc *berry*. The burn flows past a field called *Boray*. The two names are probably independent (or one has been adapted), as /o/ and /ε/ can hardly have a common origin.

**Bigging/Nearhouse Burn**

Sc

Local name for *Burn of Nearhouse* in Rendall. The specifics are the names of farms that the burn flows past, cf. *Burn of...*

**Bight of Lindy**

Sc

Evie. HY 37 26.

*Bout of Lindy* 1897 OSNB.

OS name for a sandy bay west of Aikerness, not in local use. The generic and formation is Sc. A number of ON words are conceivable as a specific. *Lind* f ‘linden’ can be ruled out, but *lind* also denotes

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‘well, spring’. In this seaside location *linn* /lɪn/ ‘runner, piece of wood on which a boat is drawn’, attested Shetland dialect (ShNorn: 512) seems most likely.

**Billia Fiold** /'biljə ʃjɔld/ ON

Evie. HY 35 23.

*Belli Fiold* 1846 ComE, *Muckle Billia Fiold* OS.

(*Muckle*) *Billia Fiold* marks the border between Harray and Evie. The origin is probably the same as for *Baillieval* and *Baillie Hill* above. For the development *ʃfall* > *Fiold*, see *Fibla Fiold* below. *Muckle Billia Fiold* is opposed to *Little Billia Fiold* further south. The specifying elements are probably Sc, though an adaptation of ON *mikill* and *lítinn* is a theoretical possibility.

**Bingwall** /'biŋwəl/ ON?

Field in Costa, E. The generic seems to be ON *völlr* m ‘even field, spot of grass’. This suggests an original ON specific *bingr* m rather than Sc *bing* ‘heap, pile’ (CSD: 42). The ON word has several meanings, but ‘a small enclosure for sheep or calves’ or a ‘hole or pit for collecting manure’ (NO, cf. OrknN: 13) both make sense in a field name.

**Bismira** ON

*Bismira* Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931.

Field in Binscarth, F. ON formation. The generic is *mýrrin* ‘the marsh’ (cf. *Baramira* above). The specific is uncertain, but could be dial. *bizzy* /'bɪzi/ ‘box for cattle’ (OFN: 14), cf. the farm name *Bisgarth* in Evie and *Slap of Quoybeezie* below.

**Black Knowe Field** Sc

Field in Blubbersdale, R. Transparent Sc formation.

**Blaland**

*Blaland* Ffn 1931.

Field in Horroldshay, Firth. The linguistic origin is uncertain, as *land* is common to ON and Sc and both ON *blár* and Sc *blae* denote

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‘blue, black, dark’. The specific could refer to dark soil. *Bláland* is also found in Iceland (Finnur Jónsson 1911: 418).

**Blans**

*Blans* Ffn 1931.

Field in Ouraquoy, Firth. Its interpretation and linguistic origin is uncertain. Typologically it resembles names like *Ballantynes and Scott’s*, i.e. gen. of a personal name (possibly *Bland?*). All examples of such names are Sc formations.

**Blatface** /ˈblɛtfeɪs/

Sc

Field in Aikerness, E. The specific is dial. *blett*, see *Blaten* below. The formation in this case is Sc., as can be seen from the Sc generic *face*. This means ‘side’ or ‘slope’ in place-names.

**Blaten** /ˈblɛtn/

ON

Field (in Costa?), E. In the Northern Isles, *blett* denotes ‘a patch of ground different from its surroundings’ (OrknN: 15, ShNorn: 51.). Though *\*blett* m ‘spot’ is unattested in ON, *blettur* is found in Icel. and Far. (cf. Dan. *plet* ‘spot’, ComGerm. *\*platja-* ‘spot, patch, patch of land’ (PEO: 493). It is thus safe to assume that the word has existed in ON. Reflexes of the post-positioned definite article prove the formation to be ON. The same element is found in *Blatface* above and *Heather of Blate*.

**Bletadith** /ˈblɛtjɛθ/

HY 32 26. *Bletadith* 1897 OSNB.

Peat moss S of Whitemire, E. The interpretation is complicated by the discrepancy between the written and spoken forms. The former suggest a generic *dýit* n def. ‘gutter, bog’. The latter could possibly be interpreted as *gjota* (NO: 223) ‘longish hollow’, which applies to narrow marshes in Norw. dial. (Jenstad and Dalen 1997: 91). It could even be a non-compound name with a suffixed dental (see 8.2.2.2.) The specific could be *blett* (see *Blaten* above) or ON *bleyta* f ‘water-logged (spot)’.

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**Bloodo**

*Bloodo* Ffn 1931.

A field in Coubister, F. The name seems to contain ON *blóð* n or its Sc cognate *blood*, and a Sc suffix *-o*, see 8.2.1. What this could refer to in a place-name is obscure. (Norw. *Bloteigen* is derived from *blóð* NG 11: 5, whereas for *Blom* a hypothetical *\*bló f* ‘place cleared by burning’ is suggested, *ibid* 305.)

**Bloomro**

*Bloomro* Ffn 1931.

A field in Coubister, F. The name is possibly derived from ON *Blómruð*, in which the generic could be *ruð* n ‘clearing’ (cf. note under *Redland* in 6.1.). *Blom* denoting ‘flower’ or ‘fern’ occurs in a number of Norw. place-names (NO, NG 11: 315).

**Blubbersdale/Sweenalay/Isbister Burn**

Sc

Rendall. HY 37–38 19.

*Burn of Blobersdale* 1841 ComR.

A burn named after the farms it passes by, cf. *Bigging Burn* above.

**Blythemo(r)**

ON?

1) **Blythemo** /<sup>h</sup>blaiθmo/

Evie. HY 34 24.

*Blythemo* 1897 OSNB.

Bogs E of Mid Hill.

2) **Blythemor** /<sup>h</sup>blætjəmo/

Evie. HY 37 22.

*Blythemor* 1897 OSNB. *Blythemør* E. Marwick (D 31/1/3/2).

A slope in the Burn of Woodwick valley. E. Marwick’s spelling suggests a pronunciation /-mør/.

There is also a former peat moss *Bluthamo* /<sup>h</sup>bluθəmo/ in Harray.

The use of *mo(r)* to denote peat mosses and marshes seems to be Sc rather than ON, even in apparently ON name formations (see 5.5.12). The specific may be ON *bleyta* f ‘water-logged (spot)’, see *Bletadith* above. ON *ey* may develop into *ε/* or */ai/* (cf. 4.4.1.4).

**Boat Geo** /bɔt djo/

An inlet NW of Clay Geo, E. Its meaning is clear, but the formation language is not, since both name elements are found in ON as well as the Orkney dialect. (see 7.1). Moreover, an original ON *bátgjá* could easily be adapted to Sc, since *bát* and *boat* are phonetically quite close. Similar semi-communication between Old Norse and Scots is conceivable in many instances (see 9.2.4).

**Boat Meadow**

Sc

Field in Costa, E. A transparent Scots formation. Sc *meadow* seems to have become the standard term at an early stage, as there are few examples of its ON cognate *eng* f as a generic.

**Boats Hellia**

ON

Evie. HY 35 27.

*Boats Helya* 1897 OSNB.

A coastal feature. An ON generic *hella* f ‘flat rock’ proves the formation to be ON (cf. *Boat Geo* and 7.1). *Helya* in 1897 reflects a palatalised pronunciation (8.1.2.5).

**Boondamira** /'bɔndəmaɪrə/?

ON

Field belonging to Hall of Rendall. The generic is ON f def. *mýrrin* ‘the marsh’, for its development see 8.2.2.1. The development *y* > /ai/ is irregular in this word, but occurs in other words, probably due to interference from Sc (OrknN: xlii). The specific is probably ON *bóndi* m ‘farmer’, *o* > *ø* is a regular development.

**Boray, Peedie Boray** /'bɔ:ri, 'pidi ˌbɔ:ri/

Sc?

Boray was once a “cot house” or croft, but the name now denotes a field in Niggly, W of Berry Burn. Gairsay *Boray* is interpreted as ON *borg* f ‘fortress’, referring to a broch (OFN: 75). There is no broch here, though. The name could have been coined from Sc *bore* ‘shelter, hiding-place’ (CSD: 54 f.) with *y*-suffix (cf. 8.2.1.) As the element *bore* is found in several field-names, the Jutland dial. term *bårer* pl. ‘unsown ploughed fields’ (Feilberg 1886: 164) should also



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be taken into consideration. *Peedie* is the normal dialect word for ‘small’ (OrknN: 129).

### **Bothy Field**

Sc

Current field-name in Binscarth, F. All the old field-names from the 1868 and 1931 lists apart from *Scarpsquoy* were lost when incomers bought the farm. A few transparent Sc names have been coined, such as this one.

### **Braehead**

Sc

Current field in Lyde, F. A Sc formation of *brae* and *head* ‘top’.

### **Braethus**

*Braethus* Ffn 1931.

A field in Smogarth, F. The generic is Sc *house* or its ON cognate *hús*, which means that the name originally denoted a building. Transfer of house names to fields is quite common (see 7.2.1). The specific is uncertain but could be ON. *brattr* ‘steep’. *Bratthús* is also found in Norway (NG 11: 194), apparently denoting a house on a steep location.

### **Brae Vingus**

Sc?

*Brevinga* 1846 mF, *Brae Venus* 1848 ComF, *Brae Vingus* Firth 1920, *Brivingis* Ffn 1931.

A former house in Redland, F, later a field belonging to Barm. The changing forms are confusing, but the generic seems to be Sc *brae*, which means that the formation is Sc, The specific is uncertain.

### **Braes of Stron** /strɔ:n/

Sc

An unspecified area near Loch of Brockan, R. The generic *Braes* and the *of*-periphrasis are definitely Sc. The area is flat, and brae has to denote the bank (of the lake or the shore). The specific is ON *strönd* f ‘beach’ or ‘border, rim’. As the meanings overlap, *Braes of* could be seen as a late epexegetic addition (see 9.3.3).

**Bransquoy**

*Bransquoy* Ffn 1931.

Field in Burness, F. The linguistic origin of *quoy* ‘enclosure’ is uncertain (see 5.5.13). The specific *Brands-* is frequent in Norw. names, and is interpreted either as gen of a masculine name *Brandr* or an appellative *brandr* ‘fire, burning’, denoting land cleared by fire. Alternatively, the specific (and formation) could be Sc, *Bran* (Gael. ‘raven’) was formerly used as personal name in Scotland.

**Breckan**

ON

*Breckan* 1848 ComF, Ffn 1931.

A house in 1848, later a field in Moan, F. The origin is ON *Brekkan* f def. ‘the hill’. *Breck* was borrowed in the dialect (cf. 5.5.4), but here the suffixed def. art. proves the formation to be ON (see 7.1.1).

**Breck of Elicant**

Sc

*Breck of Elicant* 1882 OS, *Brake of Elegant* 1900 OSNB.

OS-map name for a ridge locally called *Rae’s Hill*, named after the man who acquired the area after the division of the commonty 1841. Here, *breck* appears to denote ‘hill’ (cf. Brecks of Scarataing).

**Brecks of Scarataing** /brɛks ə 'skɛrətɛŋ/

Sc

Evie. HY 39 24.

*Brecks of Scarataing* 1897 OSNB.

Fields on the headland east of Vishall. Sc *of*-periphrasis is extremely common in secondary names, i.e. names coined with existing place-names as their specifics. The type is treated in some detail in 8.3.2. The generic *brecks* designates land left untilled between the tunships (see 5.5.4). The specific is a place-name of ON origin, see *Scarataing* below.

**Breeran** /'brɪrən/

ON?

HY 34 24. *Breeran* OSNB 1897.

Heathery ridge. The linguistic origin is unclear, but the ending *an* normally reflects ON case morphology. This could even be a com-

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pound name containing the generic *rönd* f ‘rim, edge’, with reference to the ridge.

**Brinhyan** /'brinjøn/

ON

*Brinhyan* OSNB 1897.

Former grazing land on the slopes of Burgar Hill. Probably from ON f def. *brennan* ‘the land cleared by burning’. Palatalisation of *nn* is discussed in 8.1.2.5.

**Broad Taing**

Sc

Rendall. HY 42 17.

The point of the Crookness headland. The Sc specific *broad* means we may assume a Sc formation with the borrowed appellative *taing*, *teeng* ‘point’ from ON *tangi* m (OrknN: 188).



*A view of the well-preserved Broch of Gurness. Photo: P. Gammeltoft.*

**Broch of Gurness** /'gʌrnes/ Sc

Evie. HY 38 26.

*Knowe of Gurness* 1897 OSNB.

Formerly *Knowe of G*. The location has been excavated, revealing a well-preserved stone tower surrounded by houses, thus the change of generic. *Broch* is the standard term for these pre-Viking towers. The specific is a field-name *Gurness* in Aikerness, see below. The local name is *Broch of Aikerness*.

**Broon Deer Pow**

A deep pool in the burn near Whitemire, E. The words are all Sc., but the overall semantic content is puzzling, which makes one suspect that some kind of lexical adaptation has taken place, see 9.3.2.2. *Broon Deer* is a conceivable adaptation of ON *brunnr* m 'well'. A pool in the burn where water is taken makes sense semantically, but such reconstructions are always hypothetical.

**Brya** ON

Listed as a shoal in G. Lamb's list of names in Evie. The origin seems to be ON adj. *breiða* 'broad'. This appears to be an original specific, the name lacks a specific (cf. *Gamla* and *Rounda* in Harray.). The type is discussed in 9.3.5.2.

**Buckquoy** /'bʌkwɪ/ ON

Evie. HY 36 27.

A stony point S of Eynhallow. The generic *quoy* 'enclosure' (5.5.13) is thus rather surprising. The name may have been transferred from a field, or a generic describing the location may have been lost. There is also *Buckquoy* in Harray and Birsay for which Marwick suggests the specific *bygg* n 'barley' (OFN: 132). This involves an irregular development *y* > /ʌ/, whereas a specific *bukkr* m 'he-goat' is linguistically unproblematic.

**Burn of ...** Sc

The following names are all Scots formations. Of-periphrasis is typical in secondary names, which are coined with existing place-

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names as their specifics. Burns are frequently named after the farms they pass, which means that the name may change along the course. Hardly any burn names of ON origin have survived in Orkney, but a few would seem to form part of secondary names. These include \**Leira* in *Lyradale*, \**Ruðma* in *Rummerdale*, \**Sýra* in *Syradale* and \**Varma* in *Varmadale*.

### 1) **B. of Bluebrae**

Rendall. HY 37 18.

The burn marks the border between Rendall and Firth. The specific is the name of a vanished croft *Bluebraes* (recorded on ComF 1848).

### 2) **B. of Breck**

A burn in the tunship of Rendall, containing the farm name *Breck* as its specific. Its former name may have given rise to the parish name, see the discussion under *Rendall*.

### 3) **B. of Crowrar**

A straightened burn flowing past Crowrar to Tingwall, Rendall. The specific is the farm name *Crowrar*.

### 4) **B. of Cruan**

Firth. HY 38 18.

*Burn of Cruan* 1882 OS.

The specific is the definite form of ON *krú* f ‘pen’, or more likely a place-name coined with this word, cf. *Meadow of Cruan*.

### 5) **B. and Grip of Deith Hellia** /dið'helja/

*Burn & Grip of Deith Hailya* 1897 OSNB.

Burns near Whitemire, E. *Grip* is the common term in Orkney for a ‘small burn’ (Sc ‘a drainage ditch’ CSD: 250). The specific *Dieth Hellia* is puzzling. In most cases *Hellia* reflects ON *hella* f ‘flat rock’, though it may occasionally be ON *helgi* adj. ‘holy’ (cf. *Hell-cliff*). Sc *dieth* ‘death’ (CSD: 133) could possibly be an adaptation of ON *dýit* n def. ‘the gutter, the mire’ or *dikit* n def ‘the bog’, which both correspond to the marshy location. The name as a whole is still a puzzle, as I doubt that it refers to a holy marsh. Rather one suspects some sort of adaptation that has left the name etymologically opaque (cf. *Broon Deer Pow* and 9.3.2).

### 6) **B. of Desso** /'deso/

Evie. HY 37 25.

*Burn of Desse* 1846 ComE.

The specific is possibly taken from *Knowe of Desso* above Sands of Evie. *Diss* /dis/ denotes ‘a small stack of sheaves’ (OrknN: 31), the knoll has been compared with such a stack. The ending *-o* in names can be derived from *á* f ‘burn’ or *haugr* m ‘mound’, which both suit the two locations. But it may also be a secondary adaptation to Sc morphology (see 8.2.1).

**7) B. of Ennisgeo**

HY 33 26.

*Burn of Inesgoe* 1846 ComE.

The specific *Ennisgeo* is a compound in which the latter element is *geo*, *goe*. In inland locations this appears to denote ‘a (burn flowing) in a deep ravine’, cf. 5.5.8. The former element could be *ennis* /'enɪs, 'inəs/ ‘a very poor house, a ruin’ (OrknN: 38)

**8) B. of Etheriegeo** /'iθəriɡjo/

Evie. HY 32 26.

A burn flowing into Loch of Swannay. The specific is a compound name containing the element *geo*, *goe* cf. *Burn of Ennisgeo* above. The pronunciation suggests that the first element may be the ON adj. *iðri* ‘inner’, which suits its location far into the hills. The pronunciation also renders the interpretations presented for *Ether Geo* (see below) less likely.

**9) B. of Hammersquoy**

A burn marking the border between Evie and Rendall. The specific is the name of a vanished croft *Hamersquoy*, recorded in Carfin’s rental. *S*-composition suggests that the croft name is secondary to another place-name, either *Hammeron* in Rendall or a name \**Hammer* that has probably survived as the specific of *Hammars Hill*, see below.

**10) B. of Holland**

Firth. HY 38 16.

*Burn of Holland* 1848 ComF.

The specific is the farm name *Holland*.

**11) B. of Lyd**

*Burn of Lyd* Ffn 1931.

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Recorded as a field-name in Burness, F, in 1931. The generic appears to be ON *leið* f ‘track, way’ (cf. *Lyde* and 5.4).

**12) B. of Nearhouse** (also called **Nearhouse Burn**)

Rendall. HY 39 19.

A burn in Hackland. The specific is the farm name *Nearhouse*.

**13) B. of Orquil**

Rendall. HY 41 21.

The specific is the farm name *Orquil*, a name that in its turn refers to a forking of this rather strong burn.

**14) B. of Redland**

Firth. HY 37 16.

*Burn of Redland* 1848 ComF.

The burn running through the township of Redland, hence its specific.

**15) B. of Rummerdale**

The upper part of Burn of Woo, E. For an interpretation of the specific, see Rummerdale below.

**16) B. of Syradale**

Firth. HY 34 15.

*Burn of Syradale* 1848 ComF.

This burn runs in a deep valley and has the name of the valley as its specific. The primary name is most likely to be \**Sýra* referring to the burn, however (see *Syradale* below).

**17) B. of Wasdale**

Firth. HY 34 15.

*Burn of Waasdale* 1848 ComF.

A burn that flows into the Loch of Wasdale. The specific is the farm name *Wasdale*.

**18) B. of Woo** /u:/

The specific is the farm name *Woo*, a name coined from ON *á* f ‘burn, small river’, with reference to the same burn.

**19) B. of Woodwick**

Evie. HY 37 22.

*Burn of Woodwick* 1846 ComE.

The specific is the farm name *Woodwick*.

**Burn Park, Upper & Lower**

Sc

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Two fields below Breck of Rendall, on either side of *Burn* of Breck. *Park* is a standard modern term for a field.

**Burrien Hill**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 16.

The generic is Sc and thus the whole formation (see 7.1). The specific appears to be *burrian* < ON *borgin* f def. ‘the fortress’. In Norway, *borg* may even denote hills, in Orkney *Burrian* is a common name for a broch. This is not a steep hill, so the specific is more likely to refer to a broch ruin.

**Burrey Brae**

Sc

Firth. HY 39 10. *Burry Brae* 1848 ComF.

A hill S of Rennibister. The name is Sc, the specific is possibly *burrow* ‘a kind of coarse grass or rush’ (OrknN 26).

**Burry Meadow**

Sc

*Burry Meadow* 1846 mF, 1848 ComF.

An area around the SW end of Loch of Wasdale, F. The generic and formation is Sc. The specific is probably *burry*, see *Burrey Brae* above. There is a possible broch ruin on the shore of Loch of Wasdale, however. *Burrian* < ON f def. *borgin* is a common term for brochs and is conceivable as a specific in this name.

**Byde**

Sc?

*Byde* Ffn 1931.

A field in Redland, F, unrecorded in Firth 1920. The etymology is uncertain. Sc *bide* v. ‘dwell, reside’ would make sense as a house name, and house names are often transferred to fields.

**Campierowa**

ON?

*Campierowa* Firth 1920.

A waterfall in Burn of Redland, F. The specific *rauð-* ‘red’ is suffixed. The interpretation of the generic is more uncertain, but could tentatively be ON *kampr* m ‘beard’ used comparatively. The Rousay name *Campie Rowo* /kampi'rouo/ denoting a hill-ridge shares the



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same construction and specific, but the generic in a hill name is more likely to be *kambr* ‘comb’.

**Castle Field**

Sc

A field in Ellibister. There is a pile of stones in the field said to be the ruins of a former castle.

**Chair of Lyde**

Sc

Firth, HY 35 18.

*Chair of Lyde* 1848 ComF.

A locality in the gap in the hill-ridge between Settiscarth and Hundscarth, described as a hollow in OSNB. The periphrastic formation is Sc but the name elements are of ON origin. The specific is derived from *leið* f ‘track, road’, see *Lyde* 6.1. The generic is an adaptation of *kjarr* n ‘undergrowth on swampy ground’ (NGIndl.: 60). The adaptation could be phonological, *kj* > /tʃ/ is a sporadic development in the dialect (cf. *kjalki* > *chocks* /tʃɔ:ks/ ‘jaws’, OrknN: 27). However, it seems likely that lexical adaptation to the word *chair* has also played a role (see 9.3.2.2).

From Starafjall to Starling Hill



*Chair of Lyde on a rainy day. Photo: P. Gammeltoft.*

**Clay Geo**

Sc

Evie. HY 34 28.

With the specific being Sc *clay*, we are safe to assume a Sc formation with the borrowed generic *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ < ON *gjá* (see 7.1, 5.5.8).

**Clay Loam**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 17.

The locality is described in OSNB as a “muddy ground and shallow pool”. *Loam* is a mixture of sand, silt and clay.

**Clibberbreck, Clibber** /<sup>h</sup>klibər/

*Clipperbreck* 1841 ComR.

The name once denoted a croft but is now a field with a quarry called *Clibber’s Quarry*, W of Bught. In local usage, *breck* is dropped. *Klibber* < ON *klyfberi* m is an obsolete word for ‘wooden

## 6. *The name material*

packsaddle' (OrknN: 89). It may have been used comparatively, as the field has a dip in the middle, which fills with water in rainy periods. As both *klibber* and *breck* (5.5.4.) were borrowed into the dialect, the formation may be Sc. Alternatively; the name might refer to ON *kléberg* n 'soapstone' if this was found in the quarry.

### **Clickimin**

T

*Clickimin* and *Upper Clickimin* 1846 mF, *Clickimin* Ffn 1931.

In 1846, *Clickimin* and *Upper C.* denote houses near Stoneyha'. In 1931, *Clickimin* is recorded as a field belonging to Netherbigging in Grimbister, and the name is also found elsewhere in Orkney and Shetland. According to Brian Smith (1995: 27), the names are coined after inns on the Scottish mainland (name transfers are treated in 7.2.1). The interpretation is uncertain but the first element appears to be a verb, see 8.3.4.

### **Climpers, The**

Sk?

A field with numerous mounds and dips below Brettobreck, belonging to Crook, R. The name is certainly to be derived from an unasimilated form of ON *kleppr*, cf. OSwe. *klimper* (Iversen 1973: 37). The name *Klimpen* in Askvoll appears to be a parallel (Flokenes 1998: 39). There are traces of the unassimilated form both in Norw dialects (*klimp* Torp 1963: 285) and in the Northern Isles. In Orkney, the two forms have developed specialised meanings: *kleppo* is 'a lump of some soft yielding material, e.g. cow-dung' (OrknN: 89), and *klimper* 'a lump of stone, boulder' (OrknN: 90). Both forms are also recorded in Shetland (see 8.1.2.8). The Sc articles suggest that the name is a Sc formation with the dialect loan word.

### **Clivvo, The**

Sc

A deep indenture above Mill o' Firth (G. Lamb, personal communication). The origin is most likely to be ON *klyf* f 'a cleaving'. A dialect term *klivvy* is found in a specialised sense 'place where the tide splits' (OrknN: 90). The Sc article and the local *-o* suffix (see 8.2.1) suggest formation from a dialect word.

### **Cock Pen**

Sc

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A ruin in Hackland, R. According to G. Lamb this was once a house.

**Corn Yard**

Sc

A field near the houses of Breck, R. Probably once a stack yard.

**Cottastoar** /<sup>l</sup>kɔtəstoər/

ON?

A field in Aikerness, E. The name (with no further information) was given to me by the neighbours in Niggly. *Cotta-* is probably ON *kot* n ‘small house, cot’ with the remains of ON case morphology (cf. *Cottascarth*). The second element could be a suffixed specific *stórr* ‘big’, though *kotit stora* ‘the large cot’ seems self-contradictory.

**Cra Pen**

Sc

A ruin in Hackland, R. If the specific means ‘the crowing of a cock’ (CSD: 121 *craw*), the name ties in well with *Cock Pen* above. This seems more likely than an enclosure for *cras* (crows).

**Cra’ Pow, The** /ðe 'kra ,pau/

Sc

A drained pool (dial. *pow*) between Enyas Hill and Hackland Hill. The specific is most likely *cra* (CSD: 121 *craw*) ‘crow’.

**Cracka Longi**

ON

Evie. HY 37 22.

*Crackalongie* 1897 OSNB.

A locality in the Burn of Woodwick-valley, described in OSNB as a “green, boggy spot”. Not recorded by E. Marwick. It appears to be an ON coining with a suffixed specific and the reflection of ON case marking, possibly *krókrinn langi* m def. ‘the long bend’.

**Craig of Rittin** /<sup>l</sup>ritn, 'retn/

Sc

Evie. HY 40 24.

A coastal feature. The generic and formation are Sc. There are stone structures marked as a broch ruin on the OS-map, but H. Marwick suggests that these are rather the ruins of a fold where sheep were separated and shorn. This would support an interpretation of the specific as ON *réttin* f def ‘the fold’. An obsolete dialect word

## 6. The name material

*sheep-right* ‘(sheep) fold’ is attested (OrknN: 153). An actual sheep-fold here right on the shore might suggest the shipping of sheep, possibly to/from Wyre. An alternative interpretation is given under *Rittin* below

### **Cramfire’s(?) Quoy** Sc?

*Cramfire’s (?) Quoy* Ffn 1931.

A field in Leigh, F. The reading of the specific is not certain. Could it possibly be a Sc family name and thus a Sc formation with the borrowed element *quoy* ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13)?

### **Crengso** /<sup>h</sup>kɾɛŋso, <sup>h</sup>kɾiŋso/ ON?

A pasture with a well in the valley between Vishall and Dwarmo, E. The interpretation of both elements is uncertain. ON *kringr* m ‘circle’ does not seem to fit this rather narrow valley. In Shetland *kring* denotes a ‘halter round the neck of an animal, esp. a rope binding two animals together’ (Jakobsen 1921: 434), which may form part of a field-name. The final *-o* could possibly reflect ON *haugr* m ‘mound’ (for a further discussion, see *Stenso* 6.1.).

### **Creu Brae** /<sup>h</sup>kru: |brɛ:/ Sc

Field of Quoyhenry’s, R. In the light of the Sc generic *brae*, we may assume a Sc coining with the borrowed specific *cru* ‘pen’ (5.5.6).

### **Cringlin** ON

*Cringlin* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Geo, F. The origin is ON *Kringlan* f def. ‘the ring or circle’, referring to some circular feature. The final *-n* of the definite article has been preserved, in contrast to *Baramira* above.

### **Crinky Geo** Sc

A small inlet NW of Knowe of Grugar, E. The generic is *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ (5.5.8). The specific *crinky* can hardly be of ON origin (*nk* normally becomes *kk*). A variant of *crinkly* could be suggested.

### **Croanies Quoy** /<sup>h</sup>kɾɔniz kwai/

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A pasture in Costa, E, near the ruined croft *Croan* (cf. 6.1.). The generic is *quoy* (see 5.5.13). The name probably means ‘the quoy belonging to Croan’. This would explain the genitive morpheme *s*. The addition of *-i-* is irregular, demonstrating that the morphological endings are not very stable in place-names (cf. 8.2). The generic and the *s*-genitive are common to ON and OrknSc, which means that the language of formation is uncertain.

### **Croo Back**

ON

Evie. HY 33 27.

*Crooback* 1897 OSNB.

A dry area in the brecks W of Peerie Water. The area is flat and the generic would seem to be ON *bakki* m in the sense ‘land close to a lake’ (cf. 5.5.1). The specific is the ON loan *kró* ‘pen’, see 5.5.6.

### **Crookness**

ON?

Rendall. HY 41 17.

*Crukneß* 1662 Blaeu.

A headland with a number of points. Most likely from ON *króknes* ‘crook headland’, referring to the curving shoreline. However, the cognate *cruik* is also found in Sc (CSD: 125), so if *nes* ‘headland’ was borrowed into the dialect, the formation may even be Sc. The element *ness* is discussed in 7.1.1.

### **Crovnofinya**

ON

*Crovnofinya* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to the Glebe in Firth in 1931. Today *Crovnofinya* or *Croonafea* are two name forms of a house which is also called *Bitch Ha’* and *Heather Hoose*. The area is flat and marshy, thus *fea* < ON *fjall* f ‘mountain’ appears to be a secondary development from *fenya*. The element *finya* is found in a number of names referring to marshy spots, and can probably be explained as a case form of ON *fen* n ‘marsh, mire’. The first element is a case form of ON *krú* f ‘pen’ (see 5.5.6). The name appears to be an original prepositional phrase: *Króin á feni/fenjum* ‘the pen on the mire’. Cf. *Quina-millyoar* below and 8.3.3.

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**Cuffie Hill**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 15.

*Cuiffe Hill* 1848 ComF.

A name for the marked ridge between Wasdale and Binscarth on the 1848 map. The generic and the formation are Sc. The specific could be a form of ON *kúfr* m ‘rounded top, bump’ but in this Sc formation *cuff* ‘nape’ + *ie*-suffix seems more likely. *Nakke* ‘nape’ is a rather common element in Norw. hill names.

**Cubby Roo Stone**

Sc

A stone in the Burn of Woodwick-valley, E. A Sc coining, though the generic has been normalised to Eng *stone* rather than Sc *stane*. According to local tradition, the stone was thrown by *Cubby Roo* (i.e. *Kolbeinn Hríga* from OrknSaga) and his fingerprints were once visible on the stone. For unaccountable reasons, Cubby Roo has become a hero with supernatural powers in Orkney folklore. *Cubby* is a short form with dropped *l*, name forms such as *Cobane* (REO: 207) are recorded in 16<sup>th</sup>-century documents. In *Hríga*, *g* and the final vowel have been dropped, just as in the noun *roo* ‘small heap’ < *hrúga* (OrknN: 145).

**Cuppin** /'kʌpin/

ON

A field by the school in Costa, E. An Old Norse coining, *kopp(r)inn* m def. means ‘the cup’ and applies to smallish hollows in quite a number of names (cf. the following names). This field is probably named after a house *Couppin* recorded in the 1841 Census.

**Cuppingua**

ON

*Cuppingua* Ffn 1931.

A field in Wasdale, F. The origin is an ON “inverted compound” *kopprinn goði* ‘cup good’ (cf. *Cuppin* above). Suffixed specifics occur in a number of names in Orkney (discussed in 8.3.1.1).

**Cuppo**

*Cuppo* Ffn 1931.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A field belonging to Horroldshay, F. This is either a Sc formation with *cup* and the suffix *-o* (8.2.1) or an adaptation of an ON name coined from *koppr* (cf. *Cuppin* above).

### **Cupster Nelster**

*Cupster Nelster* Firth 1920, Ffn 1931.

Described by Firth as a grassy spot in a bend of Burn of Redland, F, the locality is now overgrown with bushes. It seems that the name has gone through a “hocus-pocus-development”, whereby each element has been adjusted under the influence of the other. For this development in Orkney names, see 9.3.4. The origin is thus uncertain, but the first element seems to contain *koppr* or *cup*, as in the names above. The other elements cannot be identified. The element *-ster* occurs in a number of names, however, either as a development of *setr* e.g. *Inkster* /'ɪŋstər/ and *Mossetter* /'mɒstər/ *bólstaðr* or the final element of original *bólstaðr* (> *bister*). This means that other place-names may have functioned as a pattern for the adaptation. Onomastic adaptation is treated in 9.3.2.1.

**Cuween** /kju'wi:n/

ON?

Firth. HY 36 12.

*Cuween* 1848 ComF.

A rounded shoulder of a hill with a chambered cairn. The interpretation is uncertain. Stress on the second syllable normally suggests a suffixed specific. Here, a normal word-order formation with *ween* representing the traditional pronunciation of ON *kvín* f def. ‘the enclosure’ (cf. 5.5.13) seems to be more likely, however. The first element could be *kúa* gen. pl. or some other form of ON *kýr* f ‘cow’. Cf. *Kewing* in Rendall, 6.1.

### **Dale, The**

*Deal with the Miln* 1786 Sas.

Appears to be a farm or croft with a mill in 1786. The modern form refers to a field above Breck of Rendall, i.e. the original *Rennudal*. The name means ‘valley’ but its linguistic origin is uncertain, see



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*Dale of Cottascarth* below. The Sc definite article appears to have been added after 1786 (see 8.2.4).

### **Dale of Cottascarth** Sc

Rendall. HY 36 19

A wide valley between Cottascarth and Blubbersdale. The former farm-name functions as a specific. The formation is Sc, with *of*-periphrasis. In such cases, the generic is always Sc. This suggests that *dale* < ON *dalr* ‘valley’ was productive in the dialect at some stage, even if it is not included in OrknN or CSD. Cf. *Dale* 6.1, *The Dale* above and the discussion 5.4.

### **Dam Meadow, Damsheet** Sc

Two fields in Costa, E. The specific of both names is dam, probably referring to the milldam (presently Peerie Water but recorded as *Mill Dam* on ComE 1846). The generic of the latter is *sheed*, *sheet*, a term for a separate field, which was formerly divided in a number of *rigs* (OrknN: 153, CSD: 607 under *shed*, Clouston 1919: 31.).

### **Damsay** ON

Firth. HY 39 13.

*Damisey*, *Daminsey* in *OrknSaga*.

A small, flat island next to Holm of Grimbister in the bay of Firth. The origin of the generic is ON *ey f* ‘island’. The specific is uncertain but the old forms do not really tie in with Marwick’s suggestion *Dímun*, a pendant to the twin islands *Stóra* and *Litla Dímun* in The Faroes. Moreover, this Celtic loan normally refers to twin hills. There are two or three dams in the island, but this explanation leaves the medial *-i/-in* unexplained. Alternatively, a Celtic personal name could be suggested, cf. modern names such as *Daimine*, *Daman* and *Demmán/ Deamán* /dama:n/ (Ó Corráin & Maguire 1990: 7, 68). The same is possible for *Gairsay* below.

Damsay is well recorded in *OrknSaga* (chap. 66 and 94), which even describes a fortification in Damsay. It is not included in old rentals but appears to have been a 3-pennyland skatted unit.

**Damsquare**

Sc

*Damsquare* Ffn 1931.

A field in Burness, F. A transparent Sc formation. A former mill in Burness is mentioned in old documents, and the specific may refer to the former milldam.

**Dees** /di:z/

Sc?

Boggy area near Burn of Ennisgeo, E. The origin is ON *dý* n ‘gutter, mire’. The element is quite frequent in place-names and may have been borrowed into the dialect, even if it is not listed in OrknN (cf. Shetland *dø*, ShNorn:138). Here, the Sc plural form suggests Sc formation. Alternatively, the name may be a Sc adaptation of an original ON name coined from some form of *dy*.

**Dill Skerry**

Sc

E. Explained as a skerry where wild dill could be found. *Skerry* ‘islet’ is a Sc form of ON *sker* n (CSD: 622).

**Dinnies/Dennies, Lower and Upper**

Low-lying, marshy fields belonging to Hogar, R. The same field-name was supposedly found in Midgarth/Crowrar, and there is another swampy field *Denlongie* in Rousay. The element *din/den* thus seems to denote waterlogged soil, and could possibly be derived from ON *dý* n ‘gutter, mire’ (cf. Dan *dynd* ‘ooze, mire’). The interpretation is uncertain, especially since the form is indisputably Sc, including a Sc pl. ending.

**Dishans**

ON?

*Dishans* Ffn 1931.

A field in Lyde, F. *Dish-* is found in a number of Orkney names, and may derive from ON *dys* f ‘cairn’, as suggested by Marwick. The ending of this name is somewhat puzzling, as it appears to be a combination of an ON def. art and the Sc plural marker. Cf. 9.3.1.

**Divaults** /də<sup>1</sup>vɔlts/, **The Divaults**

## 6. *The name material*

A field in Hackland. The main stress on the second syllables suggests an irregular formation. The first element could be the Sc definite article in its traditional form (see 4.2.1.4) fixed to the name. The origin of the stressed syllable is uncertain but ON *völlr* ‘field’ is conceivable. A small group of Orkney names have dentals added finally, see 8.2.2.2.

### **Dog Geo**

Sc

*Dog Geo* 1897 OSNB.

Coastal feature in Costa, E. This appears to be a Sc formation with the dialect word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ (5.5.8.) as a generic, due to the Sc specific *dog*. *Hundy Geo* close by contains the ON cognate *hundr*. *Dog Geo* may have been inspired by this name, or it may be a part translation that has survived side by side with the original name (cf. *Starra Fiold* and *Starling Hill* below and 9.2.2). According to local tradition, dogs were drowned in Dog Geo.

### **Dongerfield**

Sc

*Dongerfield* Ffn 1931.

A current field-name in Lettaly, F. The generic and formation are Sc. *Danger* ‘peril’ seems unlikely as the specific. Fellows-Jensen has suggested (personal communication) that the name could be the English (Norman) surname *Dangerfield* from *de Angerville*, and that the name may reflect a former owner.

### **Doo Geo**

Sc?

An inlet N of Clay Geo, E, below Millhouse. *Doo* is the Sc form of *dove* (CSD: 154) and *geo* has been borrowed into the dialect (5.5.8). This means that the formation is probably Sc, though a translation or adaptation of ON *dúfagjá* ‘dove cleft’ remains theoretically possible.

### **Drowins Brae**

Sc?

*Drowins Brae* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to North Breck, F. The generic is Scots and we thus expect a Scots formation. In the Orkney dialect, *drow* (probably from *draugr* m ‘sea troll’) and more frequently *trow* (a regular development from *troll* with *ll*-vocalisation) refer to trolls or fairies.

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However, the specific appears to reflect ON case morphology *draugsins* (cf. 8.2), or should it be seen as a combination of the ON definite article and Scots genitive?

**Dwarmo, (Hill of)** /<sup>l</sup>dwarmo/ ON, Sc

Evie. HY 39 24.

*Dwarmo Hill* 1854 (map, OA D 7/3/16).

A lower summit east of Vishall, E. The periphrastic Sc formation is a map form, the local form *Dwarmo* appears to be of ON origin. Marwick derives the name from ON *\*dvergmál* ‘echo’, which can be heard between the cliffs here. Loss of *l* is discussed in 8.1.2.2. Alternatively, the name could be a compound with the generic *mo* ‘rough or heathery land, which is also found in other hill names (see 5.5.12). According to local legend Dwarmo was formed by the cut-off top of Vishall.

**Ellibister Burn/Hackland Burn** Sc

Rendall. HY 38 20.

One of the strongest burns in the parish, named after the farms it passes by. On a 19<sup>th</sup>-century map, it is called *Leyburn*. This is preserved as a house name (see 6.1).

**Enyas Hill** /<sup>l</sup>enjəs/ Sc

Rendall. HY 40 20.

*Enzie Hill* 1847 OA D 7/3/59.

The highest one of three hills in the middle of the parish. The present form is Sc, though the generic may be an epexegetic addition. The fact that there is no *-s* in the specific in 1847 suggests that *hill* was not an integrated part of the name by that time (cf. *Hammars Hill* and *Vishall* below and 9.3.3). The specific may thus represent the original name. Marwick suggests a derivation from ON *enni* n ‘brow, skull’. *Enni* forms part of place-names in Shetland, Iceland and the Faroes, but not in Norway.<sup>33</sup> Palatalisation of *nn* (cf. the

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<sup>33</sup> The semantically related element *skalle* ‘skull’ is comparatively common in Norway. If this name is actually to be derived from *enni*, it is an example of

6. *The name material*

pronunciation and the *z* representing the Sc grapheme ʒ for /j/ in the 1847 form) is regular, see 8.1.2.5. Alternatively, a derivation from some form of ON *eng* ‘meadow’ could be suggested.

**Ernie Tooin, Ernie Tower**

ON

**1. Ernie Tooin**

Rendall. HY 35 19.

*Earnie Tower* 1841 ComR, OS.

A hill marking the border between Firth, Harray and Rendall.

**2. Ernie Tower**

Evie. HY 31 29.

*Ernie/Erne Tower* OSNB 1897.

The top of Costa Hill.

The origin is ON *Arna(r)þúfan* ‘the eagle’s mound’, which is also found as a mountain name in Norway. *Tower* is a lexical adaptation of ON *þúfa* f ‘mound, knoll, tussock’ (see 9.3.2.2.). It is rather common in maps (cf. the 1841 form for Ernie Tooin), even though *þúfa* has been borrowed into the dialect in the form *tuo*, *tuack* (OrknN: 196). This word must have been foreign to mapmakers from outside the isles, and *tower* actually makes sense semantically as an element denoting elevations.

**Eskadale, Little and Muckle**

Firth. HY 34 16, 35 16.

*Little Eskdale* 1848 ComF. *Eskadae* H. Marwick’s notes.

*Muckle Eskdale* is a marked valley in Harray, and *Little Eskdale* in Firth is probably a secondary formation. There are a number of *Eskdale* locations in Scotland. In most cases, the specific is ON *eski* n ‘copse of ash-trees’, but in spite of Muckle Eskdale’s sheltered location, substantial trees are unlikely to have grown in Orkney. The possibility of name transfer must thus be taken into account. The forms with the reciprocating elements *muckle* and *little* are probably Sc formations (see 9.3.3) though an adaptation of the ON cognates *mikill* and *litinn* cannot be ruled out completely.

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how different place-name elements have been selected in Orkney from in Norway, cf. the discussion in 5.3.

**Ether Geo**

Sc

Evie. HY 31 29.

*Ether Geo* OSNB 1897.

An inlet or *geo* (5.5.8) NW of Sole Geo, E. The specific could be Sc *ether* ‘adder’ or perhaps more likely in a coastal location: *aither* ‘either’ (CSD: 9, 179). The two words may merge in pronunciation. Either way, the formation is Sc (cf. 7.1). Cf. *Ethergrass*.

**Ethergrass**

Firth. HY 38 10.

*Ethergrass* 1848 ComF.

An area in the hills S of Rossmyre. The generic is Sc *grass* or its ON cognate *gras* n. The origin of the specific could be *ether* ‘adder’ (cf. Ether Geo above) or a word *eder/ether* < ON *eitir* n ‘poison, venom’. In Shetland, *eder* refers to a bubble of foam resembling spittle containing an insect, that can be seen in the grass of outfields. This was supposed to be poisonous and harmful for the cattle (ShNorn: 140).

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*The somewhat romanticised church ruin in Eynhallow. Photo: P. Gammeltoft*

**Eynhallow**

ON

*Anehallow* 1584 (REO: 161).

An uninhabited island in the sound between Evie and Rousay. The origin is ON *eyin helga* ‘island holy’. This word order, with the ge-

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

neric first, is an old pattern in ON rather than a reflection of Celtic influence (see 8.3.1). There has been a monastery in the island. It also plays an important role in the folklore and the name and the reference to sanctity may be older than the monastery. In local tradition, Eynhallow was *Hildaland*, the invisible island of the fairies. A man who had been married to one of the “Finfolk” made it visible with nine rings of salt (Dennison 1995: 71).

### **The Faald** /ðə 'fa:ld/

Sc

A field belonging to Crook, R. Sc *faald*, *fauld* can mean ‘a fold (of cloth)’ and ‘a fold, pen’ (CSD: 189). The latter seems more likely as a field-name but is foreign to the dialect. My local informant thus related the name to the dip running through the field.

### **Faegie, Quoyfegy** /'fægjə, 'fəgi/

*Coatfeggie* 1786 Sas., *Coatfeigie* 1801 Sas., *Quoyfeggy* 1882 OS, *Quoyfeggie* OSNB 1900.

A large field belonging to Hall of Rendall. The name has been transferred from a croft, a ½ pennyland unit in 1786, located N of North Aittit on the 1882 OS-map. Only ruins remain in 1900, according to OSNB. The generic is not a stable part of the name. *Cot* ‘small house’ is common for Sc and ON (*kot*). This element has been replaced by *quoy* after the Norse language had died out and is consequently a Sc formation with the loan word *quoy* (5.5.13). Replacement by semantically similar elements is treated in 9.2.3. Later this element may be dropped completely. The origin of the specific is uncertain, but could be the short form of a personal name.

### **Fairy Gate**

ON?

A path to the hills along Burn of Rummerdale, E. According to local folk etymology, “it was along this path that the hill fairies travelled”. As *gate* refers to a path, I would suggest an ON origin *gata* f ‘road, track (for cattle)’. The specific would seem to be a lexical adaptation of ON *fjár*, gen. of *fé* n ‘cattle’, see 9.3.2.2. ON *Fjárgata* ‘cattle track’ makes good sense.



## 6. The name material

### **Fala**

Fala 1897. OSNB.

W of Scarataing, E, on OS 1903, “shingly beach and flat rocks” according to OSNB. Uncertain origin, no ON or Sc words are close at hand. The element *fal* found in Swe place names such as *Falun* has been interpreted as ON *fölr* ‘greyish or yellowish pale’ (SOL 71), which might possibly refer to the colours of the beach.

### **Farafield**

*Farafield* Ffn 1931.

Field belonging to Horroldshay, F. Possibly from Sc *far afield*. An adaptation of an ON name is also possible, cf. *Slap of Faravill*.

**Fed Geo** /<sup>1</sup>fidju, /<sup>1</sup>fedjo/**of ..**

Sc

#### **1. F. of Arsdale**

*Fed Geo of Arsdale* 1897 OSNB.

An inlet with a cave on the coast N of Arsdale, E.

#### **2. F. of the Leeans** /<sup>1</sup>liəns/

*Fed Geo of the Leeans* 1897 OSNB.

An inlet north of the school in Costa, E.

The generic is the compound *fed geo* < ON *\*fuagjá* ‘inlet of arse or putrifaction’ found in *Apron of Fedgeo* above. The specific in the former is the farm name *Arsdale*, see 6.1. The specific of 2. is not quite clear, as *lee* appears to be a merger of different place-name elements. Normally the origin is ON *hlið* f ‘slope’, but *lee* also denotes beaches where slope can hardly apply. The origin could possibly be Sc *lee* ‘shelter’ or its ON cognate *hlif*, *hlifð* f, preferably the latter since traces of ON morphology are found. *Leeans* appears to contain a combination of the ON def. article and Sc plural, cf. *Dis-hans* above and *The Leeans* below (cf. 9.3.1).

### **Fibla Field**

ON

HY. 36 21.

A hill on the border between Rendall and Evie. G. Lamb (1993: 64) suggests *fifl* in the sense ‘giant, troll’ for its specific. The inter-

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

pretation does not necessarily involve trolls, however. It could be ON *Fiflafjall*, compounded of gen. pl. of *fifill* m ‘wild cotton’ and *fjall* n ‘mountain’. *ll* > *ld* is probably an instance of hyper-restitution. The *d* in *nd*, *ld* is often dropped, particularly when word-final (8.1.2.8, EHSL: 502 f.). It may subsequently be restored in accordance with the standard language (e.g. *land* /lan/ or /land/), a process that occasionally affects even words without original *d* (cf. *Wald* below).

### **Finyeu** /<sup>h</sup>finju:/

ON?

A field with a well in the infields of Hackland, R. The element *fin(y)-* occurs in a number of Orkney place-names and it would seem to reflect ON *fen(ja)-* n ‘bog’. The raising of *en* > *in* is regular, see 4.4.1.4. The ending /u:/ could possibly be a reflex of ON *á f* ‘burn’ (cf. *Woo* /u:/ in Evie), as the field borders both on Burn of Hackland and Burn of Nearhouse. A hypothetical ON *Fenjará* ‘burn of the bogs’ might once have denoted either of these.

### **Fisk Hellya** /<sup>h</sup>fiskelja/

ON

Evie. HY 33 27.

A coastal feature below Clook. The generic is ON *hella* f ‘a flat stone or rock’. *Hella* is a common place-name element and may have been a loan word in the dialect as in Shetland. It is not recorded as such in OrknN, however, nor is it found in compounds with Sc elements. We may thus assume ON origin for *hell(y)a* compounds. The ON specific *fiskr* leaves no doubt about the linguistic origin of the present name. Palatalisation of *ll* is discussed in 8.1.2.5.

### **Fitts**

ON?

An old field of Hall of Rendall’s. The precise location is unknown, but possibly near the coast S of the farm. This is supported by its etymology, ON *fit* f ‘meadow, usually near water’, often pl. *Fitjar* in names. *Fit* is not recorded as a loan word, so the Sc pl. marker is either a morphematic adaptation of an ON pl. form (cf. 9.2.1) or a secondary addition to the name, e.g. as a result of field divisions.

## 6. The name material

### Fuffy

Sc

Tidal cliff where the foam of the sea can be strong, located on the coast of Costa. A Sc adj. *fuffy* means ‘short-tempered’ but I would rather suggest a *y*-suffix formation (see 8.2.1) from *fuff* v. ‘emit puffs of smoke or vapour’ (CSD: 217). This seems to be a precise description of the locality.

### Gaifers

ON

*Gaifers* Firth 1920.

A waterfall in Burn of Redland, F. The generic is no doubt ON *fors* m ‘waterfall, rapids’. The same element is found in names such as *Fursbreck* and *Fursan*. The interpretation of the specific is unclear.

### Gairsay /<sup>h</sup>gersi/

1. HY 44 22.

ON

*Gareksey* OrknSaga, *Gairsay* 1503 R.

An island formerly skatted as 13 pennyland.

2. A pond in Hackland.

T

The generic is ON *ey* f ‘island’. The specific appears to be a rare masculine name *Garekr*. The specific of *Gjerstad* (a *Gerixstadvn* 1398) in Bamble, Buskerud is thought to contain a similar name *Geirrekr* (NG 7: 55), which is also recorded once from Iceland. Could the name *Geirrekr/Garekr* possibly be of Celtic origin? Ó Corráin & Maguire (1990: 110) have *Gerróc* /garo:g/ (cf. *Daminsay* above). Gairsay was once the seat of Svein Ásleivarson (cf. *Langskail* 6.1), and the use of Norn in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is recorded, see 2.2.2. The Hackland name refers to a pond where the Gairsay people cut their peats. The motivation for the name transfer is thus evident.

### Gaither Lea /<sup>h</sup>giðərli/

A field in Upper Cottascarth, R. In its present form, the name appears to be a Sc compound of *gaither* ‘gather’ (CSD: 223) and *lea* ‘pasture, meadow’. Names are rarely coined with verbs as specifics, so the name may have undergone an adaptation. ON *hlíð* f ‘slope’ could easily be the original generic in this hill location. As for the specific, I cannot think of any satisfactory derivation.

**Gallow Slap**

Sk

An old gate, dial. *slap*, in Lettaly, F. The motivation for the name is uncertain. According to local tradition, a person was hanged here.

**Garoondi**

ON?

*Gaarondi* Ffn 1931.

Listed as one of Bridgend's fields in 1931. The name now denotes a road between Rennibister and the old Finstown road, following the burn to Bridgend. The interpretation is uncertain. The first element could be *garðr/garth* 'fence; farm; enclosed area', see 5.5.7. The second element could be a suffixed adj. *rund* (cf. names such as *Hulin rundi* < *hóllinn rundi* 'the round hill', Jakobsen 1921: 678).

**Gate of Bull**

Sc

*Gate of Bull* 1841 ComR.

A gate in Gorseness, R. The generic and of-periphrasis are Sc. The specific may be the farm-name *Bu* rather than *bull* 'ox'. Gates are often named after farms, and *Bull* is a common spelling for *Bu*.

**Gayro of the Wart**

Sc

*Gayro of the Wart* Firth 1920.

Strip of grass near the Wart of Redland, F. The periphrastic formation is Sc. This means that the generic is the dialect loan word *geyro* (OrknN: 53) < ON *geiri* m 'triangular piece'. *Geyro* denotes an odd piece of land or a green spot among heather', the latter seems appropriate here. *-o* is a local suffix, see 8.2.1.

**The Geo /qjo/**

A hollow behind the houses of Gitterpitten, R. Though the name is spelled and pronounced as *geo* 'narrow inlet', the semantic content is more similar to that of *Goe* below (cf. see 5.5.8). There is also an Norw word *gjota* 'longish hollow', applied to narrow stretches of mire or meadow (NO: 223, Jenstad and Dalen 1997: 91). This fits in semantically but presupposes the loss of a syllable and thus remains purely hypothetical.

## 6. *The name material*

### **Geo /gjo, djo/ of ...**

Sc

All of the following names are Sc formations with *of*-periphrasis. For this reason, we are safe in assuming that the generic is the dialect loan word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ rather than the original ON word *gjá* (see 5.5.8. Indications of linguistic origin are discussed in 7.1).

#### **1) Geo of Backber**

Evie. HY 32 28.

In the dialect *backber* means ‘port side of a boat’ (OrknN: 8). Alternatively, the specific may be an ON compound of *bakki* m ‘slope; shore’ see 5.5.1) and *berg* n ‘rock’.

#### **2) Geo of Dykesend**

An inlet SE of Haafs Hellia, E. Sk. *Dykesend* is a Sc compound ‘end of a fence or wall’.

#### **3) Geo /djo, gjo/ of Longa Tonga**

Variation between /dj/ and /gj/ is discussed in 8.1.2.5. The specific is a place-name *Longa Tonga* (see below).

#### **4) Geo of Pass**

An inlet NW of Arsdale, The specific is probably Sc *pass* ‘passage’ (CSD: 476).

#### **5) Geo of Rivacliff**

An inlet E of Geo of Backber, E, supposedly a favourite haunt for mermaids. The second element of the specific could be Sc *cliff* but as the first element appears to be a case form of ON *rif* n ‘reef’ (cf. *Riff* in Rendall, OFN 123) or *rifa* f ‘crack, crevice’, the latter element is most likely ON as well. This means that *cliff* could be construed as an adaptation of ON *klyf*. This denotes ‘a packsaddle from which good were hung on either side of the horse’s back’ (cf. *klibber*, OrknN: 89), but may also have been used in a more general sense ‘a cleft’, as suggested by Jakobsen (1936: 67). *Rivacliff* may have been the original name of the inlet and *Geo of* a later epexegetic addition inspired by other *Geo of*-names nearby.

#### **6) Geo of Smoo /smø, smu/**

An inlet below Burgar, E. The specific is possibly derived from ON *smuga* f ‘narrow passage’. Cf. *Smoo Field* below. In Shetland place-

names *smuga*, *smoga* denote tracks or narrow roads (Jakobsen 1936: 99).

**7) Geo of Verron** /'vɛrɔn/

An inlet below Costa Hill, E. The specific is another place-name, see *Verron* below.

**Geordiestoon, Upper and Lower**

Sc

Two fields in Rendall township, separated by Gorseness Road. The generic *toon* is discussed in 5.5.15. The specific is a Sc pet form of *George*. The specifying elements *Upper* and *Lower* are Sc as well.

**Georth, Diorth**

Name of a field shared by several farms in Hackland, R. Also a field belonging to Brettobreck (spelt *Diorth*). There are also a number of localities in Rousay called *Goard* /'gjøɔr, 'djøɔr/ (Marwick 1995: 53). Variation between /gj/ and /dj/ is a regular feature in the dial., see 8.1.2.5. The names seem to be coined from the dial. term *gord* 'a field not worth cultivating, but affording good pasture' (OrknN: 59). Cf. Norw *jorde* n. This is a general term for field but a cultivated field is normally referred to as *åker*.

**Gilliestoon**

Sc

Field below Breck House, R. The generic is *toon*, see 5.5.15, cf. *Geordiestoon*. The specific is probably *Gillies*, recorded both as a masculine name and a family name (Black 1974: 306). *Gillie* is also a general Sc term for 'lad, youth' (CSD: 232).

**Goe/Geo, The** /gjø, djø/

*Goe* 1857 OA D 7/3/55 (denotes a house).

A burn flowing past Bu and Puldrite, R. The burn runs quite deep at some points, ca. 8 feet. There are two localities named *Gue* /gjø/ in Rousay likewise situated near burns running deep (Marwick 1995: 54). Thus, the usage as well as the pronunciation deviates from the coastal geos or inlets, and the origin is hardly the same. A connection with Norw *juv* n 'a cleft or cavity' would be semantically appropriate here, cf. 5.5.8. Cf. *Goesback*, *Millgeos* and *North Gue* be-

## 6. *The name material*

low. The element has probably been borrowed into the dialect, which means that the formation may be Sc.

### **Goesbacks** /'gjøsbak/

ON?

A field near Burn of Pow in Costa, E. The generic is ON *bakki* m, which may denote the strip of land close to a burn, see 5.5.1. For a discussion of the specific /gjø/, see *Goe* above and 5.5.8.

### **Golback**

*Golback* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Breckan, F. The linguistic origin is uncertain. The generic *back* is ambiguous, see 5.5.1. The specific is also uncertain. It could possibly be Sc *gowl* 'narrow pass between hills' CSD 243, cf. ShNorn: 259) or *gold*, which may refer to fertile land. For the development *ld* > *l* see 8.1.2.8.

### **Goldero** /'gøldro, 'gøldəro/

There is some confusion pertaining to this name and *Gallowha*. According to one informant *Goldero* is the top of the ridge near Gallowha, according to E. Marwick (OA D 31/1/3/2) an alternative name for Gallowha. In the 1841 census, the house is called *Golderhall*, which seems to be a merger of *Goldero* and *Gallowha*. In local tradition, *Goldero* is related to the owner of the house, she "goldered, or was a *goldro*", i.e. she laughed and talked loudly (*golder* 'loud outburst of talk etc.' OrknN: 58). This is highly speculative but considering all the uncertain points, no well-founded interpretation can be suggested.

### **Golmeadows**

Sc

*Golmeadows* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Horroldshay, F. The generic *meadow* proves this to be a Sc formation. Interpretations of the specific are suggested under *Golback* above.

### **Gorseness Hill**

Sc

Rendall. HY 40 20.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A Sc formation coined with the generic *hill* and the tunship-name *Gorseness* as its specific.

**Grandie** /'grandi/

A field in Aikerness, E. The origin is ultimately ON *grandi* m 'a spit of beach running out into the sea'. The word was borrowed into the dialect (see *grand*, OrknN: 60), so the language of formation cannot be established. The ending may well be the Sc suffix *-ie* (8.2.1).

**Gravan** /'gravən/

ON

*Gravan* 1653, *Graven* 1726 Traill, *Gravin* 1841 ComR, 1847.

*David Rendall alias Graven*, Orkney Court Books 1614–15.

A field belonging to Hall of Rendall. The name once applied to a house, located close to the present Breck House on a map from 1847 (OA D 7/3/59). The origin is ON *gröfin* f def. 'the hollow'. This would appear to have been a nature name from the outset, which means we may have a case of double transfer (cf. *Trundigar* 6.1).

**Greenland**

Sc?

Field up the hill in Rendall tunship. Both elements *green* and *land* are current in Sc, which means the name may be a primary compound denoting an area of green grass among heather. Considering that *land* is an unusual element in Sc field-names, it seems quite likely that whoever coined the name also had the island-name *Greenland* in his mind when choosing this element rather than *Green Brae* or *Green Park* (cf. 7.2.3).

**Green Whysteethe**

Sc?

*Green Whysteethe* Ffn 1931.

One of Barebrecks' fields. *Steethe* denotes 'a foundation of some structure' (OrknN: 177). *Why-* reflects the traditional pronunciation /mi/ of *quoy* (see 5.5.13). *Whysteethe* would seem to denote the foundations of an enclosure or a place where an enclosure has stood. The specific *green* suggests Sc formation.

**Greeny Grip**

Sc



## 6. *The name material*

*Greeny Grip* Firth 1920.

A small burn in Redland, F, partly running underground (cf. *Pelkie's Hole* below). In the dialect, *grip* denotes a 'small burn' and *greeny* appears to be a *-y*-derivation of the adj. *green*, see 8.2.1.

**Gressy Geo** /'krisi djo/

Sc

*Cressy Geo* 1897 OSNB.

Stretch of coast below Knowe of Stenso, E. The specific is *geo* 'narrow inlet' (5.5.8). Owing to the alternating forms, we cannot tell whether the specific is *grassy* or a *y*-derivation (see 8.2.1) of *cress* 'crease, fold'. The latter would tie in with the pronunciation and the OSNB form.

**Grimis Dale**

ON

Rendall. HY 38 21.

*Grimis Dale* 1882 OS.

A wide valley N of Ellibister. The name appears to be an ON coin-ing *Grimsdalr*, containing the generic *dalr* m 'valley'. *Grim(s)-* is an amazingly common place-name element both in Orkney and Norway. It is usually derived from a river-name *Gríma* or a personal name *Grím* or *Gríma* (NSL: 182, *Grimstad*).

**Grip of Loonan**

Sc

A small burn in the SW end of Loch of Swannay, E. *Grip* denotes a small burn in the dial. (Marwick 1970: 28, cf. *gruip* 'drainage ditch' CSD: 250). *Loonan* (see below) is the name of the area.

**Grit Ness** /'grt nes/

Evie. HY 36 26.

A small rocky headland W of Sands of Evie. The formation language is uncertain, as it is uncertain whether *ness* was borrowed into the dialect (see Saltness below and 5.4). In a Sc formation, the specific could be *grit* 'bits of stone'. However, the name could also be an original ON compound *Grjótnes* 'stone headland'. Lexical substitution of *grit* for ON *grjót* may lie behind the present form.

**Grunshall**

Evie. HY 39 25.

*Grunshall* 1897 OSNB.

A lower hill N of Dwarmo. The generic appears to be the same as in *Vishall*, interpreted by H. Marwick as ON *hóll* m ‘low, rounded hill’. I have suggested that it may be ON *hjallr* ‘shelf’, see discussion under *Vishall* below. If this is the case, the specific is most likely the ON adj. *grænn* ‘green’

**Gurness** /ˈɡʌrnəs/

ON

Evie. HY 38 26.

*Muckle Gurness* 1897 OSNB.

Two fields between Point of Hellia and Broch of Gurness are called *Muckle and Little Gurness*. The generic of *Gurness* is ON *nes* n ‘headland. The specific is most likely to be the ON adj. *grænn* ‘green’. Metathesis of *r* is rather common, cf. 8.1.2.9. The forms with the reciprocating elements *muckle* and *little* are probably Sc formations (see 9.3.3.), though an adaptation of the ON cognates, *mikill* and *lítinn* cannot be ruled out completely.

**Haafs Hellia** /ˈhafs,heɪljə/

ON?

Evie. HY 31 30.

Rocks below Costa Head. The generic is ON *hella* f ‘flat rock’, cf. *Fisk Hellya*. *Haf*, *haaf* is the term for ‘deep sea’ both in ON and the Orkney dialect. Haafs Hellia opens up towards the Atlantic Ocean and the sea is probably very deep under the steep Costa Hill.

**Haagar**

ON

*Haagar* Ffn 1931.

Field in Grimbister, F. The postvocalic *g* (cf. *Haan* below) suggests that this name is a compound, with *gar(th)* as its specific (cf. 5.5.7). The specific could be ON *hagi* m ‘enclosed pasture’. If the specific is actually ON, we may assume ON formation, see 7.1.

**Haan**

ON?

*Haan* Ffn 1931.

6. *The name material*

Field belonging to Geo, F. Possibly from ON *haginn* m def. ‘the enclosed pasture’. Intervocalic *g* is regularly vocalised or lost in the dialect (cf. *Hayon*, 8.1.2.1).

**Haggis Brae** /<sup>h</sup>agis ,bre:/ Sc

A pasture in Crook, R. The generic is Sc *brae*. The specific is puzzling. The traditional Sc dish *haggis* seems unlikely as a place-name element, and ON *hagi* m ‘enclosed pasture’ does otherwise not retain its intervocalic *g* (cf. *Haan*, *Hayon*). Either of the family names *Haggie* or *Haggis* (Black 1974: 335) could be suggested.

**Hagock** /<sup>h</sup>agɔk/ Sc?

Evie. HY 38 25.

*Hagock* 1897 OSNB.

OSNB describes Hagock as an “inlet with shingle and boulders”. The same name is applied to the adjacent field. The origin is obscure, but intervocalic *g* and the suffix *-ck* suggests Sc formation (see 8.1.2.1 and 8.2.1).

**Hallack, The** Sc

According to G. Lamb (personal comment), the name denotes a mound near Brig of Firth. The formation appears to be Sc, with the Sc def. art. and *-ck*-suffix (cf. *Hagock* above. The suffix is otherwise rare in West Mainland, see 8.2.1). ON *hallr* m ‘slope’ could possibly be the original form, to which the Sc elements have been added.

**Hallans, The** /<sup>h</sup>alans/ ON?

A field in Settiscarth. Some form of ON *hallr* m or *hallan* f ‘slope’ appears to be the core of the name, very appropriate in this tunship surrounded by steep hillsides. The name appears to contain reflexes of an ON def. art. as well as Sc articles (cf. *Dishans* and 9.3.1).

**Hammar, The Hammer** /<sup>h</sup>amər/

*Hamyrr within ye dyks of Randell* 1503 (a document in H Marwick’s copy REO), *Hammer* 1619 Sas.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A steep field near Breck of Rendall, the upper part of which is a vertical cliff, partly overgrown. ON *hamarr* m refers to crags or masses of stone jutting out from hills, and in this sense the word seems to have been borrowed into the dialect (OrknN: 67). Here the def. art appears to be secondary (see 9.3.1), and it is not used consistently by the local informant, so the formation may be ON.

**Hammar(s) Hill** /'hamərʃ,il/, /'hamər hil/ Sc?

Evie. HY 38 22.

*Hammer Hill* 1846 ComE, *Hamar Hill* 1882 OS.

A rather steep hill marking the border to Rendall. The present form is Sc, with the generic *hill*. The generic is ON *hamarr* m or Orkn dial. *hammer* 'a crag'. A number of names in the area contain the element *hammer*, which may have been the original name of the hill.

**Hammers of Syradale**

Sc

Firth. HY 35 16.

*Hammers of Syradale* 1848 ComF. *Hamars of Syraday* Firth 1920.

The periphrastic formation is Sc, suggesting that the generic is the dial. loan word *hammer* (OrknN: 67). The specific is a valley name *Syradale* (see below).

**Hammera Moa** /'hamərə moə/

ON

Said to be a locality in Costa, E. Appears to be compounded of a case form of ON *hamarr* m 'a crag', possibly gen. pl. *hamra*, and *mó(r)* (see 5.5.12). Cf. *Hammar* above.

**Hang the Cow** /'haŋlaku/

*Hang-the-cow* 1846 ComE.

A point on the border between Rendall and Evie. The written form definitely makes no sense as a place-name and has to be some kind of lexical adaptation of an opaque name (cf. 9.3.2.2). The reconstruction of such names can only be tentative, but semantically, a generic *kollr* m 'rounded hill' would be descriptive of the locality. This might be the original generic. The hill is steep and the specific could possibly be related to *hanga* v 'to hang'.

## 6. The name material

### Harpy Taing

Sc?

Rendall. HY 42 17.

Stony point E of Crookness. The generic is ON *tangi* ‘point of land’ or the dial. loan word *taing* (OrknN: 188 *teeng*). In Eng *harpy* may denote the marsh harrier (*falco aeruginosus*) but this usage is not recorded in CSD. Rather, the specific may be a *y*-derivation of Sc *harp* or perhaps less likely its ON cognate *harpa* (see 8.2.1). *Harp* in place-names may refer to the musical instrument or objects that may be compared to a harp (Smith 1956: 240), inter alia implements for catching fish. Cf. *Nose of the Harper* below.

### Hass /ha:s/

A valley in the hills above Lowrie’s Water, E. Either from Sc *hass* or ON *hals* m ‘neck’ with dropped *l*. However, *hals* is a rather frequent place-name element in Scandinavia, denoting narrow passages or constrictions, whereas *hass* is more or less restricted to Orkney (CSD: 272). This may suggest ON origin, or formation according to an ON pattern. *Upper Hass* is a Sc formation with a Sc specifying element (see 9.3.3).

### Hay Green

Sc

Fields in Gitterpitten and Quoyhenry, R. Transparent Sc formations.

### Heather of Blate /’ə bləit/

Sc

E. I have no information about the locality. A Sc periphrastic formation containing the generic *heather*. The specific is probably dial. *blett* /blət/ ‘spot’ (OrknN: 15), cf. *Blaten* above. The pronunciation would seem to be influenced by the written form.

### Headlabreck /’hɛdləbrɛk/

A water-logged field in Costa, E. As for the generic, see 5.5.4. The specific is uncertain. ON *hella* ‘flat rock’ does not fit the location and seems unlikely on linguistic grounds. In Orkney, *ll* is liable to

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palatalisation e.g. *Fisk Hellia* /'heljə/, rather than segmentation > *dl* as in SW Norway and Shetland (Hægstad 1900: 65). (Cf. *Heddle* < ON *Heydalr* 'hey valley', however).

### **Hen of Gairsay**

Sc

Rendall. HY 45 21.

*Hen of Gersa* 1662 Blaeu.

A headland connected to Gairsay by a narrow isthmus. According to CSD, *hen* in Sc often replaces Eng *chicken*. It is not noted as a place-name element, but obviously denotes a smaller locality next to a larger one, just like *kalv* 'calf' in Norw names (NSL: 250). This is the oldest record of *of*-periphrasis in Rendall.

### **Hilldoor**

Sc

A cave in Costa, E. A Sc formation 'door in the hill'.

### **Hill of ...**

Sc

The following names are all Sc periphrastic formations with a Sc generic.

#### **1. H. of Heddle**

Firth. HY 35 13.

*Hill of Heddle* 1848 ComF.

A hill between Finstown and Heddle.

The farm name *Heddle* (see 6.1) functions as a specific.

#### **2. H. of Huntis**

Evie. HY 36 23.

*Hill of High Huntos* 1846 ComE.

A hill above Redland. From the present form, the specific appears to be Sc *huntis* = 'hunt' (CSD: 305), also the name of a house (*Huntis* 6.1 above). However, the 1846 form could be interpreted as an ON compound *Hundabúfa* 'dogs' mound', cf. *Ernie Tooin* above.

#### **3. H. of Lyradale**

Firth. HY 36 10.

*Hills of Lyradale* 1848 ComF.

A hill on the border to Stenness. A burn called *Burn of Lyradale* flows westwards. *Lyradale* is clearly an ON compound of *dalr* m

## 6. *The name material*

‘valley’ and a burn name *Leira* ‘the clayey one’, quite common in Norway. In Norway, river names in *-a* and valley names formed from the river name + *dalr* are the standard pattern, but such name pairs are quite rare in Orkney, cf. *Burn of..* above.

### **Hillquoy**

Sc

A field on a slope near the houses of Hackland, R. The Sc specific *hill* suggests a Sc formation with the dial. loan word *quoy* ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13).

### **Hillside**

Sc

*Hillside* 1841, 1882 OS.

A former field-name and originally the name of a croft NW of Quoyfree in Rendall. This far up on Gorseness Hill, the name is an appropriate description of the locality.

### **Himmon Hill** /<sup>h</sup>himən/

Sc

Evie. HY 32 27.

*Himmon Hill* 1897 OSNB = *Rimmin* 1846 ComE?

A border hill between Costa and Birsay. Are *Himmon* and *Rimmin* (below) actually variants of the same name, referring to the same locality? *Himmon Hill* is a Sc formation and possibly epexegetic, as there is no convincing Sc etymology for the specific. A connection with ON *himinn* m ‘heaven’ or perhaps more likely the Shetland word *himna* ‘mist, clouds’ (Jakobsen 1921: 295) could be suggested. (For the development *mn* > *m*, see 8.1.2.8 and OrknN: xlvi).

### **Hiveland**

Sc

*Hiveland* Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931.

A field in Binscarth. This is most likely a Sc compound of *hive* and *land*, i.e. the field or land where the beehives are placed.

### **Hoemin** /<sup>h</sup>ømən/

ON?

The name denotes a field north of Brecks of Scarataing, E, but also occurs three times in Harray. This suggests an appellative as a common origin. Since all the localities are pastures rather than ploughed

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

fields, ON \**höfning* f ‘(enclosed) pasture’ would seem to fit. Only the unsuffixed form *höfn* is recorded in ON, but *hamning* ‘pasture’ is attested in modern Norw dialects (NO 261).

### **Hoisteramera**

A stretch of rocky coast below Urigar, E. Consequently, the generic cannot be ON *mýrr* f ‘marsh, mire’. The first element could be Sc *hoist*, whereas the rest of the name remains obscure.

### **Holm of...**

Sc

*Holm* in Orkney is clearly used in its ON sense ‘islet’, rather than the Sc sense ‘low-lying land beside a river’ (cf. *howm* CSD: 300 f.).

#### **1) H. of Grimbister**

Firth. HY 37 13.

*Holm of Grimbuster* 1664 Ch.

An inhabited islet, connected to Grimbister by a causeway by low tide. This is one of the oldest recorded *of*-periphrases in the material. The specific is a place-name, as is the case for most of these constructions (see 7.1.3), here the rental farm name *Grimbister*.

#### **2) H. of Rendall**

Rendall. HY 42 20.

*Home Rondal* 1688 Collins.

A skerry on the coast near Hall of Rendall, hardly visible at high tide. The 1688 form is French. The loss of *l* in *holm* is common to Sc and Fr. The specific is the farm name Rendall.

### **The Holm Park**

Sc

Formerly a field close to the houses of Hall of Rendall. The formation is Sc, as is evident from the generic park and the def. article. A connection with *Holm of Rendall* seems unlikely. Rather, the name seems to be an unetymological rendering of *The Home Park* ‘the fields closest to the houses’. The vocalisation of *l* in the dialect (see 4.2.1.4 and 8.1.2.2) may cause a merger of *holm* and *home*.

### **Holt Geo**

ON?



## 6. *The name material*

A cleft and an inlet below Clook, E. The generic is *geo*, see 5.5.8. The specific would seem to be ON *holt* n in the sense ‘a rough, stony hill’. The element is rather common in Shetland place-names, (see *holter*, ShNorm: 221 f.). This may suggest an ON formation. Alternatively, the word may have been borrowed into the dialect and subsequently lost.

### **Horse**

Sc

In a list of names from Evie compiled by Gregor Lamb, *Horse* and *Mare* are described as “launching site[s] for inshore fishermen”. For the lack of additional information, no motivation for the names can be suggested.

### **Howea Breck**

ON?

Evie. HY 38 25.

*Howeabrake* 1897 OSNB.

Locality below Vishall. According to OSNB the name denotes a “knowe covered with rough pasture”. If the knoll is the original denotatum, the generic constitutes the first element of the name. The remainder could be a prepositional phrase, possibly ON *Haugr á brekku* ‘knoll on the slope’ (cf. 8.3.3. for prepositions in names). The final *a* in *Howea* may favour such an interpretation.

### **Howena Gruna**

ON

Evie. HY 33 26.

*Howenagruna* 1897 OSNB.

The name denotes a mound, possibly a broch ruin (OSNB), on the NW slope of Burgar Hill. It clearly derives from ON *Haugrinn græni*, literally ‘the knoll green’. Post-positioned specifics are by no means rare in Orkney place-names. This word order is unproblematic in ON, cf. 8.3.1.

### **Humo**

*Humo* 1848 ComF.

Denotes a ridge between Nabban and Ethergrass on the ComF map. The generic *mo(r)* refers to ridges of heather or mosses in a number

of Orkney names, see 5.5.12. The interpretation of the specific is uncertain, but possibly a form of the ON adj. *hór, hár* ‘high’.

### **Hundy Geo**

*Hundy Geo* 1897 OSNB.

On the coast below Costa Hill, E, close to *Dog Geo* (which may be a part translation). Both name elements are current in both ON and Orkney Scots (*geo* see 5.5.8). Because of the *y*-suffix, I would rather classify the present form as Sc. However, an adaptation of an ON form is also conceivable. In that case, the specific is ambiguous. *Hunn* and *hund* are rather common elements in coastal names in Norway. They are sometimes interpreted as indicating a good catch (see *Hunn* NSL: 227), sometimes as warning names, indicating shoals and skerries (*Hundhammeren* loc.cit.). Whatever the original etymology, the element may have been perceived as *hund* ‘dog’ by the users.

### **Hushasteeth**

ON?

A patch of natural grassland, and reportedly a former house-name in Costa. The same name occurs as a field-name in Hourston in Sandwick (Lamb 1993: 66). Possibly derived from *hesjastöðr* ‘a place for hay-drying racks’ and thus parallel to *Stakkasteethe* ‘a place (or actual foundations) for haystacks’. The modern Norw. word *hesja* ‘drying rack for hay’ is unrecorded in ON, however.

### **Iron** /<sup>h</sup>eiərən/

ON

A field in Aikerness, south of Sands of Evie. This rather common development of ON *eyrrin* f def. ‘the gravel(ly shore)’ is clearly a lexical adaptation to Sc *iron*, see 9.3.2.2. Cf. *Longayran* below. According to A. Marwick, /<sup>h</sup>eiərən/ also denotes a stony stretch of the shore further north in the parish. The word is borrowed into the dialect as *air*, *ayre* (OrknN: 3), but the reflex of the def. article in the *iron*-names shows the formation to be ON.

### **The Jib**

Sc

#### 6. *The name material*

A field belonging to Orquil, R. A Sc coining, the field is compared to a triangular type of sail.

#### **Jupadee**

ON

Firth. HY 36 13.

*Jewa Dale* 1846 mF.

A short, steep valley east of Hill of Heddle, probably derived from ON *djúpadalr* ‘deep valley’. *l* occasionally drops from *dalr*, which renders confusion between *dale* and *dýn* ‘filth, mud, ditch’ possible, cf. *Turrieday* (see 8.1.2.2). The name *Jupadee* found in different localities may have different etymologies, see 9.3.2.1.

#### **Kam, The** /<sup>h</sup>kam/

Sc

Fishermen’s name for Vishall, E. The Sc article suggests a Sc comparison name (cf. *kame* CSD: 333). The name is also found elsewhere in the Northern Isles and in Mainland Scotland (and its cognate *kam* in Norw. mountain-names). Jakobsen (1901: 209) describes how at sea Shetland fishermen avoided using the common names. This seems to be an Orkney parallel.

#### **Keek** /kik/

Sc

*Keek* ca. 1860 tunship map (OA D 7/3/21).

Field on the western slopes of Vishall, E, named after a former house. There was also a *Keek-up-under* (OA D 31/1/3/2). E. Marwick notes a palatal pronunciation “kjik”. The name appears to be a Sc formation from *keek* ‘peep’. *Keek-up-under* is an unusual prepositional name (see 8.3.3), as it does not name the locality the house lies under. It could possibly be an elliptic form of *\*Keek up under Vishall?*

#### **Keelylang (Hill)**

ON (Sc)

Firth. HY 37 10.

*Keelylang* 1846 mF.

The highest part of the ridge forming the border to Stenness. The origin would appear to be an ON comparative name, *Kjölrinn langi* ‘the long keel’. As for the postpositional specific, see 8.3.1. *Kjøl*

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denotes longish elevations in a number of Norwegian names (NSL: 256). Here, the form is adapted or translated into Sc *keel*, the former is possible since the Sc and Norw. forms are rather close (see 9.2.2 and 9.2.4). On modern OS maps, *hill* is added to the original name. The epexegetic form should be regarded as a Sc formation (see 9.3.3).

### **Kews, North and South**

Sc

Evie. HY 36 23.

*Kews* 1897 OSBN.

Low hills. The reciprocal affixes and the plural ending testify that the above forms, collected from OS maps, are Sc. However, Ernest Marwick gives *Kuwo* and *Nort' Kuwo*, pronounced /kuo/ or /kjuo/. This is possibly derived from ON *kífr* m 'lower, rounded hill'. The final *-o* is probably to be interpreted as the dialect suffix *-o*, see 8.2.1.

### **Kirkbreck**

*Kirkbreck* Ffn 1931.

Field in Binscarth, F. The language of formation cannot be ascertained, since both elements are found in Norwegian as well as in Orkney Scots (see 7.1.4). *Breck* is a local loan, see 5.5.4.

### **Kirk Geo** /<sup>h</sup>kɪrˌgjo/

A narrow inlet below the ruin of v *Peter's Kirk* in Costa, E. As for the formation language, this name is a parallel to *Kirkbreck* above. Geo < ON *gjá* has become the standard term for narrow inlet (5.5.8).

### **Kirk of Noransdale**

Sc

*Kirk of Norrisdale* 1897 OSBN.

According to Ernest Marwick (OA D 31/1/3/2), the name denotes a ruin on a small islet in Burn of Woodwick, E. There is a local tradition of a chapel here, though the rather isolated location renders this improbable. The periphrastic composition is Sc, but the specific *Noransdale* may be an old ON name for the valley. It seems to include the elements *norðr* 'north' and *dalr* m 'valley' (see 5.4).

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### **Kirk Sheed**

Sc

*Kirk Sheed* Firth 1920.

A field near the burn of Redland, F. In this case, the formation language is clear (cf. Kirkbreck and Kirk Geo above) since the generic sheed or sheet ‘field division’ is only known from Sc. There are local traditions about a chapel, but *Kirk*-localities may also refer to land owned by the church.

### **Knocking Stane Geo** /stɛn/

Sc

Coastal location in Evie, described by G. Lamb as a “natural recess, (where corn was milled?)”. *Knocking-stane* denotes ‘a mortar for cereals’ (Jamieson 1867: 314). This should clearly be seen as a comparison, perhaps for a place where stones were ground by the waves (cf. *The Kirn*, applied to a number of seaside locations). The specific is Sc, thus the generic can be assumed to be the loan word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’, see 5.5.8.

### **Knowe of ..**

Sc

Sc. *knowe* ‘knoll’ with vocalisation of *ll* (see 4.2.1.4) is a very common place-name element, denoting tumuli as well as natural mounds. The ON cognate is *haugr*, which develops into *how(e)* in Orkney. As a generic, the form is sometimes reduced to *-o*. In individual names, this cannot be kept apart from the dialect suffix *-o* (see 8.2.1). Whatever the original etymology, *-o* has become something of a standard ending in the knowe-names, suggesting that analogy may also have played its part.

#### **1) K. of Bakkan Swarto**

*Knowe of Bakkan-Swarto* Firth 1920.

Firth describes this as a natural mound in the uppermost part of the valley of Burn of Redland. The specific is an ON name *bakkinn svarti* ‘the black hill’ or ‘the black burn bank’ (see 5.5.1). The specific is suffixed, cf. the discussion in 8.3.1. Here, the final *-o* is clearly an adaptation. The ON form is either *-i* or *-a* (see 8.2)

#### **2) K. of Desso** /'deso/

A mound in Aikerness, south of Sands of Evie. The specific could be the dialect word *diss* /dis/ ‘a small stack’ (OrknN: 31) or ON *dys* ‘tumulus’. Cf. *Burn of Desso* above and *Knowe of Dishro* below.

**3) K. of Dishro, Dishero** /ˈdiʃro/

Rendall. HY 42 19.

*Knowe of Dishero* 1882 OS.

A broch ruin on the shore north of Aittit. The specific may contain a form of ON *dys* f ‘tumulus, stone heap’, cf. Marwick’s interpretation of *Disher* in North Ronaldsay (OFN: 2). As for the final *-o*, see under *Knowe of..* above.

**4) K. of Evrigert**

Evie. HY 37 22.

A mound in the valley of Woodwick. The specific seems to reflect ON *øfragarðr* or *-gerði* ‘the upper farm’ or ‘the upper enclosure’, cf. *Styes of Ervigjar* below.

**5) K. of Grugar**

Evie. HY 35 27.

*Knowe of Ryo* 1897 OSNB.

A broch ruin on the shore below Grugar. The specific in the present form is the farm name *Grugar* (6.1). The interpretation of *Ryo* in the older form is uncertain. It could be Sc *rye*, but this element is not found in other Orkney names. The names *Rya* and *Ryen* in Norway may be of different origin, but one possible derivation is a dialect word *ry* f ‘stony, infertile, bare ground’ (NSL 372).

**6) K. of Smersso**

*Knowe of Smersso* 1897 OSNB.

Described in OSNB as mounds, probably tumuli, west of Loch of Vastray. *Smersso* appears to be the original name of the mound(s). The final part would seem to be genitive *s* + *haugr* ‘mound’ (for the development into *-o*, see *Knowe of..* above). The specific could be ON *smjör* ‘butter’, which denotes favourable localities in Norw. names or possibly a plant name compounded with *smör-*.

**7) K. of Steeringlo**

*Knowe of Steeringlo* Firth 1920.

A broch ruin in Firth, called *Broch of Redland* on OS maps. Its location, inland on swampy grounds, is unusual. *Steeringlo* is a com-

## 6. The name material

pound name, probably containing ON *stí* f ‘stye, enclosure’ as a generic and a postpositional specific (see 8.3.1). This could be the adj. *hringlaga* ‘ring-shaped’, found in Icelandic, thus ‘the ring-shaped enclosure’. In 1883, the outer diameter of the broch walls was ca. 45 feet and the walls were about 15 feet tall. The structures may have been used as sties, but were eventually broken down and the stones were used for the building of stone fences (Firth 1974: 4).

### 8) K. of Stenso

Evie. HY 36 26.

A mound, probably a broch ruin. The specific is *Steinshaugr* see *Stenso* 6.1 above.

### 9) K. of Uro, Euro /'juro/

Rendall. HY 41 18.

*Knowes of Euro* 1882 OS.

The name denotes a group of tumuli southwest of Gorseness. The origin of the specific is uncertain, possibly ON *urð* f ‘a heap of rock fragments’ (normally which have fallen off a steep cliff side). Cf. Shetland *urd* (ShNorn:1006).

### Lamasqueen /'lamaskwin/

ON

A field between the houses of Aikerness and Broch of Gurness, E. The generic is ON f def. *kvín* ‘the enclosure’ (cf. 5.5.13). Thus, the specific is likely to be the genitive of ON *lamb* n ‘lamb’ (cf. 7.1). The genitive morpheme is *-s* in singular and *-a* in the plural (cf. *Lamaquoy* in Harray) but in this name the two seem to have combined. Could this be due to lexical adaptation (see 9.3.2.2) to Sc *lammas* ‘harvest festival’, in former times a major event in Orkney?

### Lamesquoy

*Lamesquoy* Ffn 1868, Ffn 1931.

A field in Binscarth, F. For an interpretation, see *Lamasqueen* above. The language of formation cannot be determined, since both elements are found in ON as well as in Orkney Sc.

### Lamira

ON

*Lamira* Ffn 1931.

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A field in Binscarth, F. An ON formation containing the definite form *mýrrin* ‘the marsh’ as its generic. The specific could be *hlaða* f ‘originally a stack or store ; eventually a shed or house built above it’ (Fritzner add.: 156).

**Laybreck**

Sc

*Laybreck* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Breckan, F. Probably a Sc formation with the loan word *breck* (5.5.4) as its generic, since the specific appears to be the Sc term *lay* ‘land left untilled’ (CSD: 362 *lea* 1).

**Lee Hellia**

ON

*Leehelya* 1897 OSNB.

A point near Knowe of Grugar, E. The generic is ON *hella* f ‘flat rock’, cf. *Fisk Hellya* above. There is a rather steep slope down towards the sea, and the specific could well be ON *hlið* f ‘slope’. In coastal locations, *lee* also seems to denote a sheltered haven, see the discussion under *The Leeans* in Rendall below.

**The Leeans** /ˈliəns/

*The Leeans* 1882 OS.

A sheltered shingly beach between two ridges of rock on the south side of Woodwick Bay, R. In a number of cases *lee* denotes flat coastal locations, where an interpretation *hlið* f ‘slope’ is clearly inappropriate. These names could contain Sc *lee* ‘shelter’, but forms like *Leean* seem to reflect ON def. article and an ON derivation should be preferred. ON *hlif*, *hlifð* f ‘shelter’ (see *liv*, *li(v)d* Jakobsen 1921: 480) may have merged with Sc *lee*, either by translation or phonetic adaptation. This causes a merger with names derived from ON *hlið* f ‘slope’ (cf. *Lee Hellia* above), as pointed out by Jakobsen (1932: 508 under *li*). Sc semantics may have played a role in the merging process, since hills also offer shelter from winds. The morphemic form is unusual, for in addition to the Sc def. art. and plural-s, the name seems to contain the ON def. art. -in, see 9.3.1.

**Leon**

ON



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Firth. HY 35 13.

*Leon* 1848 ComF.

A small, steep hill south of Binscarth. The origin is probably ON *hlíðin* f def. ‘the slope’, extended to denote all of the hill. *-on* is a common reflex of the ON def. art. and testifies to ON origin.

### **Leisburn**

Sc

*Leesburn* 1848 ComF, *Leisburn* Ffn 1931.

A field-name in 1931 and a house close to the mouth of Burn of Holland in 1848, though the generic suggests that the original denotatum was the burn. Unfortunately, I have no pronunciation for this name. It is thus impossible to determine whether the generic is *lay(s)* ‘land left untilled’ (CSD: 362 *lea* 1), *lee* ‘shelter’ as in *The Leeans* (see above) or dial. *ley* ‘creek in the rocks where creels or nets can be placed’ (ON: 106). The burn mouth may have provided a safe harbour but also a place for setting creels and nets.

### **Lerquoy, Upper & Lower**

Sc

Fields northwest of Upper Ellibister, R. *Quoy* ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13) is a loan in Orkney Sc, but the ON specific *leir* n ‘clay’ suggests that *Lerquoy* is an ON formation (cf. 7.1). With Sc reciprocating elements added, the present name forms should be seen as Sc formations, however. Cf. 9.3.3.

### **Leslie’s Ditch**

Sc

A field belonging to The Glebe. A Sc name, commemorating the minister Leslie, who had the ditch dug.

### **Lime Geo**

Sc?

*Lime Geo* 1897 OSNB.

An inlet east of Howea Breck. Probably a Sc formation with the loan word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ (5.5.8), though *lim* n is also the ON word for chalk or lime.

### **Limra**

A marshy field north of the road between Naban and Bridgend, F. The dialect words *limro*, *glimro* apply to the phosphorescence that

can be observed in certain kinds of atmosphere, esp. damp nights (OrknN: 106, 56).<sup>34</sup> This is also the local explanation of the name.

**Liscups, North & South**

Sc

*Liscups, North and South* Firth 1920.

Stretches of moss and grass in the hillside above Redland, F, where the sheep used to find shelter at night (Firth 1974: 3). *Kuppo* is a dialect word for a small hollow (OrknN: 100). This topographical sense of the word is unrecorded in Eng. and Sc dictionaries and seems to be of ON origin (cf. *Cuppin* 6.1), though the form of *Liscups* is purely Sc. The element *lee* may denote ‘slope’ or ‘shelter’, cf. *The Leeans* above. The medial *-s-* is unexpected, however.

**Livera Tongue**

Coastal feature northwest of Buckquoy, E. The generic is Sc *tongue* or its ON cognate *tunga*, denoting a tongue of land (cf. *Longa Taing* below). The final *-a* of the specific suggests ON case morphology and thus an ON formation. According to OSNB, the locality “derives its name from a kind of seaweed that is found on the rocks”. *Liverin* denotes a sticky or jellylike mass (ON: 108).

**Lobath**

Sc?

A field near the Burn of Millhouse, E. The name is possibly coined with the dialect word *loba* ‘coarse grass’ (OrknN: 108) with an added final dental. These can be observed in a number of names, though no satisfactory explanation can be suggested. See 8.2.2.2.

**Loch of Brockan** /'brɔkən, 'brɔgən/

Sc

Rendall. HY 39 19.

A loch in Isbister. The generic and periphrasis is Sc. The specific appears to be the name of a vanished farm, recorded as [*B*]rokin 1646, *Brocken* 1731 Traill. *Brokka* is a side form of ON *brekka*, recorded for three West Mainland locations as well as in Southern

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<sup>34</sup> Marwick’s etymology *ljómi* m ‘beam, ray’ does not seem convincing. The word is more likely to be related to ON *glim* n ‘shimmer, lustre’ or some variant form with *r* such as *glimmer* found both in Norw. and Sc.

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Norway and Shetland (Marwick 1970: 71, NGIncl.: 45, ShNorm: 78). The area is flat, and *breck/brock* cannot apply in its ON sense ‘slope’. Here the word must denote ‘poor, uncultivated land’ (5.5.4).

### **Lochs of Sketchan**

Sc

*Lochs of Sketchan* 1897 OSNB.

According to OSNB, the name denotes two small tidal lochs north-west of Bay of Woodwick, E. The present periphrastic form is Sc (see 8.3.2), but the specific is an older name of ON origin. The generic of *Sketchan* is *tjörn* ‘loch. The specific is uncertain, possibly *skeið* ‘road, track’. The initial *sk-* is a proof of ON origin.

### **Longayran** /lɔŋ,eiərɪn/

ON

A field in Walkerhouse, Woodwick, E. The origin is no doubt ON *Langeyrin* f def. ‘the long stretch of gravel’, cf. *Iron*. The shift *a* > *o* in *long* may be owing to the following nasal (see OrknN: xxxix, Hægstad 1900: 33) but could also be an adaptation to Sc.

### **Longa Taing**

ON

*Longa Taing* 1882 OS.

A long tongue of land jutting out in Woodwick Bay. *Taing*, *teeng* ‘point of land’ is borrowed into the dialect (OrknN: 188). Marwick remarks that the pronunciation in place-names is often /taŋ, tɔŋ/, but this is more likely a development of ON *tunga* f ‘tongue’. The *a*-ending of the specific reflects an ON case morpheme, which means that the origin is ON *langi tangi* m ‘long point’ (cf. 7.1).

### **Longa Tonga**

ON

A small, roundish tongue of land below Clook, E. See *Longa Taing* above for an interpretation. Both elements carry reflections of ON case morphemes so there can be no doubt about the formation.

### **Longiger**

ON

Rendall. HY 37 21.

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*Longiger* 1882 OS.

A valley with patches of pasture in the hills west of Ellibister. The origin appears to be ON, cf. the remnants of ON case marking in the specific, either *Langigarðr* or *Langagerði* ‘long enclosure’ or ‘long fence’. The name suggests that there were formerly fenced-in pastures in the valley. The ridge above is called *Breck of Longiger*.

**Longshead**

Sc

A field belonging to Iverhouse, R. The name is Sc, as can be seen from the generic *shead* (sheet, sheed) ‘divided field’ (ON: 153).

**Looma Shun** /<sup>l</sup>luməʃʌn/

ON

Evie. HY 36 23.

*Loch of Lumigan* 1846 ComE.

The name Loomachun in a variety of spellings is rather common in Orkney. It is compounded of ON *tjörn* f ‘loch’ and the bird’s term *lómr* m ‘red-throated diver’. The epexegetic form often found on maps is not in local use, see 9.3.3.

**Loonan** /<sup>l</sup>lu:nən/

ON

Evie. HY 31 26.

*Loonan* 1897 OSNB.

Marshy grasslands by the eastern end of Loch of Swannay. *Lun/loon* ‘meadow, marsh’ < Gael. *lòn* ‘low-lying, marshy area’ (MacLennan 1979: 213) is a rare example of a Celtic loan in Orkney Norse. The form is often *Loonan/Lunan* with the ON def. art., proving that the element was productive in ON, cf. 5.2 and 5.5.11

**Lowrie’s Water** /<sup>l</sup>lauris ,watər/

Sc

Evie HY 34 25.

*Lowrie’s Waters* 1846 ComE.

A loch in Burgar Hill. ON *vatn* means both ‘water’ and ‘lake’. The latter sense is not recorded for *water* in CSD, though it is also known from Caithness and Shetland (Jakobsen 1936: 114. Cf. *Peerie Water* below). Since the usage appears to be limited to the

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former ON sphere, it is reasonable to see it as a semantic extension of the Sc dialect based on the dual meaning of ON *vatn*. The formation is thus Sc. The specific is *Lowrie*, a family name that sporadically appears as a diminutive of *Laurence* (Black 1974: 418).

### **Lunan** /'lunən/

ON

*Lunan* 1848 ComF, Ffn 1868 and 1931, *Quoy of Lunnan* on maps from 1816 and ca. 1855.

A field in Binscarth, bordering on Stenness. See *Loonan* above.

### **Luthan** /'lʌθən/

ON?

Field, possibly a former croft in Costa, E. The etymology is uncertain, but as final /ən/ normally reflects the ON def. art., ON origin is most likely. One option is *hlutrinn* m def. 'the part or share', u > ʌ is a regular development. It could also be a parallel to Scanian *Ludan*, a traditional name for lean-to sheds and lopsided houses derived from *luta* v. 'lean', literally 'the leaning one'. The verb appears to have survived in the Shetland term *lødin* 'drooping corn' (ShNorn: 533). The interpretations are uncertain.

### **The Lydes of Orquil**

Sc

The area between Orquil and Hackland Hill, where there was formerly a road to Gorseness, R. The present periphrastic form is Sc but both elements are of ON origin. The specific is the farm name *Orquil*, the generic appears to be derived from ON *leið* f 'road, track'. *Lyde* in Firth and *The Lydes of Tingwall* are situated near roads between parishes, supporting the interpretation. However, the word appears to have undergone a semantic extension from the road itself to the area through which the road runs. Though unrecorded in dictionaries of Norn, *leið/lyde* was probably borrowed into the dialect, for it is rather common as a place-name element and often appears with a Sc plural marker and in Sc constructions.

### **The Lydes of Tingwall**

Sc

*Lydes of Tingwall* 1882 OS.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Heathery area between Hamars Hill and Hackland Hill, R. The generic is discussed under *The Lydes of Orquil* above. The main road to Tingwall and Evie runs across the area.

**Manse Field** Sc

A field in Rendall, close to *The Manse*.

**Manso Pow** Sc

E. An un-localised name from G. Lamb's list, apparently denoting a *pow* 'pool'. *Manso* is a diminutive form of *Magnus*.

**(The) Mark** ON?

Adjacent fields in Cott and Orquil, R, on the slopes of Enyas Hill. Two ON words suit the location: *mark* f '(border) mark' and *mörk* f 'uninhabited area between farms or parishes'. Since the latter is unrecorded in Orkney, 'border mark' seems to be the most plausible interpretation. Cf. the discussion under *Mirk* in 6.1. If we assume ON origin, the Sc def. art., used inconsistently, must be a secondary addition (see 9.3.1).

**Matman** ON?

*Matman* Ffn 1931.

The name denotes a patch of ground in the hillside sw. of Nabban, F. The generic appears to be the def. form of East Scand. *mad(e)* 'meadow'. Intervocalic or word-final *d* is regularly dropped. The word is not attested in ON or Norw. but occurs in Orkney place-names, e.g. as the specific in *Maeshowe*. The famous mound is situated close to the Loch of Harray in what must formerly have been a meadow. The specific is uncertain. ON *matr* 'food' does not seem convincing in the name of an outfield location. According to Jakobsen (1936: 81), *mat* < ON 'measure' (*mát* n?) signifies 'a border (mark)' in some Shetland names. *Matman* is situated on the border to St. Ola.

**Mavie** /'me:vi/, **Peedie Mavie** ON, Sc

*Mavie* 1897 OSNB.

## 6. *The name material*

The name presently denotes two fields (pasture) on the northwestern shore of Aikerness. However, the OSNB description “a small bay” suggests that the original denotatum is a bay, and the generic is probably ON *vík* f ‘bay’. *K* frequently develops into *g*, which may consequently drop (see 4.4.1.4, OrknN: xlv–xlvi). The specific is uncertain, possibly ON *mið*, dial *maithe* (OrknN: 112) ‘fishing-mark’. It could also be Scand. *mad(e)* ‘meadow’, which appears to enter into the name *Maeshowe*. The word is no longer current in Norw., but is found in Swedish and Danish. *Peedie* in *Peedie Mavie* is the dialect word for small, and the compound is Sc (see 9.3.3).

### **Meadow, Big & Peedie Meadow** /<sup>l</sup>pi:di ˌmidou/ Sc

Fields in Lower Bigging in Hackland and in Hall of Rendall. Sc formations. *Peedie* is the normal dialect term for ‘small’.

### **Meadow of Cruan** Sc

*Meadow of Cruan* Firth 1920

Field in the brecks or untilled land northeast of Redland, F. A Sc periphrastic formation with a Sc generic. The origin of the specific is ON *kriin* f def. ‘the enclosure, pen’, cf. 5.5.6. A number of names in the area contain this element: *Burn of Cruan*, *Moss of C.*, *Breck of C.*, which may be an older name for the area. On the other hand, all the names may have been coined with reference to the same pens.

### **Mello, The** /<sup>l</sup>melo/

Evie. HY 38 25.

A wide bay east of Aikerness. G. Lamb lists *Mell* as the name of a tidal shoal. There is no sand in the Aikerness bay, so the origin is rather ON *möl* ‘a bank of pebbles’ than *melr* m ‘a bank of sand’. In Shetland, *mel* and *mol* words have merged (ShNorn 545, 564). Either the word has been borrowed into the dialect or this name has been adapted by adding the Sc def. art. and an *o*-suffix (see 8.2.1).

### **Merchant’s Pier** Sc

A natural pier on the Evie coast. I was informed locally that salted meat was transported from this point to Kirkwall.

**Mid Tooin**

ON

Rendall. HY 35 20.

*Mid Tower* 1841 ComR.

This hill (221 m) marks the border between Harray, Rendall and Evie. The origin is ON *Miðþúfan* ‘the middle hill’. *Þúfa* f ‘hillock’ is a relatively common element in hill-names, frequently scotticised into *tower*. Cf. the 1841 map form, *Ernie Tooin* above and 9.3.2.

**Milahamer**

ON

*Milahamer* (or *-hamea*) Ffn 1868, *Milahawen* Ffn 1931.

A field in Binscarth, F. The origin is an on ON prepositional phrase, *Milli hamra* (or *hauga*) ‘between hammers (or mounds)’. The various spellings render a certain interpretation of the noun impossible. See 8.3.3 for a discussion of prepositional names.

**Mildoe**

Rendall. HY 36 20.

*Milldoe* 1882 OS.

A hill ridge. The name is probably derived from the dialect word *mildo* /<sup>h</sup>mildu/, which refers to ‘black peaty earth or mould’ (OrknN: 114), cf. *mylda* f ‘a kind of mould’ (NO 516). According to R. Bakie, there are areas without any vegetation at all.

**Millgeos**

*Milgeos* Ffn 1931.

Listed as a field in Binscarth in a list from 1931, no other information available. F. The generic is the dialect word *geo* < ON *gjá* ‘rift, chasm’. Here it is probably used in its “inland sense”, denoting a burn running in a deep rift (see 5.5.8). The generic can be *mill* or its ON cognate *mylna*. The linguistic origin is not certain, but the plural marker suggests a Sc formation. There is a mill near the mouth of the burn running through Binscarth.

**Mill Toomal** /<sub>1</sub>mil <sup>h</sup>tuməl/

Sc



## 6. *The name material*

A field north of the burn by Upper Ellibister, R. The generic is a dialect word *toomal* (various spellings), which denotes the privately owned field next to the houses (cf. 5.5.15. and OrknN: 192). The specific refers to a former mill. Carfin's rental lists a *Miln Towmal* in Woodwick. Its whereabouts is unknown today but the origin is obviously the same as for *Mill Toomal*.

### **Miravalhoi**

ON

*Miravalhoi* Ffn 1868.

A field in Binscarth, F. The final element could possibly be an unusual rendering of *quoy*, reflecting the traditional pronunciation /mi:/, see 5.5.13. The specific appears to be an ON compound with *mýrr* 'marsh' as its specific. The second element could be *völlr* m 'a field', thus possibly ON *Mýrrvallakví* 'marsh field enclosure'.

### **Moss of ..**

Sc

The following names are Scots periphrastic formations.

#### **1) M. of Broonalanga**

*Moss of Broonalanga* Firth 1920.

Peat moss in Redland, F, beside the main road to Rendall. The specific is an ON inverted compound, most likely a case form of *Brúin langa* f def. 'the long bridge'. Here, *brú* would seem to denote some sort of paving through the moss. Modern forms of original one-syllable feminine nouns ending in vowels often appear to reflect the ON def. accusative morpheme *-na*: *Queena* < *kvína*, *Broona* < *brúna*, *Linna* < *hlíðinna*.

#### **2) Moss of Cruan**

*Moss of Cruan* Firth 1920.

Peat moss in Redland, F. The specific is ON *krúin* f def., see *Meadow of Cruan* above.

#### **3) Moss of Hatamo**

Rendall. HY 39 21.

*Moss of Hatamo* 1882 OS.

A marshy area south-west of the Lydes of Tingwall. The specific may be an older name for the locality. The name element *mo* applied

to mosses and heather is discussed in 5.5.12. The specific is possibly *Hatta(r)*, gen. of *hötr* m ‘hat’. In Norw. names, *Hatt* often denotes hills, in this case the denotatum could be Hammers Hill.

#### 4) **M. of Hyon**

*Moss of Hyon* Firth 1920.

A peat moss in Redland, F. The specific appears to be of the same origin as *Hayon*, either ‘the moor’ or ‘the enclosed pasture’ (see 6.1). According to Firth (1974: 2), the mosses formerly provided pasture for the animals.

#### **Mossquoy**

Sc

A field in Hackland, R. This appears to be a Sc coining with the borrowed word *quoy* ‘enclosure’ see 5.5.13.

#### **Moyaface**

Sc

*Moyaface* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Estaben, F. The generic is Sc *face* ‘side’. The specific is opaque.

#### **Muckle Dyke**

Sc

A field belonging to Scotts Hall, Hackland, R. *Dyke* is the local common term for ‘a fence’. The specific is Sc *muckle* ‘big, large’ (CSD: 426f.). The name may refer to the former common tunship dyke around Hackland and Isbister (cf. Mackenzie’s chart, 1750).

#### **Muckle Geo** /ˈmʌkl ɡjo/

An inlet on the coast of Costa, E. The generic is ON *gjá* or the dialect loan word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’, see 5.5.8. The specific is Sc *muckle* ‘big’ or its ON cognate *mikill*. Thus, the meaning is clear, ‘the big inlet’, but the language of formation must remain open.

#### **Muckquoy, Brae of Muckquoy**

*Brae of Muckquoy* Firth 1920, *Muckquoy* Ffn 1931.

Formerly a good pasture in Estaben, F. Subsequent cultivation uncovered stone cists and burnt bones (Firth 1974: 5). *Brae of M.* is a secondary Sc formation. The specific is a field-name *Muckquoy*

## 6. *The name material*

‘manure enclosure’. Both elements are common to Orkney Sc and ON: *quoy*, see 5.5.13, ON *mykr* f = Sc ‘muck, manure’. This means that the language of formation cannot be determined.

### **Nethabooth**

ON

*Nethabooth* 1897 OSNB.

An area nw. of Ayrean, E. OSNB states that “an old shieling is said to have existed hereabouts”. The generic appears to be f *búð* ‘shed, small house’. The specific could be *neðri* ‘lower’, but the lack of *r* may even suggest a prepositional construction *neði í búðinni* see 8.3.3. The occurrence of a *búð* in the area is interesting and seems to support the existence of shielings in the area, cf. *Styes of Aikerness*.

### **Nisnaquoy**

ON?

*Nisnaquoy* 1897 OSNB.

OSNB describes the location as a rocky beach, obviously on the north side of Woodwick Bay, E. The specific appears to a case form of ON *nes* ‘tongue of land’, cf. *Nesna* in Norway of the same origin (NSL: 328). *Quoy* ‘enclosure’ is current in Orkney Sc but the ON specific suggests an ON formation with *kvi* (5.5.13).

### **Norquoy**

*Norquoy* Ffn 1931.

Field in Savil, F. The specific is either Sc *north* or its ON cognate *norð-*. The final dental regularly drops in ON (see 4.4.1.3) and tends to drop in Sc compounds (CSD: 443). The generic is *quoy* ‘enclosure’, of ON origin, but a common dialect word (5.5.13). This means that the formation language is uncertain.

### **North Green**

Sc

A transparent Sc name denoting a field north of Crook, R.

### **North Gue**

Sc

Rendall. HY 36 20.

*North Gue* 1882 OS.

A hillside valley. Northgue Burn flows in a rather deep ravine through its lower part. *Gue* seems to be an “inland variant” of *geo*

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(see 5.5.8), denoting burns running in deep rifts, and this seems appropriate here. The specific has a standard form, the traditional Orkney form is *nort*, see 8.1.2.3.

**North Sheed**

Sc

*North Sheed* Ffn 1931.

A field in Estaben, F. A Sc compound of *sheed* ‘divided field’ (OrknN: 153) and *north*.

**Nortie** /<sup>h</sup>nɔrti/

Presently a field, formerly a house north of Bruar, E. The first element is clearly *nort* ‘north’ or ON *norðr*, but the second element is ambiguous. It could be a Sc *y*-suffix (cf. 8.2.1.) or the reduced form of an ordinary generic.

**Nose of the Harper**

Sc

A cliff formation in Costa Craggs, E. The periphrastic constructions as well as the name elements are Sc, but the motivation for the name is opaque. *Nose* probably refers to a protrusion, and *harper* is a nomen agentis denoting someone using a harp or harp-shaped instrument, but who or what does it refer to? Is it the cliff itself or someone visiting the place? *Harp* may denote various harp-like implements, inter alia sieves and fishing tackle (Smith 1956: 240). Formerly, sea birds were caught in this area, and one wonders if harp could even refer to some sort of bird-catching instrument, even though this usage is not attested. (cf. *Harpy Taing* above).

**Noust of Aikerness**

Sc

*Noust of Aikerness* 1897 OSNB.

A stretch of shore northeast of the houses of Aikerness, E. The generic in this Sc periphrastic construction is the dialect word *noust* ‘boat stance’ (from ON *naust* ‘boat shed’, OrknN: 123). The specific is the farm and area name *Aikerness*, see 6.1.

**Number XI**

Sc

#### 6. *The name material*

A strip of moss in Hackland, R. The name relates to the number it acquired in the division of the commonty of Rendall in 1841.

**Oback** /<sup>h</sup>obak/

ON

Once a house, presently a plot of land, E. The name *Oback* from ON *á(r)bakki* ‘burn side’ is also found elsewhere in Orkney.

#### **Oirne**

*Oirne* Firth 1920.

A field near the burn below the houses in Redland, F. Neither etymology nor formation language is clear for this name. It might contain the dialect word *oires* ‘hard gravel, gravelly boulder clay under the upper stratum’ (Firth 1974: 151, POAS VIII: 37). The word would appear to be an irregular development of the synonymous ON word *aurr* (*au* > *oi* is not a normal development). The final *-ne* might reflect an ON def. article, but this presupposes an ON formation, tentatively *aurrin* ‘the gravel’. Uncertain.

#### **Ola Meadow**

Sc

*Ola Meadow* Carfin’s rental.

A field-name from Woodwick, E, listed in Carfin’s rental. The generic is Sc and transparent, the specific could be the masculine name *Ola*. *Ola* is the normal development of ON *Ólafir* in No, and it is familiar to Orcadians from the parish name *St. Ola*. Weak nouns do not take genitive-*s* in ON (see 8.2), but since the formation is Sc, with a Sc generic, the lack of genitive marking is unexpected. Alternatively, *Ola* could be the same as Harray *Olath*. I have suggested this to be a compound of *á f* ‘burn’ and *hlað n* ‘stack, a heap of sth’, or possibly the related word *hlaða f* ‘hay storage shed’. Final *ð* regularly drops, see 4.4.1.3.

#### **Onyo**

*Onyo* Ffn 1931.

A field in Heddle. In Shetland, *on(n)* refers to ‘a strip of a field: a piece of land dug or reaped by a labourer in one day’ (ShNorn 633) and appears repeatedly in field-names. Jakobsen derives *on(n)* from

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the synonymous mod. Scand. word *one* (Torp 1963: 475) but the ON *önn* ‘(hard) work, bustle’ might also be involved. The spelling *-ny-* reflects palatalisation, which presupposes original *nn* (long *n*, cf. 4.2.1.4). The final *-o* is a Sc suffix (see 8.2.1).

**Ouse, The /øʊs/** Sc

Firth. HY 35 14.

*Ouse of Firth* 1848 ComF.

The name is coined with the dialect word *oyce*, *ouse* < ON *óss* m ‘burn mouth’, which has acquired a specialised meaning ‘the opening from a saltwater lagoon to the sea’ (OrknN: 128). The Sc def. article corroborates a Sc formation. The traditional phoneme /øʊ/ is only heard among elderly people (see 8.1.1.2).

**Overpark** Sc

Listed in Carfin’s rental of Woodwick (ca. 1700). *Park* is a Sc term for a field (CSD: 474). In Sc place names, *over* occasionally replaces the standard form *upper* (CSD: 756 *uver*).

**Oyce of Isbister** Sc

Firth. HY 39 18.

*Ouse of Isbister*. 1848 ComF.

An *oyce* or lagoon (see *The Ouse* above) at the mouth of Burn of Cruan, south of Isbister. Both this name and the following are Sc periphrastic formations with the farm names as their specifics.

**Oyce of Rennibister** Sc

Firth. HY 39 12.

*Ouse of Rennibuster*. 1848 ComF.

An *oyce* or lagoon (more or less sanded up) close to the houses of Rennibister. Cf. *Oyce of Isbister* and *The Ouse* above.

**Paddock** Sc

*Paddock* Ffn 1931.

A modern Sc field-name in Lyde, F.

## 6. The name material

### **Pantland Craigs**

Sc

Evie. HY 31 30.

Cliffs on the coast of Costa. Sc *craig* ‘steep rock’ is rare in Orkney place-names, and this looks like a fairly modern transfer or part-transfer. The specific refers to the *Pentland Firth* between Orkney and Caithness. Strong currents are a common denominator for Evie Sound and the Pentland Firth – this may have motivated the name transfer.

### **Park of Basso** /<sup>h</sup>baso/

Sc

A field in Gorseness, R. The generic *park* ‘field’ and periphrastic formation are Sc. The specific is the name of a former house. A map from 1857 (OA D 7/3/55) has *Basso* on West Puldrite’s land. No well-founded interpretation can be offered, as *-o* may have a number of different origins. It may be a reflection of ON *á* ‘burn’ or *haugr/how* ‘mound’, or it can be a Sc diminutive suffix. In some names, this suffix seems to replace a name element (see 8.2.1).

### **Park of Fursan**

Sc

A field on the road to the peat mosses on the ridge above Niggly, E. The generic *park* ‘field’ and *of*-periphrasis are Sc. The farm *Fursan* (see 6.1) is not known to have owned land here, so the name appears to be coined of ON *forsinn* m ‘the waterfall’ directly. There is a waterfall in the nearby burn.

### **Peat Geo**

Sc

Coastal feature, E, reportedly a place from where peats were shipped to Eynhallow in former times. Since the specific is Sc, the name is certainly a Sc formation with the loan word *geo* ‘inlet’ (5.5.8).

### **Peeky**

Sc

*Peeky* Ffn 1931.

A name from Lyde, F. This is a Sc derivative of *peak*, referring to a triangular plot of land.

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**Peerie Water**

Sc

Evie. HY 33 27.

= *Mill Dam of Costa* 1846 ComE. The loch is *peerie* ‘small’ compared to Loch of Swannay. *Water* in the sense ‘loch’ seems to be a semantic extension in the former ON-speaking area, cf. *Lowrie’s Water* above. Incidentally, *peerie*, *peedie* is restricted more or less to the same area (CSD: 483, OrknN: 130) but Marwick’s attempt at an ON etymology is unconvincing. A connection with Fr *petit* ‘little’ seems more likely.

**Pelkie’s Hole**

Sc

*Pelkie’s Hole* Firth 1920.

The hole where Greeny Grip runs into the ground. *Pelkie* is a dialect word for ‘the devil’. In local lore, the hole is bottomless.

**Perks (or Sandy Perks)**

Sc

Fields in Lower and Upper Bigging, R. *White Perks* (see below) is in the same area. The names reflect the traditional pronunciation /perk/ for Sc *park* ‘field’.

**Picto**

Sc

The name denotes an old hill-dyke in Evie, i.e. the wall between infield and outfield. These were often called *pickie-dykes*, ‘picts’ fences’ (OrknN: 130). The suffix *-o* (8.2.1.) may be used to derive short forms of names, e.g. *Brettabreck* > *Bretto* 6.1.

**Pittos of Dale**

Sc

*Pittos of Dale* 1897 OSNB.

According to OSNB, the name denotes a flat marshy area in the valley above Georth and Dale, E. Sc of periphrasis. The generic is ambiguous, it could refer to ‘a pit’, ‘peat’ (CSD: 480 under *peat*) or possibly a ‘pict-dyke’, see *Picto* above. The specific may refer directly to the valley, but is more likely to be secondary to the farm *Dale* (see 6.1). The dialectal *o*-suffix is treated in 8.2.1.

**Plank** /plank/

Sc



## 6. *The name material*

A number of farms in Hackland have fields called *Plank*: Upper and Lower Bigging, Hogarth and the former farm Goodwalter. These farms also have fields called *Georth* and *Toon*. The names and the geometrical fields they denote appear to reflect a late reorganisation of the land. A *plank* is a standard size of ca. 1 ⅓ acre, and the squaring process was called *planking* (Clouston 1919: 32).

### **Point of ..**

Sc

Scots names for various points of land.

#### **1) Point of Backaquoy**

Firth. HY 39 15.

*Pt of Backaquoy* 1848 ComF.

The south-easterly extremity of the Burness peninsula. The specific is an ON field-name *Backaquoy*, see above.

#### **2) Point of Hellia**

Evie. HY 37 26.

The north-western tip of Aikerness. The specific is no doubt ON *hella* f ‘flat rock’.

#### **3) Point of Hisber**

Evie. HY 35 27.

A point of land below Broch of Burgar. The specific appears to be an ON compound name in which the second element is *berg* n ‘rock, cliff’. Final *g* regularly drops. The first element is uncertain, but could possibly be ON *hestr* ‘horse’.

#### **4) Point of Queehammeron**

E. From G. Lamb’s list of names, no further information is provided. The specific is a place-name of ON origin, composed of *kví* f ‘enclosure’ followed by the specific *hamarrinn* m def. ‘the hammer’. In names, *hammer* refers to steep rocks. *Kví/quoy* (5.5.13) is a frequent generic in such “inverted compounds” (cf. 8.3.1).

#### **4) Point of Smersso**

A point north of Loch of Vastray, E. For an interpretation of the specific, see *Knowe of Smersso* above.

### **Pooch, The /'putʃ/**

Sc

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A small plot of land in Lower Biggings, R. A Sc comparison name ‘pouch’, which also occurs elsewhere, e.g. in Harray.

### **Poolow** /'pulə, 'pulo/

A low-lying stretch of the main road from Evie to Rendall. The name may contain ON *pollr* ‘pond’. The ending is possibly a Sc *o*-suffix, which occasionally represents a lost element (see 8.2.1).

### **Pulswarto** /pul'swarto/

ON

A very wet peat moss in Blubbersdale, R. *Warto* (below) probably refers to the same locality. The name appears to be derived from ON *pollr* m ‘pond, puddle’ followed by the specific *svartr* adj. ‘black’. This word order in *Pul*-compounds is discussed in 8.3.1. ON morphology requires the generic in the definite form in these constructions, e.g. *pollrinn svarti*. However, only about one third of the names show reflexes of the definite article in their present forms. In some cases, such as here, an original article may have been lost. Others may be pattern formations without the article from the outset.

### **Purgatory**

Sc

*Purgatory* Ffn 1931.

A field in Lettaly, F. A transparent Sc name that is also found elsewhere as an appellation for fields requiring endless hard work (Field 1993: 106).

### **Quee-, Qui-, Quoy-**

The following names share the first element ON *kví* or the dialect loan word *quoy* ‘enclosure’ (5.5.13). To determine the language of formation, one needs other elements that are specifically ON or Scots. Most of the names are so-called inverted compounds with suffixed specifics. This has been assumed to be a feature of Celtic origin but the pattern is well attested in ON, see 8.3.1.

#### **1) Quilaverans**

*Quilaverans* Ffn 1931.

A field in Grimbister, F. The suffixed specific *Laverans* could be the ON masculine name *Lavrans* or possibly the saint’s name *Lawrence*.

## 6. The name material

There was an altar called *St. Lawrence stouk* in St. Magnus' cathedral (REO: 371).

### 2) Quinni Moan

ON

Evie. HY 35 24.

*Quinnamoan* 1897 OSNB.

Described in OSNB as a low ridge. The name elements are a definite form of ON *kví* f 'enclosure' and *mór* m, which denotes areas of heather or moss in the dialect (see 5.5.12). The composition could be a prepositional phrase *kvín á mónum*, cf. *Quinamillyoar* below. Preposition names are discussed in 8.3.3.

### 3) Quinamillyoar

ON

*Quinamillyoar* Ffn 1868, *Quinamellyoar* Ffn 1931.

A field in Binscarth, F. The name can almost certainly be derived from an ON prepositional phrase *Kvína milli á* 'the enclosure between the burns' (-r would seem to be transferred from other plural endings). This kind of phrasal name is common in the Faroes and Marwick suggests similar formation for some Orkney names. Some of these are uncertain, cf. *Binscarth* and *Setscarth* 6.1, but *Quinamillyoar* can hardly be interpreted otherwise. Norw preposition names differ from the above type in never having a generic. They merely state the location of an unspecified feature, e.g. *unde Bergo* 'below the rock' (see 8.3.3).

### 4) Quoy Bano /'bɛno/

Sloping field in Arsdale, E. Another instance of an inverted compound name with *quoy* as its generic (cf. 8.3.1 and 5.5.13). The language and etymology of the specific is uncertain, but the -o-suffix may suggest the diminutive form of a personal name (see 8.2.1.).

### 5) Quoy Park

Sc

A field belonging to Upper Ellibister, R. An unusual compound of the two most frequent terms for 'field' in the Orkney dialect: *quoy* and *park*, derived from ON and Sc respectively. Etymologically, the name is thus a tautology. *Park* may be an epexegetic addition (see 9.3.3). Alternatively, the tautological form could reflect a restructuring of fields, whereby an old field called *Quoy* is included in a larger parcel of land. Either way, the present name is a secondary Sc formation.

**6) Quoy Sinclair**

Sc

*Quoy Sinclair* 1841 C, *Quoy Sinclair* 1848 ComF, Ffn 1931.

A house once accommodating the teacher, near Horraldshay on the 1848 map. Survives as a field-name in 1931. The house and name probably stem from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when schools were established in the countryside. The specific is the Sc family name *Sinclair*.

**Ramna Geo** /ramigjo/

ON

The name denotes two marked *geos* or inlets, one Costa Hill, E (HY 30 30) and another in Eynhallow below Grange. The former has an alternative name *Risdae*, see below. Considering that the specific is ON *hrafn* m ‘raven’, the generic is sure to be ON *gjá*, ‘narrow inlet’, rather than the dialect loan word *geo* (see 5.5.8). The development *fn* > *mn* > *m* is paralleled in east Norwegian dialects, cf. 8.1.2.8. Cf. *höfn* > /ham/ (OrknN: xlv, xlvi).

**Red Rigs**

Sc

E. This Sc formation is from a list of field names from Evie, no further information is provided. *Rigs* denoted the narrow strips of land at the time when every farm had its share of every field in the tun-ship, cf. see *Dam Sheet* above.

**Reeky Knowes**

Sc

Two mounds, probably tumuli north-east of the houses of Aikerness. The name is a Sc compound of *knowe* ‘knoll’ and the specific *reeky*, derived from *reek* ‘smoke’. The motivation for the name formation is unclear. Locally, *Reeky Knowes* in Rousay was said to be where smoke signals were sent out to communicate with Eynhallow (Marwick 1995: 67). There are no other tales to corroborate such a signal system, however. If people imagined seeing smoke from the mounds, they may have thought that fairies were at play. In old lore, many mounds were the homes of *hogboons* (< ON *haugbúandi* ‘mound-dweller’!) or fairies. In Orkney, *reek* denoted ‘a dwelling-house’, i.e. a house with a fire burning on the hearth (CSD 549).

**Rigga**

ON

6. *The name material*

Rendall. HY 41 22.

*Rigga* 1629 wt, 1675, 1731 Traill, *Redgarth* 1841 ComR (a farm),  
*Ryga* 1688 Collins (a point of land).

The name denotes a point of land near Queenamuckle and was once a farm name, too. This was the home of Jonet Rendall alias *Rigga* who was tried for witchcraft in 1629. The records of the trial provide the first forms of a number of Rendall farm-names. This name can be derived from a case form of ON *hryggr* m ‘back; ridge’. The name must originally have denoted the point. The form *Redgarth* in 1841 appears to be a secondary adaptation influenced by the numerous names ending in *garth*, cf. 9.3.2.1.

**Rinan, Rinnan, Runan** /ˈrɪnən/

ON

*Rinan* 1841 ComR.

A croft in 1841 and presently an area northwest of Bu, R. A strong well spills water into the area. The element *Rin-* seems to denote flowing water in a number of Orkney place-names, e.g. *Rinners of Breckan*, a small burn in Harray. It may have been an appellative derived from *renna* v ‘flow’, though this noun is not attested in ON. See the discussion of *Redland* in Firth, 6.1.

**Risdæ** /ˈrɪsdə/

ON?

HY 30 30.

A small, steep inlet west of Costa Hill, E = *Ramna Geo*. It could be an original ON compound of *hris* ‘undergrowth’ and *dalr* m ‘valley’ with vocalised *l*, see 8.1.2.2. *Valley* does not seem to fit the location, however. A connection with the Shetland term *rist* ‘a ridge’ (ShNorn 703) is more probable. There is a marked ridge between Risdæ and the main road. *Green of R.* is a patch of grass in the cliffs, a favourite place for sea birds. A shelf in the cliffs is called *Mantelpiece of R.* It was a test of manhood to row close enough to the “mantelpiece” to put a stone onto it. The two periphrastic constructions are Sc.

**Ritten**

ON?

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

A low, wide cave in Sole Geo, Costa, E. Final *-en* normally reflects the ON def. article. The noun entering into the name is uncertain. For *Craig of Rittin* above, the specific ON *rétin* f def ‘the sheep-fold’ was suggested. This can hardly apply to a cave, however. In Shetland, *ritt* may denote ‘an incision’, a word that would seem appropriate nearly everywhere on the indented Orkney coast.

**Robie’s Knowe**

Sc

Evie. HY 36 26. *Robie’s Knowe* 1897 OSNB.

A mound (tumulus) below Woo, E. The name is a Sc compound of *knowe* ‘knoll’ and the pet form of the name *Robert*.

**Rooman, Rymman** /*rumən*/

ON?

Evie. HY 32 27

*Rimmin* 1846 ComE, *Rooman* OS 1903.

OS 1903 has *Rooman* = *Himmon Hill* on the modern map. According to the local informant, *Rooman* is an older name for Upper Whitemire. The varying forms can hardly be reconciled and render a certain interpretation impossible. The ending *-en* may reflect the ON def. art. One conceivable ON interpretation for the first part is *rimi* m ‘a ridge of soil’, cf. Shetland *rimma* ‘a strip of land, esp. in the outfield where heather is cut for thatching’. The element is found in Shetland place-names (ShNorn 697).

**Roondback**

A coastal feature in Evie, described by G. Lamb as a “launching site for inshore fishermen”. The generic would thus seem to be *back* in the ON sense ‘shore’ (see 5.5.1). The specific appears to be *round*, even if the compound ‘round shore’ is somewhat surprising. The language of formation is uncertain. The adj. *rund* is unattested in ON but may be found in names of ON origin in the Northern Isles (e.g. *Rounda*, a field-name in Harray and *Hulin Runda* < *Hóllinn rundi* in Shetland, cf. ShNorn 726). Possibly a Sc loan-word in Norn?

**Rowamo**

ON

6. *The name material*

*Rowamo* Firth 1920.

A ridge in the hills between Firth and Harray. For the element *mo* denoting areas of heather and moss, see 5.5.12. The specific appears to be ON *rauðr* adj. ‘red’, referring to the heather in bloom.

**Rummerdale** /<sup>l</sup>ɾʌmərdeil/

ON

Evie. HY 35 26.

*Romerdaill* 1624 Sas.

The original denotatum of the name was the valley around the upper parts of Burn of Woo. It seems to be a farm-name in 1624 and is now the name of a field north-west of Howe, E. The specific appears to be an ON name of the burn, \**Ruðma* as suggested by Jakobsen (cf. *Syradale* for burn name + *dalr* constructions). This has been derived either from *rýðja* v. ‘clear’ or *rjóða* v. ‘colour red’ (NE: 199, NSL: 367 *Romedal*).

**Rusness Bay**

Sc

Rendall. HY 45 22.

*Rusness Bay* 1882 OS.

A wide bay on the east side of Gairsay. The generic and thus the formation are Sc. The specific is a lost farm name *Rusnes* (1731 Traill, 1881 OS) probably of ON origin, compounded of *hross* m ‘horse’ and *nes* n ‘headland’.

**Salta Taing**

ON?

Rendall. HY 41 22.

*Salta Taing* 1882 OS.

A point of land. *Taing* or *teeng* ‘point of land’ (OrknN: 188) has been borrowed into the dialect. The *a*-ending of the specific normally reflects an ON case form, suggesting an ON formation. The specific would seem to refer to salt evaporation, though there are no physical remains of such activity here. Cf. *Salty Taing*.

**Saltness**

A locality in Aikerness, E. The generic is ON *nes* ‘headland’, possibly also a loan word in the dialect. It is recorded in CSD “cf. She,

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Orkn in placenames” (CSD 438), but not in OrknN. However, *ness* is understood locally as a name element. The specific *salt* probably refers to evaporation of salt, cf. *Salty Taing* below. The specific is common to Sc and ON, which means that the language of formation must remain open.

**Salty Taing**

Sc?

A point of land near Ness in Crookness, R. I was informed that there were once walls to collect sea-water for salt evaporation (or boiling?) The name is a parallel to Salta Taing above, but the form of the specific appears to be Sc in this case (for *y*-suffix see 8.2.1), though later adaptations should be taken into account.

**Sand Geo**

A small inlet with some sand at the bottom, south of Buckquoy, E. The linguistic origin is uncertain, since *sand* is common to ON and Sc and *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ < *gjá* is a dialect loan word, see 5.5.8.

**Sand of Fidgeon**

Sc

Firth. HY 37 12.

*Sand of Fidgeon* 1848 ComF.

A stretch of the shore near Holm of Grimbister, F. Owing to the Sc *of*-periphrasis we may assume a Sc generic and formation. The specific is a form of *fit* f ‘meadow (near sea or lake)’, possibly pl. def. *fitjarnar*.

**(The) Sandy Braes**

Sc

A transparent Sc formation, denoting a field in Lower Biggings, R.

**Sandy Myres**

Sc

Marshy area near Whitemire, E. The specific could be ON *mýrr* ‘marsh, moss’ or its Sc cognate *myre*. However, the Sc form of the specific and the Sc plural morpheme clearly suggest a Sc formation.

**Savday** /<sup>l</sup>sevdɛi/



## 6. *The name material*

A field (in Costa?), E. The etymology is unclear. The second element could be ON *teigr*, dial. *tie*, with the shift  $t > d$  owing to the preceding voiced sound (4.4.1.4, OrknN: xliv) or *dale* with vocalisation of *l* (see 4.2.1.4). The specific might be ON *sef* n ‘rushes’ or dial. *save* /sev/ ‘tops of heather’ (OrknN: 150). The latter were used in the production of “heather ale”.

**Scarataing** /'skerətɛŋ, -tɪŋ/

ON?

Evie. HY 40 24.

*Skarataing* 1897 OSNB.

A point on the north side of Bay of Woodwick. The *a*-ending of the specific suggests the reflection of ON case morphology and thus an ON generic *tangi* m ‘point’. Marwick’s interpretation of the specific *skarfr* m ‘cormorant’ is unlikely, since *f/v* is normally retained in this word. Cf. *Skarva Taing* below and the dialect noun *skarf* (OrknN: 157). Rather, I would suggest an origin ON *skarð* n or *skor(a)* f. The words are derived from *skera* v ‘cut’, and denote various kinds of cuts and indentures. The reference may be the inlet called *Geo of Skarataing*. Another possibility is *skári* m ‘young gull’ as suggested for *Scrabster* by Gammeltoft (2001: 144).

**Scarry Geo**

Sc

According to G. Lamb’s list, there are two localities so called in Evie. The *y*-suffix (8.2.1) of the generic suggests a Sc formation with the dial. word *geo* ‘narrow inlet’ (5.5.8) as a generic (cf. *Scarataing* above). The specific is most likely to be Sc *scar*, *scaur* ‘sheer rock, precipice’ (CSD: 585).

**Scarpan Tumol**

*Scarpan Tumol* Carfin’s rental.

Formerly a locality in Woodwick, E. The generic is the dialect word *toomal* ‘privately owned field close to the houses’, see 5.5.15. ON adj. *skarp* ‘sharp’ has been borrowed into the dialect in the sense ‘bare, barren piece of ground’ (OrknN: 157), cf. *Scrapsquoy* below. The ending *-an* in *Scarpan* reflects the ON def. morpheme, suggesting that *skarp* became a noun while Norn was still a living language.

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Normally this implies ON formation but here a Sc formation with an ON place-name as its specific is also possible (see 7.1.3).

**Scarpsquoy, Scrapsquoy**

Sc?

*Scrapsquoy* Ffn 1931.

A field-name in Binscarth, F, the only name from the old maps that is still in use. On a modern map, *West* and *East Scarpsquoy* cover the steep, sandy strip of land between the main road and the burn. The name is a compound of the dialect words *quoy* (5.5.13) and *skarp* ‘bare, barren piece of ground’ see *Scarpan Tumol* above. For the metathesis in the 1931 form see 8.1.2.9.

**Scarva Taing**

ON

Firth. HY 36 14.

*Scarvating Pt* 1848 ComF.

A point of land. The specific ends in -a, suggesting an ON formation in which *tangi* m ‘point’ is specified with of the bird’s term *skarfr* m ‘cormorant’. *Skarf* is also noted as the dialect form (OrknN 157), but *Scarva* clearly reflects the ON genitive plural *skarfa*. The elements are written separately in Sc style, however.

**Scott’s**

Sc

A field in Quoyblackie, R. The name is coined from a Sc personal name in the genitive, without a generic to indicate the sort of locality the name refers to. *Scott* could be a former owner, or the name may be secondary to a house name, cf. the houses called *Hallow Marwicks* and *John Johnstons* on the ComF-map from 1848.

**Seal Skerry**

Sc

Rendall. HY 43 20.

*Brewers S* 1688 Collins.

A skerry south-east of Holm of Rendall, called *Brewers S* on Collins’ map from 1688. The present name would also seem to be a Sc formation with the borrowed element *skerry* < *sker* n ‘isolated rock in the sea’ (CSD 622). The *y*-suffix is treated in 8.2.1.

**Shuber**

ON

#### 6. *The name material*

A stretch of coast west of Point of Vastray, E. The generic is ON *berg* n ‘berg’ with loss of *g*, see 8.1.2.1. The specific could possibly be ON *sjór* m ‘sea’.

#### **Skerry of the Sound** /<sup>1</sup>skeri ə ðə ˌsuːnd/ Sc

A skerry or shoal in Evie Sound, south-east of Eynhallow. According to legend, Cubby Roo threw the rock and his footprints on the Evie shore can prove this. See *Cubby Roo Stone* above. Periphrasis and the Sc def. article prove this to be a Sc formation. The generic is the loan word *skerry* cf. *Seal Skerry* above. The specific refers to *Evie Sound*.

#### **Skibby Geo** /<sup>1</sup>skibi djo/ ON

A narrow inlet east of Midhouse. The original form appears to be ON *Skipagjá* ‘ship inlet’. The initial *sk-* of the generic is definitely ON, though a Sc *y-*suffix has been added. This means that even in other names, this Sc feature may be an adaptation of the ON case endings. In the actual name, influence from other names such as *Gressy Geo*, *Crinky Geo* etc is a possibility.

#### **Skethway** ON?

*Skethway* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Coubister, F. *-way* probably reflects the traditional pronunciation /mi/ of *quoy/kví* ‘enclosure’, see 5.5.13. The element *Sketh-* is found in a number of names (OFN: 146, 158), and can probably be derived from ON *skeið* n ‘road, track’. In that case, the formation is likely to be ON.

#### **Skiddy Burn** Sc

A small burn flowing past the house of *Skiddy* (see above), R.

#### **Slap of (o’)** Sc

*Slap* is the common dialect term for ‘a gate’. All the names are periphrastic Sc formations.

#### **1) Slap of Faravill**

*Slap of Faravill* Firth 1920.

Once a gate in the tunship dyke of Redland, opening towards the east. The specific is an ON compound, in which *-vill* can probably be derived from *völlr* m ‘natural pasture’. Marwick discusses the place-name element *fara* under *Faraclett*, Rousay (OFN: 62). His derivation from ON *varða* ‘beacon’ is unconvincing in compounds with *völlr*, such as *Faravill*, *Farewell*. *Far-* in Norw place-names are normally interpreted as ON *fara* v, *för* f ‘travel’. As the slap was on the way to the pastures on the marshes east of the tunship (Firth 1974: 1), an alternative interpretation is a form of *fár/fær* n ‘sheep’.

**2) Slap of Geerons**

Slap of Geerons. Firth 1920.

A former gate in Redland, F, opening towards the hills. The specific is uncertain, but could be Sc *gear* ‘livestock, cattle’ (CSD: 228) or a development of ON *geiri* ‘triangular (or odd) piece of land’. The ending is puzzling: *-on* normally reflects the ON def. article and *-s* is the Sc plural morpheme, see 9.3.1.

**3) Slap of Langiegar**

Slap of Langiegar. Firth 1920.

A former gate in Redland, F, also leading towards the hills. The specific would seem to be ON *langigarðr* ‘the long fence’, which could refer to the tunship dyke.

**4) Slap o’ Mark**

*Slap o’ Mark* ComR 1841.

An old slap near Queenamuckle, R. The specific is the field-name *Mark* (see above).

**5) Slap of Onbrid**

Slap of Onbrid. Firth 1920.

Once a gate in Redland. The specific is uncertain. The first element could be *on(n)* referring to ‘a strip of a field: a piece dug or reaped by a labourer in one day’ (ShNorn 633), as suggested for *Onyo* above. The second could be ON *breidd* m or its Sc cognate *breed* ‘breadth’ (CSD: 62). A name meaning approximately ‘a piece so wide that one labourer can reap it in one day’ is conceivable as a field-name.

**6) Slap o’ Quoyfree**

A former gate in Gorseness, R. The specific is the farm-name *Quoy-free* (see 6.1).

6. *The name material*

**7) Slap of Quoybeezie**

Slap of Quoybeezie. Firth 1920

A gate in Redland, F, on the main road towards Rendall. The specific appears to be an “inverted compound name” (see 8.3.1) containing the dialect words *quoy* (5.5.13.) and the specific *bizzy* ‘the place where a cow stands in a byre’ (OrknN: 14).

**8) Slap of Smeravill**

Slap of Smeravill. Firth 1920.

A former slap leading westwards by the Burn of Redland, F. The second element of the specific is probably ON *völlr* m ‘natural pasture’ cf. *Faravill*. For the place-name element *smer-* see *Smerhouse* below.

**9) Slap o’ Velzian**

A former gate in Gorseness, R. The specific is the farm-name *Velzian*, see 6. 1.

**The Slounks** /<sub>1</sub>ðə 'slu:ŋks/

Sc

A marshy area where the Burn of Orquil has its springs, R. The name is coined from Sc *slunk* “wet and muddy hollow” (CSD: 633).

**Smerhouse** /<sup>1</sup>smerus/

*Smyrous*, *Smeirhous* 1675, *Sm[.]house* 1732 Traill.

Once a croft, presently a field belonging to Hall of Rendall. The generic is ON *hús* or possibly its Sc cognate *house*. *Smer-* occurs in a number of Orkney place-names, cf. *Slap of Smeravill* above and *Smero Spot* below. It can either be derived from the plant name *smæra* Icel ‘wild clover’, as suggested by Marwick (1970: 36), or directly from *smør* n ‘butter’. The latter is seen as having a general commendatory sense in Norw names in *Smør-* (NSL: 412). According to ON *smero* denotes ‘wild clover’ in the dialect, but I have also heard it used of ‘bird’s-foot trefoil’ (*Lotus corniculatus*). Both are valuable forage plants. Either way, *smer-* appears to denote fertile locations.

**Smero Spot** /<sup>1</sup>smero/

Sc

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A fertile piece of land belonging to Whitemire, E. The generic and formation are Sc. The dialect plant name *smero* ‘wild clover; bird’s-foot trefoil’ is of ON origin (cf. *Smerhouse* above).

**Smoo Field**

Sc

E. The generic and thus the formation are Sc. The specific appears to be of ON origin. The Shetland word *smuga*, *smoga* < ON *smuga* f means ‘a narrow passage’. In place-names, it also denotes small patches of cultivated land (ShNorn 844). The present name would seem to contain the same word with loss of -g (see 8.1.2.1). Cf. the field-name *Smooan* in Harray (Sandnes 1996: 112).

**Sole Geo**

Sc

HY 32 29.

A bay north of Midhouse. This appears to be a Sc formation Sole inlet, with the dialect term *geo* as its generic (see 5.5.8).

**Sorton**

ON?

Firth. HY 35 15.

*Sorton* 1848 ComF.

A moss in the hills. The name probably contains ON *svartr* ‘black’, possibly in a formation with no generic (cf. *Brya* above).

**South Hunigarth**

Sc

*South Hunigart* Ffn 1931.

A field of Vindon’s, F. *Garth* ‘enclosure’ was productive as a place-name element into the 19<sup>th</sup> century (see 5.5.7). It is thus impossible to determine the language of formation and suggest an etymology for the specific. The present form, with the reciprocating element *south*, is certainly Sc, but this may be a secondary addition.

**Stackaday Burn** /<sup>1</sup>stakədi/

Sc

*Stackady*, *Burn of Stackady* 1841 ComR.

A burn in Rendall, flowing northwards into Burn of Bluebrae. The generic and formation are Sc. The specific would seem to be a compound place-name of ON origin, in which the specific is the gen. pl.

## 6. *The name material*

*stakka* ‘stacks’. The second element of *Stackady* could be *dý n* ‘marsh, moss’ or possibly *dalr* ‘valley’ with vocalised *l* (see 8.1.2.2). Most of the land here is flat and marshy, and the name could refer to peat stacks or stacks of hay cut in the moss.

### **Stacks o’ the Isle**

Sc

A launching site below Midhouse, E, where peats were transported over to Eynhallow. The name is a transparent Sc formation.

### **Standard, The Standard** /,ðə 'standər/

Two sea-stacks in Evie: *The Standard* below the school in Costa and *Standard* on the Birsay side near Costa (HY 30 30). The def. article makes the Evie name appear as purely Sc. Actually, Sc *standard* ‘an upright timber pole, post etc’ (CSD: 663) and modern Norw *standar* m are synonyms, which implies that the original language is not so certain. The latter is a verbal noun, possibly derived from an unrecorded ON form *\*standarr*. The form would mean ‘someone or something standing’. Two small stone pillars on top of the stack are called *Horns o’ the Standard*, a certain Sc formation.

### **Starling Hill**

Sc

Evie. HY 34 22.

*Stirling Hill* 1846 ComE.

A summit in the hills on the border between Evie, Harray and Birsay. This is a transparent Sc formation, but interestingly it seems to be a translation of *Starra Fiold*, see below.

### **Starra Fiold**

ON

Evie. HY 35 22.

*Starra Fiold* 1897 OSNB.

A summit close to Starling Hill above. The origin is probably ON *starafjall n* ‘starling hill’, though the specific could even be *starra gen pl. of störr f* ‘rushes’. If the specific is the bird’s term – or the speakers have imagined it to be so – this name and *Starling Hill* appear to be a rare example of an ON name and its Sc translation see

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

9.2.2. The reason why both live on would seem to be that they have come to denote two different summits.

### **Staveley**

*Staveley* Ffn 1868, *Stavely* Ffn 1931.

A former field-name in Binscarth, F. *Staveley* is the name of three English locations as well as a family name, which means that a name transfer is conceivable. However, the name may also be an ON compound *Stafahlíð*, containing *hlíð* f ‘slope’ and *stafr* gen. pl. ‘sticks of wood’. The latter element is often assumed to denote straight or protruding formations (NGIncl.: 78). *Staveli* is also found in Norway (NG 14:152).

### **Stenna Dale, Stenady**

ON

Firth. HY 35 13.

*Stenna Dale, Burn of Stennadale* OS-kart, *Stennady* G. Lamb.

The generic is ON *dalr* m ‘valley’, which seems to have a variant form with vocalised *-l* (see 8.1.2.2). The specific *stena-* rather than Sc *Stany* is additional evidence of ON origin, either ON *Steina-* or possibly *Steinádalr*, ‘stone valley’ or ‘stone burn valley’. *Á* regularly becomes /o/ in stressed position, but the development of unstressed syllables does not always follow the same patterns.

### **Stoo Flats**

Sc?

From G. Lamb’s list of Evie field-names. *Stoo* could possibly be a reflection of ON *stófa/stoga* f ‘house; room’. It is not recorded as a dialect noun, but occurs in names of houses or separate farms within a township. The specific could thus refer to a vanished house. ON *flötr* is synonymous with Sc *flat* ‘level piece of ground’, but the Sc pl. article renders a Sc formation more probable.

### **Stooan**

ON

Coastal feature below Knowe of Stenso, E. There is a short stretch of sand and shingle here, which suggests that the origin is ON *stöðin* f def. ‘the place where the boat hauled’.



## 6. The name material

### **Stooslass**

A locality in Evie, possibly a variant of *Stoo Flats*. Initial *f* in *fl-* is occasionally dropped (see OrknN: xlv), and if we imagine a tri-consonant cluster *Stoosflats*, at least one of consonants would also be inclined to drop (cf. 8.1.2.8).

### **Studja /'stʌdjə/ Fiold**

ON

Evie. HY 36 24.

A rather steep hill above Redland. The generic is undoubtedly ON *fall* n 'hill, mountain' (cf. *Fibla Fiold* above). The interpretation of the specific is uncertain but the same word with the suffixed def. article added seems to enter into the Harray field-name *Sturgeon* /'stʌdjən/ (Sandnes 1996: 100). *g* is often palatalised initially but is normally lost between vowels (8.1.2.5, 8.1.2.1), leaving ON *stoga* f 'house; room' improbable (cf. *Stoo Flats* above). Gen. *steðja* of ON *steði* m 'anvil' is more satisfactory from a linguistic point of view. The same word enters into Norwegian hill-names such as *Stetinden* (NSL 427), motivated by some resemblance in shape.

### **Styes of ...**

Sc

These are all Sc formations with *of*-periphrasis. All the names belong to the Arian area (see *Arian* above) and denote former enclosures for domestic animals, not only cattle. This semantic extension may be due to interference from ON *stia* f, which denotes enclosures for all sorts of smaller domestic animals.

#### **1) S. of Aikerness**

*Styes of Aikerness* OSNB 1897.

OSBN describes this feature in the Arian area as cairns. According to E. Marwick, however, these were former sties for pigs, just as the name seems to denote. These sties belonged to *Aikerness*.

#### **2) S. o' Brymyiree, The**

E. Marwick's papers (OA D 31/1/3/2).

A former enclosure (for geese) in Arian. From Marwick's nearly phonetic spelling, the specific appears to be a nature name *Breiðamýrr(in)* 'the broad mire'.

**3) S. o' Creya, The**

E. Marwick's papers (OA D 31/1/3/2).

A former enclosure in Arian, E. The specific is the farm name *Creya*.

**4) Styes o' Ervigjar, The**

E. Marwick's papers (OA D 31/1/3/2).

A former enclosure in Arian. The specific is probably derived from ON *øfragarðr* or *-gerði* 'the upper garth or enclosure'. The name suggests that there have been more than one enclosure in the Arian-area, cf. *Styes of Aikerness*. Various metathesed forms (*rv < fr*) are recorded, such as *Burn of Irvigert* on old maps and *Black Moss of Irvigert* in OSNB (but *Knowe of Evrigert*).

**Syradale**

ON

Firth. HY 35 15.

*Syradale* 1848 ComF.

A deep valley with a burn, presently called *Burn of Syradale*. The original name of the river was probably \**Sýra* < *súrr* 'sour', also denoting 'waterlogged ground' (NE: 261, NSL 437 *Surna*). An alternative interpretation is *sýr* f 'sow', Rygh (1904) lists a number of examples of *Svinaaen* 'pig burn'. The valley in its turn is named after the river. This is a very typical pattern in Norway. Firth (1920) uses the form (*Hamars of*) *Syraday* with vocalised *l*, see 8.1.2.2.

**Taing of Midgarth**

Sc

Rendall. HY 40 23.

*Taing of Midgarth* 1882 OS.

The tip of the headland west of Midgarth. A Sc periphrastic formation with the dialect word *taing*, *teeng* 'point' (OrknN: 188). The specific is the farm name *Midgarth*.

**Thistleady Point**

Sc

*Thistleady Pt* 1848 ComF.

A point near Benzieroth, F. The generic and formation are Sc. The first element of the specific appears to be *thistle* or possibly its ON cognate *þístill* m, the second element might be *dý* n in its original sense 'gutter'.

## 6. The name material

### **Toomal, Tumul(t)**

This is a common field-name, denoting the privately owned field next to the houses (see 5.5.15 and OrknN: 192). The word is probably derived from ON *túnvöllr* m, but as it is current in the dialect, the formation may well be Sc.

#### **1) Toomal** /<sup>h</sup>tuməl/

Fields in Upper Ellibister and Lower Bigging, R. There was also a *Toomal* in Hestavel.

#### **2) Tumul of Loban**

Sc

*Tumul of Loban* Carfin's rental

E. The periphrastic formation is Sc. Carfin also lists a *Tumul of Po-all Cutto*, with the farm-name *Pulkitto* as its specific. The specific of Tumul of Loban is not so obvious. It might contain a dialect word *loba* 'coarse grass' (OrknN: 108, ShNorm: 517) or a house-name coined with this word. The ending *-an* may suggest an ON def. form, but the word as such is not attested in ON.

#### **3) Tumalt**

*Tumalt* Ffn 1931.

A field belonging to Smogarth, F. The present form is quite common and appears to be a lexical adaptation to Sc *tumult* (see 9.3.2.2).

### **Toon**

A number of farms in Hackland, Rendall, have *toon* or *toons land*: *Toon of Upper Bigging*, *Toon of Gitterpitten*, *Toons Land of Hackland* etc., cf. *Plank* above. *Toon* may denote 'tunship' or 'field', see 5.5.15. When the term enters into field-names, it may refer to *townsland*, i.e. the land under common cultivation in the run-rig system.

### **Tooin of Rusht, Toor o' Rusht** /<sup>h</sup>rʌʃt/

Sc

Rendall. HY 35 20.

*Stack o' Rush* 1841 ComR, *Tower of Rush* 1900 OSNB.

The periphrastic formation is Sc. The generic *stack* in 1841 is replaced by *tower* or an apparently ON form *tooin* in later sources. The latter must be explained as onomastic adaptation to other hill names in the area containing this generic (see 9.2.3.1 and *Ernie*

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

*Tooin* above). The specific could be *rust* f. This has a range of denotations, of which ‘hill-ridge’ may suit the locality’ (NO, Torp 1963: 552), cf. Marwick’s interpretation of *Burn of Rusht* (1970: 26).

### **Tor Ness**

ON?

Rendall. HY 42 19.

*Tor Ness* 1882 OS, *Torness Point* 1900 OSNB.

The headland on which North and South Moa are situated. Various attempts at identifying names of the Norse *asa* gods in Orkney place-names have been made; one is Lamb’s (1993: 62) suggestion that this name may contain *Þórr* ‘Thor’. The god’s name can probably be rejected on purely linguistic grounds, as the genitive form *Tors-* would be expected. Lamb’s alternative interpretation *torf* n ‘peat’ is much more likely. This ties in well with the farm names *Moa*. Though the area is now cultivated, the element *mo* reveals that this was once heather and moss (see *mo* 5.5.12). The epexegetic form *Torness Point* in OSNB is not in local use.

### **Toressin**

*Torressin* Firth 1920.

F. A partly cultivated pasture below the main road near Broch of Redland. The etymology and linguistic origin are opaque, though the ending *-in* may suggest an ON def. art.

### **Torrie**

*Torrie* Ffn 1931.

A field in Burness, F. The origin of the name is uncertain. The ON adj. *purr* ‘dry’ could apply to a field. This presupposes the survival of an ON name *Purri* ‘the dry one’ without a generic (cf. *Brya* and 9.3.5.2), since *purr* does not seem to be preserved in the Northern Isles dialects. Alternatively, Sc *tore*, ‘the grub of the crane fly or daddy-long-legs, which attacks the roots of grain crops’ (CSD: 728), could possibly denote a field infested with crane-fly grubs.

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### **Troffers, The Trophers** /,ðə 'trɒfərs/ Sc

*Troffers* is a path in Costa (Lamb 1993: 117), whereas *The Trophers* denotes a road leading from the church in Evie to Hestavel. The Sc articles suggest Sc origin, probably *thoroughfares*. The regular shift /θ ð/ > /t d/ in Sc words in the Northern Isles is regarded as interference from ON (see 8.1.2.3). In Orkney, the fricative has now been restituted according to the standard language (cf. the def. art.), but the stop is retained in some place-names.

### **Trolle Geo** ON

Coastal feature north of Grunshall, E. The a-ending of the specific suggest an ON formation *Trollagjá* 'inlet of the trolls'. As a common noun, the *-ll* of *troll* undergoes vocalisation into *trow* (OrknN: 195). The form *Troll-* enters into a number of place-names in the Northern Isles, however (Lamb 1993: 61, Jakobsen 1936: 138.). Whereas Norwegian trolls are mountain-dwellers, Orkney trolls and fairies tend to have their habitat in the sea (Dennison 1995: 30), and *Troll*-names on the coast are to be expected.

### **Trundigar** ON?

Firth. HY 35 17.

*Trundigar* 1848 ComF.

An area west of Ward of Redland. The 1846 map of Firth has another *Trundigar* up in the hills, directly north of Chair of Lyde. These locations can never have been the sites of farms, so *gar(th)* must certainly denote 'enclosure' (see 5.5.7). Jakobsen (1936: 243) observes that *Tron(n)-* appears too frequently in names to be derived from the masculine name *Þrándr*. *Tron-* is also a common element in names of Norw hills. These have been interpreted as comparative names coined from ON *þróndr* 'pig', which is not well attested in ON, however. An interpretation 'enclosure for pigs' thus remains quite hypothetical. *Trundigar* also appears as a house name in Rendall (see 6.1). Three instances of one name in a rather limited area may suggest an original compound noun behind all the names, even if no certain interpretation can be offered.

**Tuanabackan**

ON

*Tuanabackan* 1897 OSNB.

OSNB describes Tuanabackan as a “point of flat rocks and shingle” north of Bay of Woodwick, E. ON *bakki* m in the sense ‘bank, rim of land closest to the sea (5.5.1) is quite appropriate. The name as a whole may be composed with a preposition *þúfan á bakkinum* ‘the mound on the bank’ (see 8.3.3). The specific is more difficult to explain if we presuppose a normal formation.

**Tuffin**

ON?

*Tuffin* Ffn 1931.

A field in Binscarth. The ending *-in* suggests an ON formation with the def. art. The name could possibly be a development of ON *tuftin*, *toftin* f ‘the site of the buildings’ but the word is not otherwise assimilated in un-compounded names; *Tifter*, *Tufter*, *Tufta* (cf. *Aittit*).

**Tuna, Muckle and Peerie**

Sc

G. Lamb describes the localities as ledges in the cliffs on the Evie coast, with grass growing on them. The present forms with the Sc reciprocating specifics *muckle/peerie* ‘big/small’ are definitely Sc formations (see 9.3.3). *Tuna* is a very curious place-name element, however, and one suspects that this could be an adaptation of a form of ON *tó* f ‘ledge or platform in a hillside’. As for the ending *-na*, see the note under *Queena* 6.1.

**Tween Burns**

Sc

A field in Lettaly, F. A Sc prepositional name, cf. the discussion in 8.3.3.

**Vastray, /<sup>h</sup>vastrei/ Point of**

Sc

Evie. HY 39 25.

A headland west of Hill of Dwarmo with a loch called *Loch of Vastray* at the tip of it. The periphrastic formations are Sc. The specific *Vastray* appears to be a compound (place-name) of ON origin, containing gen. *vaz*, from *vatn* n ‘water; loch’. The second element is uncertain.

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**Varmadale** /<sup>h</sup>varmədɛil/, /<sup>h</sup>barmə-/ ON

Rendall. HY 40 18.

*Burn of Varmadale* 1841 ComR.

A short valley with a burn on the coast near Crookness. The name seems to be an ON compound of *dalr* m ‘valley’ and a burn name derived from *varmr* ‘warm’, cf. *Varma*, *Verma*, *Vorma* in Norway (NE: 292, NSL: 488, 499). The name *Wormadal* is also found in Shetland (Jakobsen 1936: 157). The pronunciation /<sup>h</sup>barmə-/ given by an informant from nearby Puldrite renders the interpretation somewhat uncertain. A lexical adaptation to *varm/warm* or an onomastic adaptation to *Varsa Dale* below appears more likely than an otherwise unrecorded shift *b > v*. This means that the specific could be *barmr* m, which denotes ‘strip of land by the sea’ in Norw names (NG 14: 65).

**Varsa Dale** ON?

R. The valley in which Gorseness Road runs. *Varsadale Burn* flows into Loch of Brockan. The generic is ON *dalr* m, possibly a loan word in the dialect (see 5.4). The specific is uncertain but could be *vaz-*, gen. of *vatn* ‘water; loch’. For the development *s, z > /ʃ/*, see OrknN: xlvi, cf. *Warsquoy* /<sup>h</sup>waʃkwɪ/ on a headland in Loch of Harray. The final *-a* in Varsa might reflect *á* ‘burn’, cf. *Varmadale*.

**Vasvia** /<sup>h</sup>vasvɛiə/ ON

A marshy field near Loch of Swannay, belonging to Crismo, E. The specific appears to be ON *vaz*, gen. of *vatn* n ‘water; loch’. The generic is uncertain, but a similar element enters into other names denoting mosses as well, cf. *Vias Moss* in Harray and Birsay (Marwick 1970: 31) and *De Viggas* in Shetland, a wet, low-lying piece of meadow next to a burn (Jakobsen 1936: 246). The names might contain the ON *veig*, which seems to have had a general sense ‘fluid’ (NSL: 484 under *Vega*). In Orkney, intervocalic and final *g* are regularly dropped (see 8.1.2.1), in Shetland *g* is often retained (Orkn *how* – Sh *hog* < *haugr*).

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

### **Vedo** /<sup>h</sup>vɛdo/

Said to be a field below the houses of Midhouse, E. The name could be compared to Shetland *vedek* ‘small burn, drainage ditch; stripe in general’ derived from ON *veit* f ‘drainage ditch’ (Sh Norn 1037). *-ek* is a diminutive ending in Shetland, parallel to *-o* in West Mainland (see 8.2.1). There is no burn really close to Midhouse, however.

### **Verigens**

ON?

Firth. HY 36 17.

*Verigens* 1848 ComF, *Virigens* 1920.

Small lochs on the top of Ward of Redland (see below). The generic appears to be a phonemic and morphemic adaptation of ON *tjarnar* f pl. ‘lochs’ (see 9.2.1). ON *tjörn* can be adapted in a number of ways, most frequently /ʃʌn/ or /tʃɪn/. The interpretation of the specific is uncertain, but *varði* m ‘beacon’ would definitely tie in with the location. The loss of *ð* is regular, whereas /a/ > /ɛ/ is a sporadic development (cf. 4.4.1.4 and *Verron* below).

### **Verron** /<sup>h</sup>vɛrɔn/

ON

A mound east of Costa Hill, E. Similar names occur in a number of locations in Orkney. Here and in Sandwick, the name denotes possible broch ruins on the coast, whereas *Castle of Verron* in Birsay is a stone pillar marking a shoal. Thus, they all seem to function as sea-marks. The initial *v* and final *-on* (from the ON def. art.) both indicate ON origin, possibly *varðan* ‘the beacon’ (Marwick 1970: 23). In hill names, the normal form is *Ward* or *Wart* (see below). These names may contain a dialect loan word, whereas the *Verron*-forms are ON formations having undergone the expected phonetic development (loss of *ð*, /a/ > /ɛ/, cf. *Verigens* above). An alternative interpretation is given under *Verry Geo* below.

### **Verry Geo**

An inlet west of Knowe of Grugar, Evie. Formally, the name could be Sc, the generic *geo* ‘inlet’ is a loan word in the dialect (5.5.8). The initial *v* suggests ON origin, however, possibly *varða* f ‘beacon’ (cf. *Verron* above). For coastal locations, ON *ver* n ‘a place where



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fish or birds are caught’, cf. ‘a skerry where seabirds breed’ ShNorn 1042, are semantically appropriate. The same element could be suggested for *Verron*, but this gives rise to morphological problems. The definite form of neuter words such as *ver* is *-it*, *verit* (though the *-t* is not pronounced in Norw and no neuter def. forms seem to have survived in Orkney place-names, see 8.2.2.2).

### **Vishall** /<sup>h</sup>viʃəl/ (**Hill**)

ON (Sc)

Evie. HY 38 24.

*Vital Hill* ca. 1860 (map OA D/7/3/21).

A prominent hill in the middle of a rather densely populated area. Epexegetic *Hill* is a “map form”, not in local use (cf. 9.3.3). In early notes, H. Marwick interprets the name as ON *Véshóll* ‘(heathen) sanctuary hill’ and the farm-name *Hellicliff* as *Helgakleif* ‘the steep track to the holy place’. This is somewhat speculative, considering that there are no other certain examples of names referring to pagan cult. E. Marwick’s suggestion *Viti-fjall*, *-hóll* ‘beacon hill’ seems more well founded. OrknSaga chap. 68–71 describes an old network of beacons in the isles. Vishall is visible from a wide area and close to settlements and would certainly be an ideal place for a beacon. The medial *sh* /ʃ/ remains unexplained, however.

An alternative, admittedly somewhat speculative way of explaining *-sh-* is by assuming ON *hjallr* m ‘shelf’ to be a generic. The element is found in a number of Norw names, and *hj* > *sh* is a regular development (OrknN xlv). The interpretation could even be justified semantically. The top of Vishall is flat (according to local tradition it was cut off to form Dwarmo). Nearby *Grunshall*, which appears to contain the same generic (see above) could be conceived of as a shelf on the seaward side of Dwarmo. The suggested interpretation leaves the specific of Vishall unexplained.

### **Waas Wick** /<sup>h</sup>wazwik/

ON

Rendall. HY 41 22.

*Waswit* 1492 R, *-weik* 1503 R *Waas Wick* 1882 OS (a bay).

In the rentals, Waswick is farm (skatted as 3 pennyland together with How, and a part of Orquil in 1620 Sas.). On OS-maps, *Wass*

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

*Wick* denotes a bay. This is certainly the primary denotation, since the generic is ON *vík* ‘bay’. The specific could be gen. *Vaz* < *vatn* ‘water; loch’ (cf. *Lowrie’s Water above*), as suggested by Marwick (OFN: 121). There may once have been a small loch in the swampy area at the bottom of the bay. Alternatively, the specific could be *vágr* ‘narrow bay’ with loss of *g* (see 8.1.2.1). The seemingly pleonastic name *Vågsvik* is also found in Norway.

### **Wadi** /<sup>h</sup>wadi/

R. *Wadi* appears repeatedly as the name of fields next to burns. It is ultimately derived from ON *vað* ‘ford’, which is borrowed into the dialect (*waddie*<sup>35</sup> OrknN: 205). The language of formation is thus uncertain (cf. *Wades*, Evie with unambiguous Sc morphology).

### **Wallice** /<sup>h</sup>waliz/

Sc

A field near the school in Costa, E. The name has no generic denoting the kind of locality. The specific is a personal name, either the family name *Wallace* or *Wally’s*.

### **Warran**

ON

This is said to be a locality somewhat higher up in the hills than *The Warts* below, possibly identical with *Wart Tower* on 1846 ComE. The three names contain the element *varða* or the dialect loan word *wart* ‘beacon’. The final element *-an* in *Warran* appears to be a reflection of the ON def. article, and the name can thus be derived from *varðan* f def. ‘the beacon’, cf. *Verron* above. The loss of *ð* between vowels is regular and *v* > *w* is rather common in loan words of ON origin (see 4.4.1.4).

### **Ward, Wart(s)**

Sc

A number of hills in Orkney are called (*The*) *Ward* or *Wart*. The ultimate derivation is ON *varða* ‘beacon’. However, the actual names appear to be coined from (or adapted to) the dialect loan word

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<sup>35</sup> Marwick supposes *Waddie* to be a reflection of ON dative *vaði*, but it is more likely to be a Sc *ie*-suffix (see the discussions in 8.2.1 and 8.2.5).

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*wart* ‘beacon’ < *varða* f (OrknN: 206), as opposed to the *Verron* names, which seem to reflect a “natural development” of *varða*. Sc formation is supported by Sc articles in *The Wart* and *The Warts*.

### 1) **The Wart**

*Wart of Gorseness* 1900 OSNB.

The summit of Enyas Hill, R. There are traditions of beacon-fires in former times. Even if the hill is not high, it can be seen from most of the parish as well as from the sea, so it is certainly an ideal location for a beacon.

### 2) **Ward (Wart) of Redland**

Firth. HY 36 17.

The highest hill in the parish of Firth, with a view to most of the islands of Orkney and to Caithness. According to Firth, a beacon was built here in 1848 but the name may refer to a much older beacon. A system of beacons in the Northern Isles is described in Orkn-Saga ch. 67.

### 3) **Wart**

*Wart Ffn* 1931.

A field in Lettaly, F. The motivation behind the naming is obscure.

### 4) **Warts, The** /<sub>1</sub>ðə 'warts/

Evie. HY 34 25.

*Wart Hill* 1848 ComE.

A two-topped hill (marked as *The Wards* and *North Wards*) near Lowrie’s Water. Sc articles clearly indicate Sc formation.

### **Warto** /<sup>h</sup>warto/

A peat moss in Blubbersdale, R, said to be the same location as *Pulswarto*. Stress on the second syllable of *Pulswarto* may explain why the first part of the name, including the initial -s of *swarto*, has been dropped. -s may have been analysed as part of the specific, which often ends in genitive -s, and the formal similarity with Wart-names may also have contributed. An actual beacon in a peat moss in a valley seems unlikely.

**Waswyns**

ON

*Waswyns* Ffn 1931.

A field in Wasdale, F. It seems to reflect ON *Vatzkvín* f def. ‘the enclosure near the loch’. If this is true, the Sc plural marker must be a later addition. Cf. *Dishans*, (*Slap of*) *Geerons* and 9.3.1.

**Well of...**

Sc

The generic and periphrastic formations in the following names are Sc.

**1) Well of Devalt**

*Well of Devalt* Firth 1920.

A well in Redland, F. The specific could be the dialect word *deval* ‘a wet patch, a little swampy piece in a field’ (OrknN: 30), cf. the synonymous *dile* m in NO. A number of names have a final dental added, e.g. *Linneth*, *Midhiest*, *Aclath* (< *hlíðinna*, *miðhús*, *axla-*) in Harray and *Scuant* and *Leeants* in Birsay (see discussion in 8.2.2.2).

**2) The Well of Dum**

A well near Crowrar, R. The specific is uncertain, but it could possibly be related to Norw *dum* ‘dark, dull’, which might describe the colour of the water. (Cf. *dumbet* ‘dull of colour’ ShNorm 133?)

**3) Well of Gemuglo**

*Well of Gemuglo* Firth 1920.

A well east of Barm, F. The first element of *Gemuglo* cannot be identified, but the second element appears to be ON *mikill* or Sc *muckle* adj. ‘large’. It thus seems to be an “inverted compound” (an original place-name?), cf. 8.3.1.

**4) Well of Hewin**

A well near the coast below Midhouse in Costa, E. The specific is ON *haugrinn* m def. ‘the mound’ or more probably, a place-name coined from this word.

**5) Well of Ragan**

*Well of Ragan* Firth 1920.

A well in Redland, F. The specific is the name of a former croft on the slopes west of Estaban: *Raggan* 1848 ComF, *Ragan* 1920. *-an* often reflects the ON def. art., but there is no obvious ON interpretation of this name. Rather, it might be a Sc pres. participle formation ending in *-an* (cf. OrknN xxxi), containing *rag* v. “*of a wall* develop

## 6. *The name material*

cracks and bulges, come out of alignment” (CSD: 538). Semantically, this can be compared to other derogatory house-names such as *Windywas* and *Falldown*.

### 6) **Well of Sinnakilda**

*Well of Sinnakilda* Firth 1920.

A well and a croft in Redland, F. The well is the original denotation, as can be deduced from the generic ON *kelda* f ‘well’. The specific is probably ON \**sina* v., Norw *sine* v. ‘dry out’, referring to a well that dries up easily. Alternatively, it could be ON *sina* ‘grass from last year’. Both are dialect loan words (*sine*, *sinny-girs* OrknN: 155), but the ON generic indicates ON formation (cf. 7.1).

### 7) **Well of Stygault** /stɛi'gɔlt/

A well, possibly near Lyde, R. Sk. The specific would appear to be an ON “inverted compound” of *stia* f ‘enclosure’ and *galti/göltr* m ‘hog’, i.e. literally ‘enclosure pigs’. *Styes of Stygault* in Harray, used as summer pasture for pigs within living memory, may support this interpretation. Suffixed specifics are discussed in 8.3.1.

### 8) **The Wells of the Yarsows**

The wells are said to be in the *Pulswarto/Warto*-area in Rendall. The specific is probably an ON compound name, in which *-ow* reflects *haugr* m ‘knoll’. The first element is uncertain. Marwick (1995: 75) suggests *jaðarr* m ‘rim, margin’ for Rousay *Yarso*.

### **Well Park**

Sc

A modern field-name in Binscarth, F. There is a well in the field. Park is the common dialect term for a field.

### **West Park**

Sc

E. A purely Sc formation ‘west field’.

### **West Taing**

Rendall. HY 41 17.

*West Taing* 1882 OS.

The westernmost tip of Crookness. Both elements are common to ON and Orkney Sc, which leaves the language of formation open.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

The dialect word *taing*, *teeng* < ON *tangi* (OrknN: 188) means ‘a point’.

### **Wheean** /ˈmiːn/

ON

A field name in Costa(?), derived from ON *f* def. *kvín* ‘the enclosure’. The spelling reflects the traditional pronunciation /ˈmiː/ (see 5.5.13). The form is recorded after A. Marwick of Whitemire, who normally uses /miː/-forms.

### **Wheeling Cross** /ˈmiːlɪn ˌkrɒs/

Sc

The name refers to a big, flat in Gorseness Hill near Hogarth, R. According to the tradition, this was a resting place for funeral processions. The same explanation is given for two *Wheeliecreus* /krɒs/ in Stronsay and Stronsay (Lamb 1993: 115, OrknN: 208). The first element is a Sc verbal noun *wheeling* v ‘resting’. The verb is a borrowing of ON *hvíla* v. ‘rest’. In this name, the specific appears to be *cross*, but the Northern Isles forms rather suggest *crue* ‘small enclosure’, see 5.5.6. The precise denotation remains unclear, but wheeling crues would certainly make sense for people herding animals from a to b.

### **Wheenobrya**

ON

*Wheenobrya* Ffn 1931.

A field in Netherbigging, F. The origin is a form of *Kvín breiða*, literally ‘the enclosure broad’; both elements display reflections of ON case morphology. *Whee-* reflects the traditional pronunciation /miː/ (cf. *Wheean* above). Suffixed specifics are treated in 8.3.1.

### **Wheetersinnins**

*Wheetersinnins* Firth 1920.

A former pasture north of the peat mosses of Backatown, F. The first element could be *quoy/kví* f ‘enclosure’ (cf. *Wheean*), but this leaves the rest of the name unexplained. Alternatively, the name may have been coined from Sc *withershins* ‘the wrong way round, anti-clockwise’ (CSD: 799). It is not quite clear how this should apply to a piece of land, however.

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### **Whistlebare**

Sc

*Whistlebare* 1848 ComF, Ffn 1931.

Refers to a field in Savil in 1931, to a house east of Smogarth on the ComF-map. A number of houses in Orkney bear this name, which Marwick leaves unexplained (OFN: 20). Field (1993: 59) relates *Whistling Ground* to ‘its windswept location’. Perhaps *Whistlebare* is a similar description of bare, windswept locations?

### **White Perks**

Sc

The field at Lower Bigging, R, closest to Gorseness Hill. A Sc compound of *park* ‘field’ and *white*. The latter normally refers to white plants, and in Eng field-names tends to be an indication of inferior, waterlogged soil (Field 1993: 31). The spelling *perk* reflects the traditional pronunciation /perk/ of *park*.

### **Willha(II)**

Sc

*Willhall* 1882 OS.

A house east of Quoyfree on 1882 OS and subsequently a field-name. The name appears to be a rather young Sc compound of the masculine name *Will* and the generic *hall*. Hall is quite popular in younger house-names (see 5.5.9), and *Hall of Rendall* may have served as local inspiration.

### **Windbreck**

The name occurs repeatedly in Orkney. Marwick wants to see the archaic ON element *vin* f ‘natural meadow’ in this name and a few others (OFN: 107). *Vin* is found in Norwegian names of high age, but the noun disappears from ON at an early stage. Such an archaic element appears unlikely in names of late-recorded crofts in unfavourable locations. The interpretation *vind-brekka* ‘wind-slope’ or even Sc *wind-breck* (*breck* see 5.5.4.) would seem appropriate in most instances. Cf. *Lyking* and *Vinquin*, 6.1.

#### **1) Upper, Lower & Outer Windbreck**

Sc

*Windbreck* 1629 wt, 1801 Sas.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Once farm in Rendall tunship, disappeared by 1882. The name survives in the names of three fields: *Upper, Lower and Outer Windbreck*. The soil in Windbreck is quite good, on a slope providing natural draining. However, even here an interpretation *vind-brekka* is as well founded as *vinjar-brekka* 'pasture-slope', since the fields extend to the top of the ridge Rendall and Gorseness.

### 2) **Windbreck** /'winbræk/

*House of Windbreck* 1802 Sas.

The name obviously denoted a house in 1802. It presently denotes a field in Aikerness, E, on the northern slope of Vishall. Aikerness Windbreck is definitely exposed from all directions but the south, and a specific *wind* or *vindr* would apply. The generic could be ON *brekka* 'slope' or dial. *brecks* 'untilled land' (5.5.4), and the formation language must thus remain open.

### **Yard o' Muckle Pow**

Sc

A Sc periphrastic formation. The specific is the farm-name *Muckle Pow*, E.



## Chapter 7. Name formation

Orkney place-names contain elements from two linguistic systems, Norse and Scots. No pre-Norse stratum can be discerned in the place-names, either because the Norse settlers of Orkney adapted borrowed names to such an extent that they appear to be Old Norse<sup>1</sup> or because they totally ignored the names of the Picts and coined their own. Individual place-names may contain Old Norse as well as Scots elements. The first part of this chapter explores the coining of such “bilingual” names. Most importantly, I try to establish criteria by which the formation language of such names can be decided. This is possible only for place-names that are motivated or descriptive in the widest sense. Analogical formations and transferred names have to be treated separately, and these are discussed in part 2.

### 7.1. Formation language

Before trying to establish criteria for the formation language of such names, some basic principles should be made clear. First, the term ‘Old Norse names’ can only be used in a diachronic sense. From a synchronic point of view, these are Scots names of Old Norse origin, since Orkney is now a monolingual society, and the originally Old Norse names only exist as substratum borrowing in the Scots dialect. Like any other borrowed element, place-names are phonetically adapted to the borrowing language, and possibly undergo further adaptations. From a diachronic point of view, however, we may distinguish between an older layer of Norse formations and a younger layer of Scots formations.

Secondly, we have to distinguish between the linguistic origin of the place-name elements and the formation language of the place-name as such. Both appellatives and proper nouns can be borrowed, and this may obscure the connection between the etymological ori-

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<sup>1</sup> This goes for the name *Orkneyar* ‘the Orkneys’, which is recorded as *Orchades* on Ptolemy’s map from the first century AD. No other pre-Norse name forms are recorded.

gin of the place-name elements and the formation language. One example of confusion is Marwick's classification of *bu of*-names as an ON class on par with *staðir* and *bólstaðr* (OFN: 240). In this case the appellative *bu* is borrowed into the local Scots dialect, in which it has come to denote a central farm, often a result of early amalgamation: *The Bu of Hoy*, *The Bu of Rendall*. Thus, the element '(the) bu of' in place-names is Scots, as is clearly indicated by the Scots preposition *of*.

Names containing elements from more than one language have been called *hybrid names*. The term is unfortunate, as it conveys the idea of names coined with elements from two different linguistic systems. I will consider monolingual coinages as the rule, on the fundamental linguistic principle that a linguistic unit is usually monolingual, even if the speaker is bilingual. A code shift within the unit of a place-name is certainly improbable. If the elements of a name have different origins, we should rather consider whether one of the elements is a loan, or whether a borrowed name has been partly adapted. For adaptations, see chapter 9.

When defining the formation language, generics should have priority. Since these normally describe the locality, they will be chosen from the living language. The three names *Boat Meadow*, *Boat Geo* and *Boats Hellia* may serve as examples. Their common specific may either be Sc. 'boat' or the synonymous ON *bátr*. Naming a meadow 'meadow' requires a competence of Scots, whereas calling a flat rock rear the sea '*hella*' requires a competence of Old Norse. For various reasons, this simple rule is not satisfactory. Most importantly, the ON appellative *gjá* 'cleft, ravine' has been borrowed into the local dialect in the form *geo*, which is the common term for a steep inlet of the sea. This means that the formation language of *Boat Geo* is ambiguous. When a new name is formed, the namer will make use of his total linguistic competence. For a Scots speaking Orcadian this includes the knowledge of an onomasticon, i.e. the total inventory of proper nouns of Norse origin as well as appellatives borrowed from Norse. Calling a house *Coopersquoy* or giving a stream a secondary name such as *Burn of Orquil* does not require language competence beyond Scots. Both the farm-name *Orquil* <

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ON *árvísl* ‘forking of a stream’ and the appellative *quoy* < ON *kvi* ‘enclosure’, eventually becoming the most common generic in habitation names, are familiar. In many cases, the namers have a choice between elements of Scots and Norse origin. The preference of *quoy* and *bu* to *croft* and *manor* demonstrates the influence of the existing onomasticon in place-name formation.

### 7.1.1. Norse formations

As mentioned above, a Norse generic is an indication, but no proof of Norse coinage, since Scots may use borrowed appellatives when coining new names. A further complication is the transfer of existing names to a new locality or structure. This means that a house built in the Scots-speaking period may get a Norse name. A house called *Ness* < ON *nes* ‘headland’ in Rendall is first recorded in 1882 and is not marked on older maps. The name is Norse in form, though it was coined about a century too late to be a Norse formation. This could be explained in different ways. The name may be transferred from the locality where the house was built (denotation shift, see 7.2.1 below), or *ness* may have been a current appellative in the dialect when the name was coined.<sup>2</sup> As a third alternative the name may have been available through the onomasticon. It may have been transferred from another locality bearing this name, or it may have been chosen because *Ness* is a typical name similar localities. The house is situated on a headland called *Crookness*, so in this case both the name and situation may favour the choice of the element *ness*.

Additional elements of Norse origin, besides the generics, are further indication of Norse formation. These include reflexes of case and gender morphology and the post-positioned definite articles, such as in *Lamaquoy* (< *lamba* gen. pl. of ON *lamb* ‘lamb’) and *Queean* (< *kvín*, fem. sing. def. of ON *kvi* ‘enclosure’). Approximately 12% of the names contain reflexes of the definite articles. Even if some of them are first recorded in the 1800’s, e.g. the Firth field names *Lunan* and *Bismira*, the morphological reflexes are

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<sup>2</sup> *Ness* is not included in ON, but it is included in CSD: “a headland *la 15-*, *chf Sh Ork*, in *place-names la 12-*“

fairly certain indications of Norse formation.<sup>3</sup> In some cases, the specifics are the only indications of Norse origin. This is the case for *Iverhouse* and *Nearhouse* in Rendall, where the generic is common to Norse and Scots, whereas the specifics point to ON *øfri* and *neðri*, ‘upper’ and ‘lower’.

If the generic is a Norse element with a definite article, we may also expect a Norse specific is Norse. One exception is the house-name *Gutterpitten*. A Norse generic *pyttrinn* or *pyttarnir* ‘the pool’ or ‘the pools’ with the definite article indicates Norse formation, but the specifying element ‘gutter’ is obviously Scots. The interpretation ‘gutter pools’ is supported by a map of the township from 1862, which depicts a number of little pools close to the house. According to Marwick (OFN: 122) the name form is puzzling. One possible explanation is that *gutter* was borrowed into Norse; in this case the formation would be regular. Alternatively, *gutter* might be a translation of an originally Norse element (semantic adaptations are treated in ch. 9.2). The specific is less likely to be a later addition, since epexegetic elements normally describe the locality. A hypothetical epexegetic of *Pitten* would thus be *\*Pows of Pitten*.

Norse name formation gives a terminus ante quem. The names must have been coined while the Norse language was still a living language, i.e. no later than the early 1700’s in the areas where Norn survived the longest. About 40% of the place-names included from Firth and Evie and nearly 35% of the names from Rendall seem to be Norse formations. These numbers include compound names with two elements of Norse origin, non-compound names with reflexes of Norse morphology, and some non-compound names in which the generic is not known to be borrowed into Scots. For habitative names, the percentage of Norse formations is nearly 60%.

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<sup>3</sup> There are a few exceptions, where reflexes of the definite article seem to have originated as late adaptations to common place-name patterns, e.g. *Breck* > *Breckan* and *Stack of Rusht* > *Tooin of Rusht*.

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### 7.1.2. Scots formations

From the 14<sup>th</sup> century there has been an influential group of Scots in Orkney (see 2.3), but it takes quite a while for the Scots language to make its way to place-names. The oldest recording of a scottified form is *Firth* in the 1502 rental for the Orkneyinga Saga *Fiaurþ* (ON *ffjörðr*). In the 1595 rentals there are some more examples: *Banks*<sup>4</sup> and *Cruik* in Rendall, the latter could be an adaptation of ON *krókr* ‘bend, corner’. *Kingshouse* in Harray was called *Mydgarth* in the 1503 rentals, one the rare examples of name shift.<sup>5</sup> In the 1600s more Scots or potentially Scots names appear: *Dyke* in Evie (*Dyk* 1618 Sas.), Sc ‘fence’, *Newbigging* in Redland (1619 Sas) and probably *Sundiehouse* (1629) and *Netherbigging* in Costa. A name like *Pow* in Costa (1618 Sas) could have Scots or Norse origin (ON. *pollr* ‘pool’), but the *l*-less form is Scots. The oldest recordings of names consisting of a Norse generic and Sc plural article are found in the first rentals (1492), *Quoyis* being the only example from the investigation area. Other early examples of names with elements from both languages include *Flawis* (1656 Ret) and *Holm of Grim-buster* (1664 Ch).

The main point in this context has been to show the earliest traces of Scots influence, and not to discuss whether the names are adaptations of earlier names (adaptations are discussed in chapter 9) or new Scots formations. The examples indicate that Scots influence on the name material is only sporadic before the mid-1500s, and that the actual breakthrough for Scots in place-names is the 1600s. The Scots element is still low compared to the Norse, however. This is supported by a small study of names in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century records.

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<sup>4</sup> *Banks* in Birsay is recorded in the 1492 rentals. Marwick regards this as an adaptation of ON *bakkar* ‘banks, slopes’ (OFN: 131). This is purely hypothetical, as no Norse form is recorded. A Scots name formation this early would be exceptional, but as long as there are Scots speakers, it is certainly possible.

<sup>5</sup> The 1502-rental informs us that parts of the township to which *Mydgarth* alias *Kingshouse* belongs is under Scots ownership. This may be one reason for the name shift, but still it is exceptional. A majority of Orkney farms came under Scottish ownership, but this very rarely led to a change of names.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

1) From Rendall, 26 place-names are recorded by 1629, from various rentals and a witch trial. Only one of those, *Banks*, is purely Scots in its form. Five of the names are of uncertain origin: *Cruik*, *Poldrite*, *Uppetown*, *Windbreck*, *Sundiehouse*. In Traills accounts 100 years later we find another four or five names consisting of Scots elements, namely *Drythall*, *Quoy(b)lecke* (possibly containing the family name *Black*), *Bou of Rendell*, *Quoyhendrie* and the uncertain *Opahouse*.

2) Grimbuster saisines from the 1600s and 1700s contain 23 different names, mainly from Firth.

Of these, only *Firth* have a Scots form (this is certainly an adaptation of ON (*Aurriða*)*ffjörðr* ‘trout firth’), whereas *Millquoy* and *Quoy Sinclair* are probably Scots formations.

3) Saisines from Northwest Mainland 1617–21 (Firth, Rendall, Evie, Harray, Stenness and Sandwick parishes) list a total of ca. 110 names. Of these, *Dyke* (3 instances) is Scots. The construction indicates Scots origin for *Hendirtown of Zeskenabie*. The linguistic origin for *Pow* and *Cot in Widweik* is uncertain. This is also the case for *Newclet* and *Lytilquoy in Quoyis*, which contain elements from both languages. They could be Scots adaptations of Norse coinages or Scots coinages with ON loan words.

4) Retours 1610–1648 for the isles has some 200 entries. Four are Scots, namely *Banks*, *Mylnfield*, *Dyke*, *Tippitoiscroft*. 14–16 contain Scots elements, most commonly *s*-plural: *Aikiris*, *Clettis*, *Gravis*, *Halfquoyis*, *Quoyis* (4 times), *Stowis*, *Wallis* and *Pentland Skerries* and with uncertain generics: *Langtas* and *Aistas*. Three are periphrastic genitive constructions, written *de* (the source is in Latin): *Bull de Ropness*, *Bow de Hoy*, *Hall de Holland*.

5) Charters 1664–65 (Firth, Rendall, Evie, Birsay, Harray and Stenness parishes) contain a total of 103 names. Scots are: *Banks* (two different localities), *Couperhouse*, *Nortons*, *Swordsland* and probably *Souples land* and *Garicotts land* and the *of*-construction *Holm of Grimbuster*. The origin of *Aikers* and *Quoyis* is uncertain.

The percentage of names of purely Scots form in these sources ranges from 2–6, rising to about 10% if individual Scots elements are included (most commonly plural *-s*). In addition, there is a group of names of uncertain origin.

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### 7.1.2.1. Criteria for Scots formation

About 15 % of the total name material from Evie and Firth and scarcely 25% of names from Rendall consist of exclusively Scots elements.<sup>6</sup> But as we have seen, a number of Norse appellatives were borrowed from Norse into the local dialect, so Scots formation may well contain Norse elements. *Quoy* < ON *kví* ‘enclosure’ is the most frequent name element of all in Orkney. Other frequent elements include *geo* < *gjá* ‘cleft, ravine’, *breck* < *brekka* ‘slope, bank’ and *gar(th)* < *garðr* ‘farm’. Several of these develop name-specific meanings, which survive the language shift, e.g. *quoy* of crofts and *geo* of narrow inlets of the sea. If these are used as non-compound names, the formation language cannot be established. In many cases other elements will give a clue, especially if the specifying element is Scots. Thus, it is quite unproblematic to assume Scots formation for *Clay Geo*, *Heathery Quoy* and *Quoyblackie* and similar names with Scots specifics.

Scots grammatical morphemes alone are a somewhat more uncertain indicator. Names like *The Geo* and *Flaws* may be Scots formations with borrowed appellatives, but they could also be Norse formations with translated grammatical morphemes. Translation of morphemes can only be proved if a name is previously recorded with a Norse grammatical morpheme, like *i Stufum* (‘in the stubs’, dat. pl.) 1362 (DN II: 170) > *Stowis* 1492 (see 9.2.1). I have not found other similar developments. As a rule, early recordings increase the probability of Norse formation, as Scots formations are rare before 1550–1600. For names recorded later than this, Scots formation should be considered, and it is more likely the later it is first recorded. For instance *Quoys* in North Evie is first recorded in 1841 and is likely to be a Scots formation. Another *Quoys* in Inner Evie is recorded in 1492, and this could well be a morphological adaptation of an originally Norse name. It should be noted that by using such extra-linguistic criteria, we run the risk of circular con-

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<sup>6</sup> The difference between the parishes is mainly due to the sources available. In Rendall, I was given access to a collection of more recent field names, nearly all being of Scots origin.

clusions. Exceptionally early Scots formations may be regarded as adaptations, just because they are early.

Locally, *of* is often used to express relation, and *of*-periphrasis is very frequent in place-names: *Burn of Orquil*, *Point of Hisber*, *Well of Ragan*. These names also have Scots generics. In other cases the generics are borrowed from Norse, like *Bu of Rapness*, *Holm of Grimbister*, *Geo of Verron*, but the construction nevertheless makes it clear that the names are Scots formations. In all the examples quoted, the specifying element is a place-name. This is obviously a preferred pattern when coining secondary names, about 4/5 of all names with place-names as their specifics are *of*-constructions. We may imagine a Scots-speaking farmer in 19<sup>th</sup> century Orkney about to name a new field. For a generic, he may choose any appropriate word in his lexicon, field, *green*, *park* or possibly *quoy*. To distinguish this field from all his other fields, the farmer may well use an existing place-name, which is likely to be of Norse origin. The result may be a name like *Breckan Park*, but more commonly with *of*-periphrasis: *Park of Fursan*, *Meadow of Cruan*. (A further treatment of *of*-periphrasis is found in 8.3.2).

When Scots elements are added to ON names, a new Scots name is formed. This pertains to epexegetic forms such as *Lyde Road* < *Lyde* (< ON *leið* 'road, way', cf. 9.3.3). This also goes for On specified by Scots adjectives or adverbs such as *Upper* and *Lower Durrisdale* and *Peedie Boray*.

The percentage of Scots name-formations in the material as a whole appears to be about 45-50%.

### **7.1.3. Uncertain formation language**

If the elements of place-names are current in both languages, and particularly if no old records are available, the formation language cannot be established. This goes for 10–15 % of the names. A lot of Norse words have been borrowed into the dialect. In addition, Norse and Scots are closely related languages, meaning that many words have similar forms from the outset. For these reasons, the linguistic origin of *Sand Geo* cannot be established. *Sand* is common to both languages, and *geo* has been borrowed into the local Scots dialect. Some habitative elements are also very similar, e.g. *land*, *hús/house*



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and *tún/town*. This makes the formation language of *Mydhouse* (1503 R) and *Uppetown* (1629 wt) ambiguous. Even though we have written evidence that Scots and Norn were regarded as separate languages and that one was unable to understand the other language if one had not learnt it, we may assume some sort of semi-communication on name element level. This is partly because many frequent place-name elements are so similar, like *hús/house*, *tún/town*, but also because some denote very visible formations, like *hammer* (*hamarr* ‘steep face of bare rock’) and *howe* < *haugr* ‘mound, hillock’.

Old Norse formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- can only be regarded as certain if the name contains reflexes of Norse articles or case morphology: <i>Ernie Tooin, Quina</i></li> <li>- a generic of ON origin is an indication of possible ON formation, which is supported if there are additional Norse elements: <i>Fisk Hellya</i></li> </ul>
Scots formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- all elements are Scots, including local borrowings from Norse: <i>Sunnybanks, Clay Geo.</i></li> <li>- a Scots generic is specified with an existing place-name of Norse origin: <i>Breckan Park</i></li> <li>- <i>of</i>-constructions: <i>Bu of Hoy.</i></li> </ul>
Uncertain	if all elements are known in both Norse and the local Scots dialect: <i>Boat Geo, Midhouse</i>

Figure 7.1. Indications of formation language.

## 7.2. Analogy in place name-formation

Place-name formation can be seen as a truly creative process, where a locality is analysed, a characteristic feature selected, and a descriptive name given on the basis of elements in the lexicon. In this way, a locality is bestowed an individual, descriptive name independently of other names in the area, in what could be termed primary, motivated place-name formation. But not all names are primary and motivated in this strict sense. On the contrary, names tend to follow rather standardised patterns, and are often based on existing names in the area. In addition, the name giver may elect a name used elsewhere.

The process at work in such cases is *analogy*. Webster's dictionary gives the following definition of linguistic analogy: "a linguistic process by which words or phrases are created or re-formed according to existing patterns in the language [...]". Translated to names, analogy is a process whereby names are created or adapted to existing patterns in the language (including the onomasticon). The term *onomasticon* was introduced in Scandinavian place-name research by Nicolaisen, as a matter of fact in connection with Scandinavian place-names in Scotland. Nicolaisen (1978: 46) writes: "the early Scandinavian settlers [...] brought with them, and used, in addition to a lexicon reflecting the vocabulary of the homeland, an onomasticon which was the product of the onomastic dialect of that same homeland". Since then, several name scholars have used the term onomasticon as a parallel to lexicon (cf. fig. 7.2 under 7.2.5 below). The quotation does not reveal whether the onomasticon is pictured as the total inventory of names or it may also include patterns for name formation. The term lexicon has a narrow and a broad definition: within the generative tradition it is commonly seen as the vocabulary, the list of words. Within cognitive linguistics, elements and principles for word formation is included in the lexicon.<sup>7</sup> The wide lexicon definition, including patterns for word formation is easily transferred to onomasticon, in fact Aitchison (2003: 136) uses place-

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<sup>7</sup> E.g. Aitchison 2003: 126 f.

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names as examples of speakers' competence of linguistic elements and patterns for word formation.

The following section will deal with various kinds of analogy in place-name formation as well as direct transfer of name from one locality to the other. Such naming practise has been the topic of some discussion in recent Nordic and British onomastics.<sup>8</sup> An important reason why name scholars try to identify analogy in names is the fact that these names cannot be treated on par with primary names when establishing the linguistic origin and the relative chronology of names. The field is still rather new, and a standard terminology has not yet developed. Thus the organisation below is my attempt at organising some of the ideas presented by other scholars, furnished with examples from the Orkney material.

### 7.2.1. Name transfer

The term 'name transfer' is used in a wide sense, to cover all direct transfer of names from one locality to another. The process of naming is the same in every case: an unanalysed named is transferred directly to a new locality. What varies is how far away the name giver looks for a name.

#### *Denotation shift*

Denotation shift implies the transfer of an existing name to a new denotation in the immediate vicinity, the obvious example being transfer of topographical names to settlements built on or near the localities bearing those names. In the Orkney material there is also a number of examples of fields named after former houses on the site. For instance seven of the field names in the township of Rendall are named after vanished houses: *The Dale*, *Faegie*, *Gravan*, *The Hammer*, *Smerhouse*, *Willhall* and *Windbreck*. Some of the houses were in their turn named after topographical features: *The Hammer*, *The Dale*, *Gravan* and *Windbreck*.

Field names with habitative generics, like *Smerhouse* and *Willhall* demonstrate that the original etymology is irrelevant in trans-

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<sup>8</sup> E.g. Strandberg 1987, Pamp 1991, Bakken 1994, Nyström 1995, in English Nicolaisen 1991, Brink 1996.

fers. The same is true for *Lyde* (< ON *leið* ‘road’), name of a croft near the hill road between Rendall and Harray. Locally, this word may have developed a specialised meaning ‘area with a road running through’, see the discussion of *The Lydes of Orquil* (6.2). The croft is not marked on the 1882 OS map, but *Liod* occurs as a name of the area. A topographical feature *Cups of Liod. Chair of Lyde* (< ON *kjarr* ‘brushwood on swampy ground’) is recorded on the 1848 ComF. We may conclude that the road or the area with the road running through is the primary named locality, *Chair of Lyde* and *Cups of Lyde* are secondary formations, whereas the croft name *Lyde* seems to be a direct transfer. The road is now called *Lyde Road*.

*Trundigar* in Rendall is a case of repeated denotation shift. The name was chosen for a house built in the 1990s, after the field where it was built. The field name was previously transferred from a vanished farm. Denotation shift may also explain the reflex of ON morphology in a number of houses which are not recorded until the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, e.g. *Queena* (< *kvína* ‘the enclosure’) in Rendall and *Cruan* (*krúin* ‘the enclosure’) in Firth. None of them are recorded in the first census or the perambulation maps. The names are most probably transferred field names.

As stated above, such names may cause chronological problems if they are not identified as transfers. Evidently, Norse naming is out of the question after the Norse language died out. Rather, the names are given by Scots speakers familiar with the local onomasticon. The names in such cases are transferred as unanalysed units, with no regard to etymological origin or appropriateness (cf. Dalberg 1991: 131). Metonymy or geographical closeness is the triggering factor. This is very rational from a functional point of view, as the transferred names draw on the identifying property of established names. Everyone who knows the original *Trundigar* field will know where the house is situated. However, one possible complication of name transfer is that two names may result in two localities bearing the same name. This may be solved by coining a new epexegetic name for one of them. Thus there is *Lyde Road* as opposed to the area called *Lyde* and *Hall of Rendall*, to distinguish the farm from the parish *Rendall*. The fields *Smerhouse* and *Faegie* are somewhat dif-

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ferent, as they probably got their names after the respective houses were disused – as a kind of name inheritance.

### *Transfer of names from other locations*

In addition to metonymic denotation shift, local as well as national and international names may be transferred. Compared to denotation shifts, such transfers seem to be a fairly modern phenomenon, at least in the Orkney material. Transferred names are associated with the 19<sup>th</sup> century, being given to new crofts established after the division of the commonities. This is evident from the peripheral situation and lack of early records.

Let us first have look on some of the local transfers. In the Har-ray hillside, there was a croft called *Gaitnip* (as a field name the name survived the croft). It is first recorded in the 1841 census as *Gatenip*, and may just have been established, after the division of the commonity. A Norse formation is unlikely at this point. Rather, the name is probably given after *Gatenip* in St. Ola. In a hillside in Rendall are the ruins of a *Hayon*, said to be named after a farm called so in Birsay. Another hillside croft in Rendall is called *Graemshall*<sup>9</sup>, a perfectly plausible Scots formation, especially if it could be related to someone named Graeme. But since Graemshall in Holm was one of the largest farms in Orkney in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>10</sup> the possibility of name transfer should be taken into consideration.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The Scots name is due to one of the rare examples of recorded renaming of farms. The form in older rentals is *Meall*, the renaming taking place after it became property of the Graham family in the 1600s.

<sup>10</sup> Thomson 1987: 235 f.

<sup>11</sup> Transfer may explain some of the reoccurring names, even if one cannot tell which one is the original name and which one a younger “copy”. OFN lists three *Lyking*, probably from ON *leikvin* ‘sports field’. The Sandwick *Lyking* is recorded as a farm in the first rentals, whereas *Lyking* in Rendall is first recorded in 1841. The name could possibly be transferred from a field, but the croft is situated on a slope which does not immediately seem ideal for sports. Thus naming after the Sandwick locality seems to be a distinct possibility. Other recurrent farm names are *Holland* (12 instances), *Garson* (9), *Grindally* and *Kirbister* (7).

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

Among the peripheral houses in Harray are *London* (1841), *York* (1841) and a vanished *Newcastle*. *London* is also found in Rousay and Eday (where travellers by air may be surprised to land at London airport). Marwick suggest an ON origin *Lundrinn* m ‘the copse’ (OFN: 49 f.). But since these are all new houses or crofts, absent from old records, with a peripheral situation (and there are no natural copses in Orkney), a transfer is more likely. In Evie, the former croft called *Hull* was probably another instance of transfer. Naming houses after major towns and cities is unusual in Norway, but according to Pamp (1991: 158), there are dozens of *Stockholm* in Scania.

Names of minor localities are also recycled. *Clickimin* is the name of several houses in Shetland and Orkney, presumably named after pubs in Scotland (Smith 1995: 27). The name is found in Firth, and there has also been a *Clickimin* in Evie. *Hoversta* in Rendall, absent from early records and the 1882 OS-maps, may be transferred from Shetland, where it occurs twice (Stewart 1987: 253, 256). The form itself indicates that it does not belong to the group of Orkney *staðir*-names, which normally develop into *-ston*. In Shetland, however, the modern reflex is *-sta* (Jakobsen 1936: 100).

Locally, people from Harray have to put up with some jokes because they are the only inlanders in the isles. In the material I have studied, however, Harray stands out in adopting international names. I was informed that the field name *Manitoba* was given to commemorate a relative who had settled in the province of the same name in Canada (probably a Hudson Bay Company man). In this case, there is a personal motivation for the name transfer. The hill *Spy on Cop* in Harray is named after *Spion Kop*, a battle field in the Boer War (cf. Field 1993: 63). Interestingly, the name has already been reanalysed, and a new explanatory story associates the name with the Jacobean rebellion in 1745. The battle in South Africa is now forgotten, whereas the Jacobean rebellion is a living part of Scots tradition and folklore. Exotic examples from Harray include *Madras House* and *Ballarat House*, named after towns in India and Australia.

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There are few examples of international names in the other parishes. The recent name *Como* of a deserted croft in the brecks in Rendall is possibly named after the Italian location, though the element *mo* could be local (see 5.5.12). On the 1882 OS maps, *Cadiz* is the name of a house in Firth. This is certainly a transfer of the Spanish name, no native etymology is possible.

### *The motivation for name transfer*

By choosing a name used elsewhere, an associative link to the original location carrying this name is created. The motivation for doing so may vary. We have seen that there may be a personal link. When the tenants on the west coast of Rousay were evicted in the 1800s, they chose the old names for the new houses where they were resettled. An even more unfortunate man in Birsay was evicted twice. He established two new crofts, first *Dale* east of Loch of Swannay, later *Dale* west of the loch (Marwick 1970: 44 f.).

The name *Gairsay* in the moors near Hackland may seem out of place, but this is where the Gairsay tenants cut their peat. A somewhat unusual instance is *Boardhouse* in Harray (built after 1831). The name fairly certainly relates to *Boardhouse* in Birsay, but the inspiration to choose this name is rather unusual. The inspiration is probably a mile stone close to the house, on which the distance is given from Boardhouse in Birsay. *Pantland Craigs* in Evie appear to be named after *Pentland Firth*. What Evie Sound and the Pentland Firth have in common are dangerous currents, could this have influenced the choice of name?

Even in the more exotic names there may be a personal link, cf. *Manitoba* above. Today one cannot tell whether the name givers of *Madras House*, *Ballarat*, *London* and *Newcastle* had relatives in these locations, or if they had visited the towns as sailors. According to local tradition, it was popular for sailors who had made money to buy farms in Harray, since these were independent “odal” farms.<sup>12</sup> To establish the motivation in individual cases, extra-linguistic information is required.

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<sup>12</sup> *Oðal* or *odel* is the Old Norse inheritance system, odallers were freeholders.

### 7.2.2 *Transfer of name elements?*

The reuse of place-name elements in new names is normally termed analogical formation. It resembles transfer in the sense that the namer chooses elements from the onomasticon rather than the lexicon. Gammeltoft (2001: 288 ff) lists a number of late analogical formations in *-bister*. *Skelbist* in Gairsay, recorded as *Scelbister* in 1723, could be another example. If it were a primary *bólstaðr*-name, one would expect it to appear in rentals (cf. 5.5.3). However, *Skelbist* may be an old name left unrecorded because Gairsay is treated as a unit in the rentals. Alternatively it could either be a transfer of *Skelbister* in Sanday or a formation with familiar place-name elements. In this case, both elements are known locally. There are two *bisters* in the parish, *Ellibister* and *Isbister*, and the generic could be *skail*, trad. /skil, skjil/, like in *Langskaill*, name of the major farm in the island.

The house *Cruanbreck* does not appear in the 1882 OS, but the area is called *Breck of Cruan*, so the name giver has certainly drawn on a local name. He or she is probably familiar with local patterns for place-name formation and assumes the compound and the *of*-construction to be interchangeable, like in *Harray Loch – Loch of Harray*. In the actual case, the reflex of the definite article in *Cruan* indicates that the name cannot be an Old Norse formation, as the definite article of the specific would have been dropped in the compound. Rather, both *Cruanbreck* and *Breck of Cruan* are secondary to a place-name *Cruan* < *krúin* f def. On the other hand, *Rushabreck*, name of a house in Evie, seems to be a genuine ON composition. However, the specific is Sc 'rush(es)', indicating Scots formation. The namer may have found the pattern in names of ON origin, where *a*-composition<sup>13</sup> is frequent, cf. *Longa Tonga*, *Looma Shun*.

A house in Evie, formerly a gospel hall, bears the somewhat puzzling name *Kirkatof*. This seems to be unaltered ON. When talking to the owners, I was informed that the name was coined by the historian and ethnologist Ernest Marwick. His knowledge of Old Norse enabled him to create an Old Norse name in modern time.

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<sup>13</sup> The compositional element *a* is a reflex of various morphemes in ON case morphology.



## 7. Name formation

This name formation is actually an anachronism, whereas the other examples are quite regular Scots coinages. The Old Norse elements are not chosen from the vocabulary, but rather from the onomasticon.

### 7.2.3. Contents analogy

Nicolaisen (1991: 151) uses the term “contents analogy” to denote analogous formations that are semantically appropriate. Two of his examples are *Sandwick* < *Sandvik* ‘sandy bay’ and *Sennes* < *Selnes* ‘seal headland’, found in Orkney and common throughout the Scandinavian-speaking world. They differ from name transfers in characterising the localities in the same way as primary formations. Strandberg (1987: 247) states that they would have been possible without a pre-existing pattern, in other words they are linguistically and semantically integrated.

I quite agree with Strandberg and Nicolaisen that name givers tend to use familiar names. It is still problematic to define a category on the basis of processes in the name givers’ minds, rather than a clear-cut group of names. For individual names, we cannot actually decide whether they are primary or analogous formations, as long as the elements are found in the lexicon and are semantically appropriate. Thus the discussion in Scandinavian onomastics whether all *Bjørkøys* and *Oppsals* in Norway are named after the famous *Birka* and *Uppsala* in Sweden is unfortunate (J. Sandnes 1998). Namers may certainly have similar names in mind when they coin new names. But for the individual name, this can only be ascertained if we have access to the namer’s motivation for selecting a particular name, and this is only possible for very young names. The field name *Greenland* in a Rendall hillside may serve as an example. Both elements are productive in Scots. The place name formation is motivated if the field stood out as a green patch when the name was given, today the entire hillside is cultivated. However it is very likely that whoever coined the name was inspired by the island name when *Greenland* was preferred to *Green Brae* or *Green Park*, since land is an unusual element in Scots field names.

Another form of content analogy is what Andersson (1996: 23) calls ready-made characterising names. Nicolaisen (1991: 150) uses

the term instant names “available to namers ... immediately, ready-made, off-the-peg so to speak, without previous detailed lexical analysis”. According to Nicolaisen, Norse settlers used such “instant names” in the Northern Isles. Like we saw above, such names will appear as motivated and integrated in the onomasticon, and can hardly be distinguished from primary names. A possible example from the Orkney material is *Windbreck*, found repeatedly throughout the isles. The interpretation is uncertain, but if the specific is Sc. ‘wind’ or the synonymous ON. *vindr*, it may have been an appropriate instant name for houses in exposed localities. Similarly, *Holland* may have been a ready-made name for houses on elevated sites. Marwick lists 12 *Hollands* in OFN. Two new *Hollands* in Harray are not included. Both lie on high grounds, which may indicate that the name is regarded suitable for houses such situated.

#### **7.2.4 Fashion names**

In Swedish onomastics, the term *modenamn*, “fashion names” has been used to denote stereotypical names that may be used for a range of locations. Typically, such names are popular in a limited period, and the examples given are normally fairly young names.<sup>14</sup> Fashion names in Orkney include *Newark*, *Blinkbonnie*, and various compounds with bank: *Rosebank*, *Sunnybank*, *Comelybank*. Fashion names cannot be strictly distinguished from local transfers. They differ in being chosen from abstract onomasticon, rather than the actual nomenclature (cf. Andersson 1996: 27 f.). The names are not descriptive in a strict sense, and could be applied to any house or croft. Rather, they are chosen for aesthetical reasons, elements like *rose* and *sunny* convey positive connotations. The presence of elements which are not used locally indicates that these names are not an integral part of the local onomasticon, e.g. *lea* in *Briar Lea*, *Heather Lea* and the archaic form *vale* in *Clairvale*.

#### **7.2.5 Preferred generics**

A characteristic feature for all proper names is the reoccurrence of a limited number of generics. The range of popular generics varies

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<sup>14</sup> Pamp 1991: 158, Strandberg 1987: 249.

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throughout time, but there are always some elements close at hand. This is the most obvious form of analogy in place-names, and also the basis of all attempts of name chronologies. In Orkney the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, *hall* or *ha'* (with Scots *ll*-dropping) was the most popular element when naming settlements: *Gallowha'*, *Greenhall*, *Ha'white*, *Sandyha'*, *Scotts Hall*, *Willha'*. Somewhat earlier divisions of farms tended to generate *houses*: *Appiehouse*, *Midhouse*, *Nearhouse*, *Netherhouse*, *Nisthouse* and *Overhouse*. Alternatively, one might use *bigging* (*Upper Bigging*, *Newbigging*) or *bærinn* (*Estaben*, *Nistaben*). In the latter case, the origin is certainly Norse, for *house* and *bigging*, the language of origin cannot be certainly established. In the Norse settlement phase and early Norse phase, elements like *staðir* and *bólstaðr* seem to have been popular.

As I see it, there is in principle no difference between the use of ON name elements *staðir* and *bolstaðr* in old names and *hall* or *house* in more recent names. In both cases people utilise frequent place-name elements and familiar patterns. Such frequent elements may lose their original semantic meaning, and merely retain a function as elements suitable for place-name formations. In this way they develop into suffixes (cf. Pamp 1991: 158 f.). This has happened for the very frequent generic *torp* > *rup* in Denmark, and similarly the element *holt* is used in place-name formation after the it was disused as an appellative (Eggert 2006: 20 f.).

The use of particular generics can be explained both from a general linguistic and a functional point of view. Cognitive linguistics consider the individual's mental lexicon to include competence of the smaller units, used in word formation. As mentioned above, place names are used as examples by Aitchison (2003: 136). From existing names, speakers extract elements appropriate for various localities, which may be used in new formations. Thus, using familiar name elements is easy for the namer. It also has functional advantages in that the names are easily identified by other speakers as place-names. Kiviniemi (1973: 32) states that place-names would not fulfil their identifying function if they were too unusual and haphazardly chosen. Moreover, Nyström (1988: 79, 171) points out that name elements may cover a wider semantic field than the homonymous appellative. In the Orkney material this is illustrated by

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*hill* and *knowe*, which have come to cover the whole range of elevations in Scots place-names (see 8.4.1.). This obviously reduces the range of generics in names.

Finally, a brief comment should be made on the geographical horizon of the namers. When some generations have passed after the settlement, one cannot expect it to extend to Norway. In some cases the patterns seem to be distinctly local. For instance five out of nine rental farms in Stenness are compounded with *staðir*, whereas Firth, Rendall, Birsay and Orphir have no *staðir*-farms all, but quite a number of *bólstaðrs*. Similarly, *bólstaðr* is very frequent in Caithness, totally displacing *setr* and *staðir*. Such local tendencies in the choice of generics mirror the name users' preference of familiar patterns.

<b>Non-proprial lexicon</b>	<b>Actual onomas-tikon</b>	<b>Abstract onomas-tikon</b>
Words, particularly appellatives and adjectives, which may be used in place-name formation.	Existing place-names	Stereotypical (fashion) names, instant names  Ready-made characterising names.

*Fig. 7.2. Model illustrating the linguistic resources available to namers (according to Andersson 1996: 29, simplified).*

The simplified model above sums up the namers' options and linguistic resources when coining a name. In spontaneous or primary name creation, the namer selects name elements from the lexicon. Such names reflect the lexicon at the time when the name was coined, and are the only names that may be used e.g. in chronologies and lexical studies.

Frequently material for new names is found within the onomas-tikon. In the case of *denotation shift* and *name transfer*, the namer reuses an existing place-name for a new locality. The namer may

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also select an item from what Andersson calls the abstract onomasticon. This includes *fashion names*, which do not really describe the locality, and *stereotypical characterising* names. Such names are selected, rather than coined. There is no sharp line between the actual onomasticon and the abstract in the model, the difference is whether the namer has an actual locality in mind or not.

Many names are compounded of elements from two categories. Frequently, a generic chosen from the lexicon is specified by an existing place-name. Such names are normally referred to as *secondary names*. And, possibly most important, preferred name elements seem to be characteristic throughout time.

It is important to note that the model is chiefly concerned with processes in the namer's mind when a name is coined. This means the categories do not necessarily correspond to easily defined groups of names in an actual nomenclature. As stated above, it may not be possible to decide whether an individual name is a spontaneous formation or an analogical formation, a fashion name or a local transfer.

### 7.3. Stereotypy in colonial place-names?

Above we have discussed how patterns from the existing onomasticon are at work in all place-name formation. However, a number of scholars have regarded it as a particularly important feature in colonial areas,<sup>15</sup> and the preference for personal names as specifics has been mentioned as one stereotypical feature of colonial place-names. In this section the Orkney place-name material will be investigated with regards to degree of stereotypy. Particular reference is made to a study of place-name elements from two Orkney islands by Nicolaisen, entitled *Imitation and Innovation in the Scandinavian Place-Names of the Northern Islands of Scotland*.

#### 7.3.1. Personal names as specifics

The tendency in colonies to coin place-names with personal names as specifics is discussed by Rentenaar (2001: 260 ff.). The naming

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<sup>15</sup> E.g. Hansen 1998: 29, Kruse 1996: 260 f.

pattern has been explained as particularly convenient when a large number of names are coined in an area within a short span of time. If we look at the Danelaw-area, the percentage of names with personal names as their specifics is certainly very high. According to Fellows-Jensen (2001: 283) about half the *by*-names in East Midlands and Yorkshire have personal names as their specifics, and the percentage is also high for *porp*- and *tūn*-names.

There is no such abundance of personal specifics in the Orkney material, however. Out of a total of some 660 different names, I have interpreted 27 or about 4 % as compounded with personal names, and another 18 or 2.8 % as possibly compounded with personal names (see appendix 2). This quite low percentage seems to be well in line with Marwick interpretations of more than 1500 farm names in *Orkney Farm Names*. In his interpretation, 68 (4.6 %) of the names certainly have personal names as their specifics, whereas another 42 (2.8 %) may contain personal names. I may add that from my material, personal names are not restricted to names of Norse origin. About half of the examples are Scots formations like *Annie's Rig*, *Dicksquoy* and *Scotts Hall*.

The numbers from Orkney also seem to tie in well with Ellingsve's (1999: 34 f.) number from 16 parishes from different parts of Norway. The percentage of personal name specifics varies from 1.8–9.9%, the average being 4.7%. Three out of six parishes with percentages above the average were settled late, either by internal colonisation as Målselv and Sørreisa in the Sami areas of Northern Norway or by external colonisation by Finns, as Grue in the forest areas on the border to Sweden. To some extent the Norwegian material thus seems to support the hypothesis of personal names as preferred generics in colonial areas, but the percentages are very much lower than those in the Danelaw.

One important difference between the Danelaw and the Orkney material is that the latter contains other types of names than settlement names. But this can hardly explain the differences, since the farm-names show results comparable to mine. There actually seems to be a major difference in the naming practise in the two areas. If personal name specifics are actually a characteristic feature of short,

### 7. Name formation

but intensive colonisation period, this could in itself explain the difference between the Danelaw and Orkney. In Orkney, the colonisation period was followed by a long Norse period and later by a bilingual period, in which Norse names may have been coined. On the other hand, there is little evidence in Orkney material that the personal specifics relate specifically to the colonisation period, since about half of these names are Scots coinings. We may have to accept that there are great regional differences in the naming practises.

#### 7.3.2. Nicolaisen's study from Sanday and North Ronaldsay

Using OFN as his source, Nicolaisen (1987: 74 ff.) studies the farm names of the two northernmost islands of Orkney, a total of 136 names. 116 of these are of Norse origin. In this material he identifies 39 different generics and 41 specifics. These are compared to name elements found in Rygh's *Norske Gaardnavne* ('Norwegian farm names', NG). In nearly every case (even where Nicolaisen does not identify it, as for *eyrar*), there is a Norwegian parallel. In most cases the actual compounds are also found in Norway. On this basis, he concludes that the Orkney names are imitative: "there cannot be any doubt that the element of imitation is predominant, and that any innovative impulse is almost completely absent". Nicolaisen list a few name elements specific to Orkney: ON *bölkr* and *stæði*, and Celtic *trave* (cf. Gael *treabh*) which is used of earth fences in the northern parts of Orkney. Some name elements develop new meaning, the most important one being *bólstaðr*.

#### 7.3.3. Evidence of the West Mainland material

Not surprisingly, the generics show a much greater variation in the West Mainland place-name material than in Nicolaisen's material. The West Mainland material is far more extensive, and includes more name types. More than 60 different generics of Norse origin are found in settlement names and about 115 in total. This includes elements not found in Norway. Some of these seem to have Old Norse origin, such as *blett* < *\*bletr*, Icel *blettur* 'spot' and *Hoemin* < *\*höfning* 'pasture' (see 6.2). Celtic loans are rare, the *trebs* and *traves* found in the Northern Isles are absent in West Mainland. The loanword *ærgi* 'shieling' is found once in the material, and the only

Celtic loans in common use are *lón*, *lun* ‘waterlogged ground’ and *krú* ‘enclosure’ (cf. 5.5.6, 5.5.11). Some Scots elements may have been borrowed into Norn, e.g. *muir*, (see *mo* 5.5.12) and possibly *gutter* (see *Gutterpitten* 6.1).

Nicolaisen’s Northern Isles study has been cited as evidence for higher degree of stereotypy in colonies than in the native country, e.g. by Hansen (1998: 29). Nicolaisen does not explicitly state that the formation of names is stereotypical, even if the passage “this is an unexcited landscape described in unexcited terms by an unexcited, or even unexciting, people” may certainly be read in this way. And in a later article he refers to the 1987 study when stating that the range of generics is very limited (Nicolaisen 1991: 149).

May we conclude then that that Norse place names in Orkney are more stereotypical than place-names in Norway? In his study from 1987 Nicolaisen concentrates on place-name elements, and his method implies that just one record in Norway for an Orkney place-name element is sufficient to classify Orcadian name elements as imitative. In this way differences in frequency are obscured. He makes a note of *bólstaðr*, but does not mention the fact that *kví*, which is the most frequent of all place-name elements in Orkney, is very rare as a generic in Norwegian names. The same is true for *skáli*. Nicolaisen also fails to mention that some Old Norse place-name elements develop new, specialised meaning in Orkney. Two important examples are *brecks*, which comes to mean ‘infertile, uncultivated ground’ and *Bu of* as a term for manors (see 5.5.5). In addition, the element *krú*, f ‘enclosure’ deserves a special note. This Celtic loan word seems to have entered some Norwegian dialects via the North Sea colonies (see 5.5.6), so here Orkney is primary, rather than Norway.

We may note that stereotypy is more conspicuous for some Scots place-name elements than for Norse ones. In ch 8.4.1, we see how *knowe* and *hill* are used to cover the whole range of elevations, whereas up to 14 different elements of Norse origin denote elevations of various size. Six or seven generics of Old Norse origin are used to denote high grounds in the inlands, whereas the same localities are uniformly termed *hills* in Scots.



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Time is certainly a relevant factor when discussing stereotypy and variation in place-name formation. Variation builds up over a span of time, because many name elements are particularly popular for a limited period. In Orkney, Norse name formations have been possible for about 900 years, and this allows time for variation to build up, for new elements to become popular and for specialised meanings to develop. In this respect, Orkney differs fundamentally from the Danelaw colonies, where the Scandinavian language only survived for a couple of centuries, and even more from Normandy, where Scandinavian only lived on for some generations. Scots names have been coined in a shorter period than Norse names. This may explain why stereotypy is more prominent in Scots formations, particularly in Scots topographical names. As discussed above (7.1.2), the coining of Scots names was rare before the 17th century, and 500 years seems to be too short a time span to allow topographical elements to fall into disuse and be replaced by new ones. For elements denoting fields and buildings the case is somewhat different. A number of new terms have come in, frequently reflecting agricultural improvement. For further discussion of place-name elements and words used in place-name formation, see 5.5. and 8.4.1.

As stated above, there is more variation in the Norse place-name elements in the West Mainland material than the one studied by Nicolaisen. The frequency of certain elements, e.g. *garth* and *quoy*, is still prominent. About 50 names in the material have *quoy* as their generics, and Thomson (1995: 52) lists a total of 438 *quoy*-names in Orkney. We may conclude that there is actually a high degree of stereotypy, especially on place-name element level, but the names do not stand out as being particularly stereotypical in containing a high proportion of personal names as specifics or a restricted range of elements. Rather, the use of a limited number of generics and the formation according to standardised patterns seems to be an integral part of place-name formation in general. Beyond this, there is no indication that the Norse settlers had different ways of naming localities in the colonies than in the old country. The colonisation phase was relatively short, and the majority of the names have certainly been coined after the landnam period. Gradually a local nam-

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ing tradition evolves, including some elements which are rare or unknown in the old country (cf. 5.3).

## Chapter 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

Whereas chapters 6 and 7 deal with the original forms of names and principles for their formation, chapters 8 and 9 are devoted to the development of place-names. Chapter 9 is concerned with changes specific to place-names, in particular adaptations that occur when place-names are integrated into a new linguistic system. The present chapter focuses on structural changes that can be observed in any kind of linguistic material, attempting to analyse how these changes work more or less systematically in proper names. It thus provides an opportunity to systematise some of the recurrent features that have been discussed briefly under individual names in chapter 7 and to deal with them in some more detail.

For the sake of clarity, the features are organised in four sections each investigating a separate linguistic level: phonology, morphology, morphosyntax and lexicon. This may sometimes obscure complex connections. For instance, morphemes and lexemes have a form as well as a meaning,<sup>1</sup> and we do not know at which level changes take place. If an ON name *Uppitún* develops into *Appietoon* in Orkney Scots, we cannot determine whether the shift *upp* > *ap* is a phonological adaptation or a Scots translation of an ON preposition, i.e. a lexical adaptation.

### 8.1. Phonology

It is common in linguistics to distinguish between regular and sporadic changes. The most important regular phonological changes in Sc and ON are treated in ch. 4.2 and 4.4. In addition, some scholars (Dalberg & Kousgård Sørensen 1979: 159–165, Bakken 1997: 21–29) have suggested that there may be changes specific to place-

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<sup>1</sup> “Morpheme sind immer zugleich Lautkörper und Bedeutungsträger. Die Lexeme und auch die Topolexeme sind stets strukturierte Ganzheiten, die in allen sprachlichen Ebenen verankert sind” (Walther 1980: 153).

names. On this basis, I have posed three questions: 1) To what extent are regular phonological changes carried out in the place-name material? 2) What kind of sporadic features can be observed in the material? 3) To what extent do the sporadic changes appear to be specific to proper nouns?

The material is limited, only allowing for tenable conclusions on features of some frequency. The shift from Old Norse to Scots means that the two languages are not symmetrical. All original ON names are influenced by the Scots linguistic system in which they are transmitted (but not vice versa). Adaptations to Scots may take place at the moment a name is borrowed or after the name is established in the Scots dialect, cf. ch. 9. Thus, the present form of original ON names reflect phonological changes that may have taken place a) during the ON period, b) at the moment the name was borrowed into Scots or c) after it had become a part of the Scots language (cf. Walther 1980, Naert 1995: 55). We may thus add a fourth question: 4) From which linguistic system does a change appear to emerge?

### **8.1.1. Vowels**

#### **8.1.1.1. Quantity**

As shown above (4.2.1.1), the vowel quality in Sc depends on the phonological context rather than the historical origin. Original short, non-central vowels are lengthened word finally and in front of /r/ and the voiced fricatives /v, ð, z, ʒ/. Original long vowels are shortened in front of other consonants. The surveys of Orkney dialects in LAS demonstrate that the Scottish vowel length rule by no means works regularly in the dialect; e.g. lengthening before /d/ is rather common in the dialect.

It has proved difficult to uncover patterns for the development of vowel quantity in words and names of ON origin in Orkney, apart from the general observation that long vowels are rare<sup>2</sup>. To eliminate

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<sup>2</sup> Out of 187 OrknN entries under the letter *g*, 26 are recorded with long vowels and 13 with diphthongs in stressed syllables. In most cases these can be derived from ON long vowels or diphthongs, but counter-examples occur: *glamer* v /'gla:mər/ 'speak loudly' < *glamra* v. SVLR does not account for the

### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

potentially inaccurate transcriptions by this author who is a non-native speaker of the language, not fully familiar with the local linguistic system, I have checked all the phonetic transcriptions in OFN for names from the investigation area. Out of a total of 106 names, no more than five are recorded with long vowels in stressed syllables and only *Hinderayre* /<sup>h</sup>ɦɪndərəɛr/ with a long vowel in an unstressed syllable. 17 names are recorded with diphthongs. All the present long vowels except from one can be derived from ON long vowels or diphthongs. The only exception is the parish name *Evie* /<sup>ɛ</sup>vi/ (< *Efja*), where the vowel seems to be lengthened according to the Scottish rule. Examples of the shortening of original long vowels (marked by acute accent) abound, e.g.:

*Holland* /<sup>h</sup>hɔlənd/ < *háland*

*Quear* /<sup>k</sup>kwiər/ < *kvíar*

*Orquil* /<sup>ɔ</sup>ɔrkwəl/ < *árkvísl*

*Neigarth* /<sup>n</sup>nigjər/ < *nýgarðr*

Some changes appear to be contrary to both language systems, e.g. the shortening of the stressed vowel in front of *r* in *Orquil* and the shortening of word-final long in in /*kwi*/ < *kví*. In Norwegian onomastics, vowel quantity is quite regular and thus of great value when interpreting place-names, but this feature is obviously of little help in the interpretation of Orkney names. In the rare cases where an original ON name is still pronounced with a long vowel, we may assume an original long vowel or diphthong, however.

#### 8.1.1.2. The raising of long vowels

The Great Vowel Shift only affects front vowels in Scots (cf. 4.2.1.2). The vowel shift is attested in written documents around 1400, but the sound change may have started earlier. The specifically Scots shift from Anglo-Saxon long  $\bar{o} > /ø/$  is first recorded in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century.

The shift  $\acute{o} > /ø/$  also occurs in place-names as well as dialect words of ON origin, e.g. the common place-name elements *óss* / $\acute{o}$ s/

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lengthening in this word. The lengthening in *glaize* /<sup>g</sup>gle:z/ ‘loosely knit or woven’, cf. Norw *glissen*, is in accordance with the Scots rule, however.

and *kró* /krø/ (cf. OrknN: xli). This is not a normal development in ON.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, Sc interference should be considered, even if that is rather surprising from a chronological point of view. The shift is supposed to have been completed in Scots before the Great Vowel Shift and thus long before the Scots language made a major impact in Orkney (see 2.3). It seems to imply that the shift remained active in Orkney for a longer period than generally assumed.

The raising of long front vowels according to the Scots pattern in originally ON words seems more or less unattested.<sup>4</sup> OrknN has no example of the raising of *é*. The place-name material offers one or two potential examples. (*Craig of*) *Rittin* can probably be derived from *rétin* f def. ‘the enclosure where the cattle were gathered and sorted’. The interpretation of *Vishall* /'viʃəl/ as *véshóll* ‘sanctuary hill’ is rather speculative (see 6.2). ON *í* is normally retained as /i, i:/ but occasionally appears as a diphthong<sup>5</sup>. Place-name forms suggest that diphthongisation may be a rather modern development. The very frequent place-name element *quoy* < *kví* is pronounced /kvi, mi/ or /kwai/. Monophthongs are consistent in names with ON case morphology (e.g. *Quean*), which are undoubtedly early formations. Where the spelling is *quoy*, the spoken form may be influenced by Scottish rules of pronunciation. Similar variation is found in the name *Puldrite*. OFN and a middle-aged informant from Rendall both give the form *Puldrite* /pʌl'rit/, whereas a younger Rendall informant says /pʌl'rait/. *Grimston* /'graim(i)stən/ in Harray as opposed to *Grimbister* /'grimbistər/ in Firth would seem to be another example of a secondary, possibly rather late, development.

The Norwegian back vowel shift, i.e. the rounding /a:/ > /ó/, the raising of *ó* and fronting of *ú* (cf. 4.4.1.2) affects the place name material to a great extent. ON *á* usually develops into /o/ or /ɔ/ (cf.

<sup>3</sup> *ó* > *ø* in ON is a result of umlaut, which can hardly be the case here.

<sup>4</sup> According to Hægstad (1900: 73) vowels in the Shetland dialect, in particular the long ones, differ from the Norwegian vowels in being raised and centralised. This seems to tie in with the Great Vowel Shift, but most of his examples involve the back vowels, which are not affected by the vowel shift in Scots.

<sup>5</sup> The diphthong is transcribed /ai/ in OrknN and /ei/ in LAS.

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4.4.1.4): *geo* /gjo, djo/ < *gjá*, *Holland* /'hɔlɔn(d)/ < *Háland*. *Á* 'burn' becomes /o/ as a specific, e.g. *Oback* /'ɔbək/.<sup>6</sup> *Flaw* /fla:/ < *flá* appears to be the only example of a retained long *a* in the material (cf. *flaa* ON: 42). Furthermore, there are a number of instances of the raising of *ó* in names: *Scuan* /'skuən/ < *skógrinn*, *Loomashun* /'lumeʃən/ < *Lómatjörn* and (Cuppin) *gua* /'gua/ < *koppinn góða*.

### 8.1.1.3. Short vowels

The lowering and centralisation of short *i* and *u* is characteristic of Scots (cf. 4.2.1.2). This change is quite regular in the Orkney dialect, even in words borrowed from ON (cf. 4.4.1.4). In fact, the centralisation of short *i* (transcribed /ɪ/) is regarded as a salient feature in the dialect. Spellings with *e* instead of *i* in the 1425 document, such as *grepin*, *welia* < *gripinn*, *vilja*, may thus be due to Scots influence. But short vowels are also lowered in East-Norw dialects: *vit* > *vett*, *munr* > *monn* (cf. Indrebø 1951: 222 f.).

In place-names of ON origin in Orkney, short *i* develops into /ɪ/ more or less consistently, e.g. *Mid-* /mɪd/ in a number of names, *Etheri(geo)* /ɪθəri/ < *iðri* adj., *Grind* /grɪnd/ < *grind* f, *Riff* /rɪf/ < *rif* n. The regularity may indicate that the lowering is a productive feature or an ongoing process in the Sc dialect.

### 8.1.1.4. The phonemes *y* and *ø*

Scots lacks the phoneme /y/. Examples of the unrounding of ON *y* can be found as early as 1369, e.g. *nita* < *nýta* (see 4.4.1.2). In place-names, too, /ɪ/ is the normal adaptation form: *Meera* < *Mýrrin*, *Dishan* < *Dysjar*. The adaptation *y* > *i* probably involves two different layers of adaptation. The *i*-spellings in the 1369-document and possibly in the Lord's Prayer from 1700 can be ascribed to Scottish scribes unable to recognise the /y/-phoneme. It does not necessarily reflect a change in pronunciation. The lack of /y/ in the modern dialect, on the other hand, is an inherent part of the language shift. The

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<sup>6</sup> The simplex form *Woo* is pronounced /u:/, possibly due to interference from Sc *woo* 'wool'.

phoneme does not exist. It has to be replaced in names and words of ON origin and unrounding is a simple strategy of adaptation.

Since the phoneme /ø/ exists in Scots, we might expect to find it in names as a reflection of original ON *ø*, *æ*. This does not seem to be the case, however. As far as in can see, /ø/ can always be derived from *ó* or *ú*: *Oyce* /øʃ/ < *óss*, *cru* /krø/ < *kró*, *krú*. Original *ø* and *æ* are adapted in other ways, normally as /ʌ/ or /ɛ/: *Græn-* > /grʌn, gʌrn/ in *Gurness*, *øfst-* > /ɛst/ in *Estaben*.

#### 8.1.1.5. *Diphthong > monophthong*

Scots has the diphthongs /ei~ai/ as in *bite* and /au~ɔu/ as in *loup* (cf. 4.2.1.3), very close to ON *ei* and *au*. This means that the Scots phonological system allows ON diphthongs to be preserved. Dialect loan words exhibit diphthong forms as well as monophthongs, with the latter being more common (cf. OrknN: xlii f). Diphthongs and monophthongs alternate in place-names as well, but retained diphthongs appear to be somewhat more frequent in names.

*ei* is often retained, e.g. *Lyking* /<sup>l</sup>leikin/ < *Leikvin*, *Lyde* /leid/ < *leið*, *bry-* /brei/ < *breið-*. Monophthongisation seems to be the rule in *steinn*, e.g. *Stenso*, *Stenness* /<sup>l</sup>sten-/. *Stymbro* is transcribed /<sup>l</sup>steimbroy/ in OFN, but my local informant gives the form /<sup>l</sup>stembroy/, which means that the diphthong may be influenced by the spelling. ON *leir* develops differently in *Lyron* /<sup>l</sup>leirən/ < *leirin* and *Lerquoy* < *leirkví*. There is a possible phonotactical reason for the monophthong in the latter: consonant clusters tend to give rise to a monophthong (or short diphthong) in Norwegian dialects as well.

*au* is retained in *haugr* /hɔu, hau/, which is a very frequent place-name element, and in have suggested the specific *rauðr* for *Rowamo*. There are hardly any other certain instances of *au* in the material.

*ey* has become a monophthong in *Hedde* /hɛd/ < *heydalr* (*Hedal* 1425). Forms vary for the place-name element *eyrr*: *Hinderayre* /-ɛ:r/, *Longayran* /-ai:rn/. The latter may be a lexical adaptation



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to *iron*, cf. 9.3.2.2., but Marwick cites a similar variation (OrknN: xliii, 4.4.1.4).

We may conclude that the shift from diphthong to monophthong is sporadic in the Orkney material. This can be compared to the consistent use of a monophthong in Shetland. As we have seen above (4.2.1.3, 4.4.1.2), monophthongisation is a characteristic feature of Scots as well as East Scandinavian.

As in see it, the consistent monophthongisation in Shetland can be explained in two ways: 1) it was completed in ON so early that all words and names were borrowed with the monophthong, or 2) it is a feature transferred from the Scots linguistic system when or after the ON material was borrowed into the Scots dialect. The former seems improbable and is actually contradicted by a late ON document from Medalbø (DN VI 651, 1509). Diphthongs are used in accordance with the ON standard, with only one apparent exception (*them* < *þeim*).<sup>7</sup> The consistent monophthongs thus seem to be a result of levelling within the Scots linguistic system.

The variation in Orkney must be explained otherwise. The language shift may have conserved a transition phase in ON, where some words retain their diphthongs and others have become monophthongs. In fact, Norwegian dialects also appear to reflect a transition or a change that has run out of momentum, with diphthongs retained in the west and various degrees of monophthongisation in the east (McMahon 1999: 52f., Sandnes 2007:166). It is difficult to assess the role of the Scots linguistic system in Orkney in this matter, though it is clear that it permits the retention of diphthongs. There may be enough variation within the system to accept both forms without adaptation.

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<sup>7</sup> *Allum monnum them sem thetta breff see edher heyræ heilsum vy... heidarligin mann Gutthorm Niellsson [...] heyræ eda vitad ath sira Gregorius Iuarsson fforbrotid sitt godzss laust ock ffast*

### 8.1.2. Consonants

#### 8.1.2.1. Vocalisation/loss of postvocalic -g

Vocalisation and loss of postvocalic *g* is a typical feature of Orkney ON. The development can be observed in the place-name element *vág*:

- 14<sup>th</sup> century *Kirkiu uaghe*, *-waghe* 1329, *-vaghe* 1369  
 15<sup>th</sup> century *Kirkwaw* 1422, 1438, *Kirkwau* 1435, *Kyrkwaw*  
 1480, *Kirkway* 1481, *Kirkwall* 1488, 1496,  
*Ronaldiswaw*, *Widewaw* 1492.  
 16<sup>th</sup> century *-wa*, *-wo*, *-wall*  
 (All forms have been excerpted from REO)

The 15<sup>th</sup>-century forms (*-waw*, *-way*) clearly suggest that vocalisation has taken place. From the end of the century the final *w* is dropped or replaced by *-ll*. This can be seen as an indication that the pronunciation is /wa:/ as in Sc *wall*. Other examples include the popular masculine name *Magnus*: *Mawnus* 1447, 1455, *Magniss* 1455, *Mawnis*, *Mawnus* (1482, 1489 etc).

Unlike most other phonological features, vocalisation or loss of postvocalic *-g* is regular in all names of ON origin: *How(e)*, *Hewin*, *Howa Breck* etc < *haugr*; *Shuber*, *Hisber* < *berg*, *Burness* < *Borgnes* and *Hayon* < *haginn*(?). The same is true for nouns that appear in place-names, e.g. *roo* < *hrúga*, *tie* < *teigr*. Spellings without *-g* in the first rentals, e.g. *How* 1492 (Rendall), confirm that the weakening of *g* was completed by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It is thus a change within ON. The same development is found in Denmark (Haugen 1976: 204 f.). However, the contact between Denmark and Orkney can hardly have been sufficiently close in late medieval times to cause linguistic interference. I am more inclined to see the weakening of *g* as an independent local development.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Parallels found in Norwegian dialects suggest that the weakening of *g* is a possible development in ON. /*g* > *w*/, e.g. *sag* > /*saw*/ occurs in an isolated area south of Trondheim (Sandøy 1996: 237). East Norwegian dialects diphthongise *skog* /*skəu*/ (Christiansen 1946–48: 167).

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### 8.1.2.2. Vocalisation and loss of *l*

Whereas the vocalisation of *g* is a linguistic innovation of ON origin, the vocalisation and loss of *l* are clearly of Sc origin. Loss of *l* actually occurs in some Norw. dialects in Telemark and Agder but not in the same phonotactical environment as in Sc (*l* or *ll* in front of a consonant or in word-final position, cf. 4.2.1.4). We saw above (4.4.1.3) that the unetymological spelling *halfua* for the verb *hafa* ‘have’ in the 1396 document (DN in 404) may be one of the first attested instances of /*l*/ becoming unstable. In place-names, the loss of *l* can be observed from the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but the development is not consistent. A comparison of the two common place-name elements *fjall* and *dal(r)* may serve as an illustration. The former normally develops into *Fea* in non-compound names: OFN treats ten instances of *Fea* as opposed to one *Fiold*. The oldest sources have *Fea*, apart from the rentals 1502–3, which have a number of *Feall*-spellings. *Fealquoy* (5 instances listed in OFN) is normally pronounced with an *l* today but in old source forms, the *l* is frequently dropped:

Evie: *Feaquoy* 1492, *Feawquoy* 1503, *Fealtquoy* 1595  
Stromness *Fewqui* 1490 REO, *Feaquoy/Fealquoy* 1617

It is clear that forms with and without *l* alternate with each other. We may compare the current names *Skaebrae* and *Skelbrae* (OFN: 13, 69, 155). Both are derived from ON *skjaldbreiðr* but with and without loss of *l* in the generic. In hill-names, *fiold* appears to be the standard form, e.g. *Starra Fiold*, *Fibla Fiold*, *Studja Fiold*. This seems to indicate a lexematic form in which *ll* has been restituted as *ld* (cf. 8.1.2.8).

The loss of *l* in *dalr* is much less visible in written sources.<sup>9</sup> Sporadic examples and form variation indicate that the loss may have worked in this element as well:

- *Turrieday* /<sup>h</sup>tʌriəde(i)l/ (pronounced but not spelt with an *l*)

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<sup>9</sup> OFN records loss of *l* in only two farm-names in Mainland and the northern isles: *Deldale/Delday* /<sup>h</sup>deldi, <sup>h</sup>delde/ < *Delldail* 1488 and *Lidda* /<sup>h</sup>lɪdi/ < *Luddal* 1455, *Lidday* 1665 (OFN: 77, 84).

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

- *Jupadee* – *Jewa Dale* 1846.
- *Stenna Dale* – *Stenady*
- *Hamars of Syradale* – *H. of Syraday* Firth 1920.
- *Eskadale* – *Eskadae* (/ɛskədə/ in H. Marwick's notes)
- *Aviedale* is recorded as *Efeday* in 1629.

Possibly, *l* in *dalr* is less liable to loss and may even be restituted after earlier being lost because the common noun *dale* was current in the dialect (see the discussion in 5.4). If the word is familiar, the topography may contribute to restitution: Syradale, *Jewa Dale*/*Jupadee*, *Stenady*/*Stenna Dale* and *Eskadale* are all marked valleys. The quoted forms open up for alternative interpretations of the names containing the generic /dǫ/. Marwick suggests original *dý* in most of these names, but where the topography allows, the origin *dalr* should also be considered.

The development *Kirkjuvágr* > *Kirkwall* has been discussed above (8.1.2.1). The restitution of *vág(r)* with *wall* clearly presupposes the loss of the final consonant in both words. An example of the spelling *al* for /a(:)/ is *Halkland* 1503 and 1595 for *Hackland* /'haklǫn(d)/ in Rendall (see 6.1).

The loss of *l* can hardly have been consistent in place-names of ON origin. For instance, ON *troll* enters into a number of names, such as *Trolle Geo* and *Trulla Shun* (in Harray). The noun *troll* is borrowed into the dialect with vocalised *l*: *trow* /trǫw/ (ON: 195, Dennison 1995: 30). If the dialect form is *trow*, the *Troll*-forms cannot be restitutions; they have to be of ON origin. The place-name element *Trow-* in *Trowie Geo* and *Trow's Buil* (Lamb 1993: 61) for instance, can either be an adaptation of the ON element or the Sc dialect word from the start.

As vocalisation and loss of *l* is a Sc feature, it is most likely to have affected the names after they had been adopted into the local Sc dialect. The feature was clearly not strong enough to affect all borrowed place-names wherever it might occur.

### 8.1.2.3. Dental fricatives /θ, ð/

In the course of the late Middle Ages, ON *ð* and *þ* shifted to *d* and *t* or were lost (see 4.4.1.3). The shift from dental fricatives to stops is

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also characteristic of traditional Orkney Scots (see 4.2.1.4). Dental fricatives in dialect words of ON origin develop in different ways: they may be retained, lost or shift to stops (ON: xliv–xlvii).<sup>10</sup> All these shifts can be observed in place-names as well. In addition, a handful of place-names undergo a particular development  $b > h$ , which will be discussed below.

The dental fricative is regularly lost in names with *garðr* as their generic, e.g. *Grudgar*, *Hammiger* and *Neigarth* in Evie. They are all spelt *-garth* in the first rentals with *gair*-forms taking over in 1595. The shift from fricative to stop is also well attested in names, e.g. *Tingwall* < *Pingvöllr* (*Tyngwell* 1492) and *Georth* /gjørt, djjørt/ < *garðr* (*Garith* 1492, *Garth* 1503, 1665, *Gairth* 1664). *Wart* or *Ward* < *varða* is a common element in hill-names, and so is *Tooin* < *þúfan*: *Mid Tooin*, *Ernie Tooin*. *Rendall Garson* < *garðsenði* may have undergone a shift to stop and subsequent loss if the forms *Garsent* 1492 and 1502 can be trusted. The shift from fricative to stop is also found in *Troffers* < Sc *thoroughfares*, in accordance with the local dialect.

The shift from a fricative often appears in written forms around 1600 (cf. the generic *garðr* treated above). This is rather late in comparison with the situation in Norway, where the shift was completed by 1450 ( $\delta > d$  is somewhat earlier, Indrebø 1951: 228–229).

*Eday* < *Eiðey*: *Ethay* 1560, *Hethøy* or *Eda* 1662 (Blaeu)

*Turriedale* < *Thorodale* 1503, *Thurrie-*, *Turkadaill* 1595

*Woodwick* < *við/við-*: *Weithweik* 1503, *Widweik* 1618 *Wald* < *vaðill*: *Wathill* 1502, *Wale* 1595.

In some names, the fricatives appear to have been retained throughout:

*Thurrigar* /θʌri-/ , S. Ronaldsay: in *Dordar ekru* 1329,

*Thurdrakir* 1500, *Thurregar* 1627, *Thurriger* 1697

*Aith* /e:ð/ < *eið* is always spelt *Aith*, *Ayth*

*Aith* appears in both Sandwick and Walls. Moreover, *scarth* is the normal spelling for ON *skarð* in names such as *Cottascarth*, *Bin-*

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<sup>10</sup> Voiced and unvoiced forms tend to vary when ON words are borrowed into Scots. Thus /t, d/ serve as non-fricative forms for both /θ/ and /ð/.

*scarth* and *Settiscarth*, though there are occasional *skart/scart*-spellings, chiefly in 17<sup>th</sup>-century documents: *Bingascart* 1587, *Benascart* 1627, *Cotascart* 1629, *Settiscart* 1623, *Settiscart* and *Skart* 1642. Some informants made it clear to me that the old pronunciation of *scarth* was without fricative (“hard”).

Seen in isolation, the place-name material would appear to demonstrate competition between two systems rather than a systematic shift from dental fricatives to stops. Conservative spellings that may preserve and even restore the fricative should be taken into consideration, however. In Orkney Scots, fricatives have been reintroduced in recent time (cf. 4.2.1.4). This late development is certainly an adaptation to Standard English. If the shift from fricative to stop was a general rule in the dialect, this phonological change must have affected all names of ON origin as well.

Despite the somewhat inconclusive evidence of the place-names, it seems likely that the shift from fricative to plosive spread from ON. If the shift took place about the same time in Orkney and Norway, we may reckon that it was completed by 1450. The feature may subsequently have been transferred into Scots as a result of the language shift because the speakers of Norn perceived the dental fricative as an allophone of a dental stop. Since a rather large population adopted a new language in this case, their phonemic analysis caused a change in the target language, i.e. what is called interference through shift (Thomason and Kaufman 1991: 38). It means that the non-fricative forms appearing in place-names around 1600 should possibly be interpreted as the reflection of a shift taking place in the Scots phonological system rather than in the Old Norse dialect. This certainly makes more sense from a chronological point of view and, more importantly, Scots was the written language in which the names of ON origin were transmitted.

An unusual development  $p > h$  is attested in a handful of place-names, including one in Firth: *Thorvaldishow* 1502, *Horraldsay* 1595 (< *Borvaldshaugr*, see 6.1.). Marwick lists another three place-name examples but none in the lexicon (OrknN: xlvii). A parallel development is found in Faroese: *hesin*, *hetta* < ON *þessi*, *þetta*. Barnes (1998: 19) suggests that the change may have been more

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wide-spread in Norn, referring to such forms as *ita* (< \**hitta* < *þetta*) in the Hildina ballad and a reverse spelling in *þia* < *í hjá* (DN III 284, Shetland 1355). There seem to be no other certain instances of the shift *þ* > *h* in the Northern Isles, however.

Theoretically, the shift *þ* > *h* in the names could represent a sound change that had started but had subsequently been reversed. The change is much later in the Orkney farm-names than in the document quoted by Barnes, making it less likely to be part of a common development. Moreover, the change of initial /θ/ > /h/ is common in Central Scotland (EHSL: 507), and Central Scotland is actually the area from which most of the Scots-speaking settlers in Orkney came. This means that the *h*-form may have been introduced by scribes with a Central Scottish background. The fact that only farm-names are affected may point in the same direction, as farm-names are most frequently recorded in written texts. All in all, there seems to be little support for a more systematic shift *þ* > *h* in the dialect.

#### *Addition of a dental*

In a number of names, final dentals have been added for no apparent reason, e.g. *Aglath* < *Öxlin*, *Linneth* < *hlíðinna*, *Midhiest* < *miðhús*. These additions are discussed in 8.2.2.2.

#### **8.1.2.4. The development of ON *p t k***

Voicing of *p*, *t* and *k* is attested in the documents from 1369 and 1425. This is a characteristic feature of South Scandinavian but foreign to Scots, and would thus seem to originate from ON. The shift *p, t, k* > *b, d, g* is common in words of ON origin, whereas the opposite shift occurs sporadically, chiefly in initial position (cf. 4.4.1.4). My Costa informant's pronunciation /'krisi/ in *Gressy Geo* appears to be an instance of the latter.

It seems that place-names differ from the general word stock in this respect. Instances of voicing are surprisingly rare, the only water-proof examples being *Jubidee* < *djúp*- and *Skibby Geo* < *skipa*. For *Ettit*, my Rendall informant gave the alternative pronunciations

/ˈɛtit/ and /ˈɛtid/. The discrepancy between the onomasticon and the lexicon with regard to voicing may indicate that a large number of ON names were borrowed into Scots quite early, while voicing was still at a very early stage.

#### 8.1.2.5. Palatalisation

*ll, nn*

So-called segmentation of *ll* and *nn* as /dl/ and /dn/ as in the Shetland dialect, West Norwegian and Icelandic is not attested in Orkney (the only possible exception is *Headlabreck*, see 6.2). Palatalisation of *ll* is treated in the phonological overview in OrknN (xlvi), but not palatalisation of *nn*. Both may be palatalized in place-names, however.

*Binscarth*, *Binnaquoy* and *Benzieroth* demonstrate the range of variation for *nn*. The three names almost certainly share the same specific (cf. 6.1). *Benzieroth* /ˈbɪnjəro/ is recorded with the palatal only, *Binnaquoy* /ˈbɪnjəkwi, bɪnəkwi/ has alternating forms and *Binscarth* /ˈbɪnskar(t)/ is pronounced without the palatal today. In old sources however, the spelling of *Binscarth* is almost consistently with *z*, *y* or *ng*, which are different ways of indicating a palatal pronunciation: *Benyescarth* 1502, *Binzescarth* 1595, *Benascart* 1627, *Benyescarth* 1661, *Bingascarth* 1665, 1794.

Other examples from West Mainland include:

- *Brinhyan* /ˈbrɪnjən/ < *brennan* f def.
- *Chinyan* /ˈtʃɪnjən/ < *tjönnin* < *tjönnin* ‘the loch’, Harray
- *Linnieth* /ˈlɪnjəθ/ < *hlíðinna* ‘the slope’ Harray.

*Crovnofīnya* and *Finyeu* are possible instances of palatalisation, coined from the *ja*-stem *fen* in which *j* enters in certain case forms. Finally, palatalisation of *nn* is not consistent, as can be demonstrated by the names *Rennibister* /ˈrɛnəbɪstər/ and *Rinnan* /ˈrɪnən/.

Palatalisation of *ll* can be observed in a number of names:

- *Boats Hellya*, *Fisk Hellya* and *Helliecliff* < ON *hella*.



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- *Bailliequoy* /<sup>h</sup>bɛljə-/ , *Baillie Hill*, *Baillieval* < ON *belgr* (or the dialect loan word *belly*, *belya* /<sup>h</sup>bɛli, <sup>h</sup>bɛljə/, OrknN: 12)
- *Velzian* /<sup>h</sup>vɛljən/ < ON *völlr*, farms in Rendall and Harray.<sup>11</sup>

The spelling of the field-name *Quinamillyoar* < *Kvína milli á* suggests a palatal, though I have not been able to obtain a pronunciation form of this name.

We saw above (4.2.1.4) that Older Scots palatalises *ll* and *nn* in French loan words. The numerous instances of palatal marking in place-names of ON origin prove that the scribes perceived palatals in those names, too. Palatalisation is widespread in Scandinavian dialects (Mid- and North-Norway and Denmark, cf. Sandøy 1996:166). Thus, the palatalisation may well be a feature of Orkney ON as well. The distribution is in accordance with Scots rather than ON rules, however. For instance, there is no palatal in word final position in *Tingwall*, *Brettoval* and other names derived from *völlr*, where Norwegian dialects palatalise. Palatals are limited to intervocalic position, as described for Scots in general (EHSL: 98).

*g, k*

Palatalisation of a velar in before a front vowel is a characteristic feature of traditional Orkney Scots (cf. 4.2.1.2). In Scotland, this development is limited to the areas settled by the Norse and has therefore been explained as a possible result of ON interference (EHSL: 503). Today, palatalisation is more or less restricted to the northern islands, cf. the LAS entries for *king*, *kist* /tç-, tʃ-, c-/ and ON: xlv f., 228. The palatal form of *g* is /dj/ or /gj/. Palatalisation affects words of Scots origin as well as ON, and unlike Norwegian, it also works in front of *a*: e.g. *ga* /dja/ ‘go’ (LAS: 19, Birsay) and /gjɔŋ/ < *ganga* (ON: xlv).

There are many examples of palatalisation in place-names, although these also demonstrate how palatalisation is on the wane in the dialect. Evie informants made me aware of the fact that the tradi-

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<sup>11</sup> It is an early family name, always recorded with *z* or *y*-spellings indicating a palatal: *Walzing* 1552 *Velzeon* 1579, *Wailyom* 1595 (REO: 153, 170, 249).

tional form /gjər, djər/ < *garðr* is being replaced by /gər/. The transition is apparent in the phonetic transcriptions in OFN, which have palatal /gjər/ for *Grudgar* and *Neigarth* and non-palatal /gər/ for *Bisgarth*, *Hammigar* and *Urigar*. For the former names, palatal forms are still in use, but non-palatal forms can also be heard.

A similar development is observed for palatalised *k*. E. Marwick notes a traditional pronunciation /kjik/ for *Keek*, and R. Bakie gives the old form /'stçidi/ for *Skiddy*. The spellings *Batkatown* 1848, *Badyateun* 1920 for *Backatown* /'bakətun/ (< *bakki*) also seems to reflect a palatal consonant, and *Batyaloan* and *Batyebreck* /'batjə-/ still survive in Harray. These examples suffice to demonstrate that palatal velars are being replaced in West Mainland. Original palatal clusters have also been replaced, e.g. ON *kjarr* > /kər/ in *Kergurn* and *Cuppie Kerr*. In the same way as with the return to dental fricatives, the loss of palatal velars can be seen as an adaptation to the standard language.

In many Norwegian dialects, velars in word-final position alternate with palatals in front of the definite article, e.g. *borg* /borg/ – *borgen* /borjen/. This has evidently been the case in Orkney, too, as many place-names coined from definite forms reflect a palatal, e.g. *Burrian* /'bʌriən/ < *borgin* (cf. *buryon* in the Hildina ballad), *Hayon* /'heiən/ < *Haginn* and *Arian* /'eriən/ < *ergin*. In this position, the palatals do not cause unacceptable consonant clusters and they can therefore be retained.

#### 8.1.2.6 *v/w*

Old Norse and Norwegian do not differentiate between /v/ and /w/. In the Orkney dialect, ON /v/ develops into /w/ in most cases (cf. OrknN xlvii). In place-names of ON origin, *v* is often retained, e.g. *Varmadale* and *Velzian* but there are also numerous examples of /w/, e.g. *Wades* and *Wasdale*. The variation suggests disparate phone-

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matic analyses by Scots speakers when the names were borrowed into Scots.<sup>12</sup>

### 8.1.2.7 Affricates

The English affricates /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ are foreign to ON. In traditional Orkney Scots, /tʃ/ is used for both (EHSL: 500, LAS entries for *John*, *joy*, *job*.) In some cases, original /tʃ/ becomes /ʃ/.

/tʃ/ and /ʃ/ function as adaptation forms for the ON consonant clusters *tj*, *dj* and *kj*, though there are only a handful of examples in the place-name material. The frequent place-name element *tjörn* is adapted as /tʃʌn, tʃɪn/ in dialect words (ON: xlvii). In place-names, the form is sometimes /ʃʌn/, e.g. *Loomashun*, *Evie* and *Shun*, *Har-ray*. The shift *dj* > /tʃ/ occurs in *Jubidee* /'tʃubədi/ < *Djúp-*. /tʃ/ < *kj* is found in some dialect words, e.g. *chocks* < *kjalki* 'jaws'. The only place-name example we have noted is *kjarr* > *Chair* (of *Lyde*), but this should probably be viewed as an instance of lexical adaptation (see 9.3.2.2).

### 8.1.2.8 Consonant clusters

Consonant clusters are subject to assimilation in ON as well as Sc, so it is unsurprising to find such forms in the material. Before looking at assimilation forms, we should like to draw attention to one unassimilated form: *The Climpers* < *kleppr* 'lump, knoll'. The form is surprising, as the shift *mp* > *pp* is generally thought to have been completed in the Common Scandinavian period, i.e. before ON (Iversen 1973: 37). But precisely this form appears to have survived in Norway, too. The hill-name *Klimpen* in Askvoll is discussed by Flokenes (1998: 39). It appears that the unassimilated form survives beside the assimilated form, both in Norway (Torp 1963: 285) and in the Northern Isles. In Orkney and Shetland, the two forms develop

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<sup>12</sup> Modern Norwegian pronunciation may be somewhat rounded, and according to EHSL: 109, the development from ON *Vik* > *Uig* in the Hebrides presupposes a rounded pronunciation.

specialised meanings. OrknN has *kleppo* ‘a lump of some soft yielding material’ and *klimper* ‘a big lump of stone, a boulder’.

*Assimilations mb > m, nd > n, ld > l*

These assimilations are common for Scots and most Norwegian dialects (cf. Indrebø 1951: 235). In place-names, assimilation is consistent only for *mb*: *Lamaquoy*, *The Kam* (< *lamb*, *kamb*). *nd* and *ld* are often retained in names, e.g. *Grandi/Grandon* < *grandi* and *ld* in *Sinnakilda* < *kelda* f. *Land* is pronounced /lan/ or /land/, but the latter may clearly be a restitution corresponding to the orthographical form. There are other indications of restitution, too: A number of names which did not contain the relevant consonant combinations in the first place appear to have undergone non-etymological restitution. This would explain the forms *Fiold* < *Fjall*, *Wald* < *Vaðill* (*Wathill* 1502, *Vaill* 1627, *Waal* 1794) and *Brendo* < *Brenna*.

*hv, kv /kw/ > /m/*

In traditional West Mainland pronunciation, ON *hv/kv* and Scots /kw/ merge into /m/<sup>13</sup>. Thus, in the traditional pronunciation /<sup>l</sup>matmi/ for *Quatquoy* < *hvítakví*, both *kv* and *hv* are rendered as /m/. The merger also explains why *Wheean* alternates with *Quean*.<sup>14</sup> The Shetland dialect has a similar merger of *hv* and *kv*. *hv, kv* is pronounced *hw* in the east and *kw* in the west. As in Orkney, this affects words of ON and Scots origin alike (Jakobsen 1928: LIX).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Rev. George Low in the 18<sup>th</sup> century: “queen, question, quarrel &c is universally pronounced as if it was written wh” (ON: 226 f.).

<sup>14</sup> OrknN is not quite clear on this point. The phonological overview (xlv f.) gives *hv* > /m, w/ but *kv* > /kw/ only. However, half the words with initial /m/ (under *wh-*) are derived from ON *kv*, e.g. *whieso* ‘a whitlow’ < *kveisa* f. OrknN also lists a few words under *kw-*, and all but one of these can be derived from ON *kv*. The occasional /kw-/words could be explained in two ways: the shift *kv* > /m/ may not have worked in all words, or more likely, /m/ has been restored in some words. Today, /kw/ is gradually replacing /m/ where it is appropriate in the standard language, but my oldest informant has /m/-pronunciations throughout in *quoy*-names.

#### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

The merger of *hv* and *kv* is characteristic for West Norwegian dialects, whereas Standard Scots differentiates between the two phonemes. For this reason, it seems reasonable to attribute the merger to the ON language system.<sup>15</sup> Just like the merger of dental fricative and stop, this merger must have been strong enough to spread to the Scots dialect (8.1.2.3).

##### *Other consonant clusters*

- rs* in *Furso*, *Fursbreck* etc. has a retroflex or supradental pronunciation which is also found in East Norwegian dialects. In Northern Europe, supradentals are limited to Scandinavian and Scots Gaelic dialects, where they may have developed as a result of language contact (Eliasson 2000: 39 f., 47 f.). In Orkney Scots, supradental pronunciation only pertains to *rs*. LAS notes [rʃ, rʂ] for *hoarse* and *horse* in Birsay and Dounby respectively. If the supradental was introduced into Gaelic from ON, it must be assumed to be an early development.
- kn* is no longer pronounced in place-names. This is a fairly recent adaptation to the standard language, however. In the 1920s, old people still pronounced the *k* in *Knarston* (OrknN: xlvi).
- xl* > *kl* in *Aclath*, *Agla* < *öxlin*.
- fn* > *mn* > *m*: *Ramna Geo* /'ramiɟjo/, ON *rafnagjá*, *Holm* /ham/ < *höfn*, *Yamma* < *jafna* (*Yimma-Yamma*, Birsay), cf. *yamalt* 'a person of same age' (ON: 214, xlvi). See *ft* below.
- ft* is retained, e.g. in such names as *Tufta* and *Tafts*. The form *-tit* occurs in unstressed position, but this appears to be a rather late development. *Aittit* is spelt *Etafft* as late as 1729. In Norwegian dialects, the oppositions *fn* : *mn*, *ft* : *pt* and *fs* : *ps* form a dialect isogloss. There is no example of original *ps* in the West Mainland material, but there is a farm in Westray, near "a very steep, craggy hill-slope" called *Iphs* /ifs/ < *ufs* 'steep side of a cliff' (OFN: 40). Admittedly, the material is limited, but the

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<sup>15</sup> Indrebø's claim that Norn belongs to the *kv*-area (1951: 234) is certainly a simplification. In fact, the Northern Isles seem to constitute a transition area with a rather wide range of variation.

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forms correspond most closely to the dialects in Trøndelag and Eastern Norway (Christiansen 1946–48: 102ff.).

### 8.1.2.9. *Metathesis*

Metathesis is a very common but inherently sporadic feature. For some names, variation or shift can be followed in the source forms.

- *Gresøy* – *Hen of Gersa* (both forms 1662 Blaeu = *Gairsay*).
- *Irvigert* 1897 – *Ervigjar* E. Marwick 1971 (= *Evrigert*).
- *Scrapsquoy* 1931 – *Scarpsquoy* on a modern map.
- *Nethirburgh* 1492 > *Netherbrugh* 1503 (= *Netherbrough*, Harray)
- *Burgh* 1500 > *Browch* 1584 (= *Brough*, S. Ronaldsay)

In other names, there is no trace of metathesis in the source forms, but assuming metathesis offers the most plausible interpretation. The specific in *Gurness* and *Girnigeo* for instance, is most likely to be ON *græn*- ‘green’.

### 8.1.3. *Conclusions*

Returning to the initial four questions pertaining to the regularity and the origin of linguistic variant forms in the material, we must ask which conclusions can be drawn. For the sake of clarity, a selection of the results has been inserted into a table, figure 8.1. We immediately observe that developments specific to proper nouns are rare, the only potential example being /θ/ > *h* in a few names. Moreover, it is obvious that many features found in the traditional dialect are being reversed or have been reversed in recent times.

#### *Regular changes*

are more rare than sporadic developments. More or less regular changes include the lowering and centralisation of short *i*, assimilation of *mb* > *m*, vocalisation and loss of postvocalic *g*. Most likely, the shift from dental fricatives to stops /θ, ð/ > *t, d* has been regular as well, though the place-name material is somewhat ambiguous on this point. Occasional *th*-spellings may reflect Standard Scots, and

8. *Structural features observed in the place-name material*

the reintroduction of fricatives in the modern dialect is certainly influenced by the standard language.

	<b>Sporadic or regular</b>	<b>In place-names only</b>	<b>Linguistic origin</b>
<b>Vowels</b>			
<i>ó</i> > /ø/	uncertain, on the wane	no	Scots
in > /ɪ/	to a great extent	no	Scots
monophthongisation	sporadic	no	uncertain
<b>Consonants</b>			
<i>g</i> > <i>w</i> > loss	regular	no	ON
vocalisation of <i>l</i>	sporadic	no	Scots
/θ, ð/ > <i>t, d</i>	probably regular, reversed	no	ON
/θ/ > <i>h</i>	rare	apparently	uncertain
<i>p, t, k</i> > <i>b, d, g</i>	sporadic	no	ON
<i>ll, nn</i> -palatalisation	sporadic	no	uncertain, Sc distribution
<i>g, k</i> -palatalisation	uncertain, being reversed	no	uncertain
<i>mb</i> > <i>m</i>	regular	no	Scots + ON
supradental <i>rs</i>	uncertain		ON
<i>hv, kv, /kw/</i> > /ʌ/	uncertain, being reversed	no	ON

Figure 8.1.

*Sporadic changes*

include monophthongisation, vocalisation and loss of *l*, the shift /θ/ > *h*, voicing of *p, t, k* and palatalisation. The phonological overview in OrknN demonstrates a wide range of variation in the way ON phonemes develop in dialect loan words, with up to 4–5 alternatives for individual sounds.

A number of reasons can be suggested for the variation. Some sound changes may never have been completed in the first place (cf. McMahon 1991: 50 ff.). For instance, the shift /θ/ > *h* can never have been other than sporadic, whether it originated in ON or as interference from a third linguistic system (Central Scots). Even in those cases where a sound change was completed at some stage, the bilingual situation means that the speakers face diverging norms which may break up previous regularity. Vowel quantity offers a very conspicuous example of competition between two linguistic systems. The bilingual situation appears to cause a total collapse of both systems, the result being a massive shift to short vowels.

Moreover, various kinds of restitution may cause anomalies. At present, the local dialect is under pressure from the standard language. This means that even though Orcadians are monolingual today, they are still facing competing forms in many instances.<sup>16</sup> In such situations, the standard language tends to win. This is also what happens in Orkney, when dental fricatives and the diphthongs /ei, au/ are reintroduced, whereas the palatalisation of initial /g, k/ and the phoneme /ø/ are abandoned.

*Sound changes and proper names*

Sound changes specific to proper names are virtually non-existent in the present material. However, there may still be a connection between the monoreferential function of names (see 3.3) and the fact that few linguistic changes work consistently in the place-name material. For instance, names derived from ON *fjall-* appear with or without *l* (8.1.2.2). This does not correspond to lexical diffusion in the ordinary sense, where one expects only one form of a specific word (cf. McMahon 1999: 50 f.). Place-names are different. If two forms compete, different forms may be selected in different names. The primary function of a place-name is to identify a locality; there is no need to consider the semantic contents. This means that the uniformity required for the identification of common nouns is re-

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<sup>16</sup> Weinreich, Herzog and Labov (1968: 101) regard command of heterogeneous structures as part of unilingual linguistic competence, while the competing forms the speakers command are the foundation for linguistic change.



#### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

dundant for place-names. A reader (especially if not Scots) may not identify *wa* as *wall*, and variation may thus cause confusion. Place-names refer to unique localities, and a place-name *Fealquoy* next to a *Fea* causes no confusion or identification problems (cf. Bakken 2000: 14 f.).

Individual sound changes may also arise from restitutions and adaptations. For instance, *l* appears to be restored in most cases in the place-name element *dale*. This kind of lexical adaptation depends on the speaker's ability to analyse the individual name and establish the semantic correspondences. The adaptation *wall* for *wa* < *vágr* on the other hand is a result of a non-etymological reanalysis. Both kinds of reanalysis and restitution are treated in chapter 9.

#### *The Scots linguistic system*

It should come as no surprise that more than half of the sound changes are of Scots origin, since Scots is the only living language in Orkney. ON words and place-names only exist as loans in the Scots dialect. If they are not acceptable in Scots, adaptation is compulsory. This means that the Scots linguistic system overrules ON even in the loan words: ON is a fossilised layer, only Scots features can be productive. If the lowering and centralisation of short *i* is a phonetic rule in the dialect, for instance, names of ON origin are necessarily affected. The only way ON features can continue to be productive in the Scots dialect is by becoming part of this dialect. As we have seen, such substrate interference has actually taken place. Interference is the most likely explanation for such specifically North Scots features as stops instead of dental fricatives, palatalisation of initial *g* and *k* and the supradental pronunciation of *rs*.

#### *The ON dialect in Orkney*

The place-names bear witness to sound changes carried out in ON before the names were borrowed into Scots. In addition to palatals, supradentals and the loss of dental fricatives mentioned above, the changes include

- vocalisation and loss of intervocalic and word-final *g*
- voicing of *p*, *t*, *k*

- the merger of *hv* and *kv* and the development /kw/ > /ʍ/

In my opinion, these changes prove that Orkney Old Norse was not an archaic dialect. Moreover, they offer little support for Indrebø's assumption (1951: 280 f.) that Norn belonged to the South-West Norwegian dialect group (cf. 4.5). We may note that Indrebø bases his hypothesis mainly on Shetland material. A common feature for Norn and SW Norwegian is the unvoicing of *p*, *t*, *k*. A number of innovations in Norn deviate from the rather archaic dialect in south-west Norway: the supradental pronunciation of *rs*, palatalisation rather than segmentation of *ll/nn* and ON *hv* > /ʍ/ rather than SW Norwegian *kv*. The consistent vocalisation of postvocalic *g* is a salient feature in Norn. This development is rare in Norway, but is characteristic for Danish.

From a chronological and geographical point of view, it makes sense to study Orkney Norn as a unique dialect, independent of Norwegian dialect isoglosses. These can hardly have been well developed by the early date at which the islands were settled, and it appears unlikely that the contact with one specific area in Norway could have been strong enough to make a major impact on the development of Norn. What the material shows, in fact, is that nearly all the innovations observed in Norn are also found in other parts of Scandinavia, though not in one specific area. These observations raise the question as to whether certain phonological innovations are latent in the language and can become effective more or less independently of direct contact. Investigating this question is outside the scope of this study, however.

## 8.2. Morphology

The following section deals with the development of inflectional morphemes in the place-names of ON origin. This is a problematic task for various reasons but most of all because the sources are

8. *Structural features observed in the place-name material*

rather late. Only a handful of names have been recorded prior to the first rentals from 1492. By that date in Scandinavia, the ON morphological system had undergone major simplification, bringing it very close to the modern language (cf. figure 8.1). We must assume that simplification had also occurred in Orkney and this may have affected place-names. Moreover, the documents are written in Scots by Scots scribes. Though some of the scribes may have been bilingual, they must necessarily have been influenced by the language in which they were writing. Thus, we should always consider potential influence from the Scots linguistic system in modern forms. It means that even if traces of ON inflectional endings can be found in a large number of Orkney-place-names, it may be impossible to pinpoint the actual case form. For this reason, in shall use the present form as the starting-point for the discussions below. As most place-names are coined from nouns and adjectives, an overview of the inflectional system in ON and modern Norwegian for nouns and adjectives is given below.

Tables 8.2 ON morphology, nouns and adjectives

**Old Norse strong nouns**

The suffixed definite article is added.

		masc.	fem.	neut.
Sg	N	<i>hestr-inn</i> ‘horse’	<i>laug-in</i> ‘bath’	<i>land-it</i> ‘land’
	G	<i>hests-ins</i>	<i>laugar-innar</i>	<i>lands-ins</i>
	D	<i>hesti-num</i>	<i>laugu-nni</i>	<i>landi-nu</i>
	A	<i>hest-inn</i>	<i>laug-ina</i>	<i>land-it</i>
Pl	N	<i>hestarnir</i>	<i>laugar-nar</i>	<i>lönd-in</i>
	G	<i>hesta-nna</i>	<i>lauga-nna</i>	<i>landa-nna</i>
	D	<i>hestu(m)-num</i>	<i>laugu(m)-num</i>	<i>löndu(m)-num</i>
	A	<i>hesta-na</i>	<i>laugar-nar</i>	<i>lönd-in</i>

**Old Norse weak nouns**

The suffixed definite article is added.

Sg	N	<i>bogi-nn</i> ‘bow’	<i>gata-n</i> ‘street’	<i>riki-t</i> ‘realm’
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Pl	G	<i>boga-ns</i>	<i>götu-nnar</i>	<i>riks-ins</i>
	D	<i>boga-num</i>	<i>götu-nni</i>	<i>riki-nu</i>
	A	<i>boga-nn</i>	<i>götu-na</i>	<i>riki-t</i>
	N	<i>bogarnir</i>	<i>götur-nar</i>	<i>rik-i-n</i>
	G	<i>boganna</i>	<i>gatna-nna</i>	<i>rikja-nna</i>
	D	<i>bogu(m)-num</i>	<i>götu(m)-num</i>	<i>rikju(m)-num</i>
	A	<i>boga-na</i>	<i>götur-nar</i>	<i>riki-n</i>

**ON adjectives, weak declension**

*spak-* ‘wise’

		masc.	fem.	neut.
Sg	N	<i>spak-i</i>	<i>spak-a</i>	<i>spak-a</i>
	G,D,A	<i>spak-a</i>	<i>spök-u</i>	<i>spak-a</i>
Pl	N,G,A	<i>spöku</i>		
	D	<i>spökum</i>		

Table 8.3. Modern Norwegian morphology (n. and adj.)

**Modern Norwegian, noun declension**

		masc.	fem.	neut.
Sg	indef	<i>hest</i> (horse)	<i>gate</i> (street)	<i>land</i> (land)
	def	<i>hest-en</i>	<i>gat-a</i>	<i>land-et</i>
Pl	indef	<i>hest-er/-ar</i>	<i>gat-er</i>	<i>land</i>
	def	<i>hest-ene/-ane</i>	<i>gat-ene</i>	<i>land-ene/ -a</i>

**Modern Norwegian adjective declension**

	masc.	fem.	neut.
Sg	<i>stor</i> (big)		<i>stor-t</i>
Pl	<i>stor-e</i>		

**8.2.1. Word-final vowels -o, -y and -a**

*a*

In names of ON origin, -o, -y and -a /ə/ are the most common vowel endings. Of these, -a is the most salient ending, as it is foreign to

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Scots. It may reflect ON *a*-morphemes, which occur in a number of case forms (cf. table 8.2. above). This seems to be the case in a number of place-names. For instance, it seems safe to derive *Queena* from *kvina* (ON f acc. def.) and *Cuppingua* from *koppinn goða* (m. acc.) The generic of *Sinnakelda* is *kelda* (f nom.), *Brya* corresponds to *breiða* (adj.) and *Hellia* to *hella* (ON f nom.). When the element is feminine, the final *-a* may even reflect the modern def. form, e.g. *Meera* < ON *mýrrin*, cf. Norw. *myra*.

The origin of final *a* /ə/ is not necessarily ON *-a*, however. It may also be the result of weakening of other unstressed vowels, which will normally develop into schwa in Scots, or the result of levelling. The latter is illustrated by some of the rhymes recorded from Shetland by Jakobsen (1928: XCII f.), where ON morphology has been levelled to *-a* more or less consistently.<sup>17</sup> This may suggest that *-a* has been perceived as a typically Old Norse or Norn ending.

#### *-y* and *-o*

In his grammatical notes (OrknN xxix), Marwick derives the endings *-y* or *-ie* from ON *i*-morphemes (m nom. or dat.) and *-o* from feminine nominative *-a*. The correspondence is tenuous, however. Some masculine nouns also end in *-o*, e.g. *gayro* < *geiri*, whereas other endings have obviously been dropped altogether, e.g. *bod* < ‘breaker’ < *bodi* m. In other cases, vowel endings have been added to strong nouns, e.g. *waddie* ‘ford’ < *vað* n and *chaldro* ‘oyster-catcher’ < *tjaldr* m.

These examples suffice to demonstrate the lack of correspondence between the ON originals and the present form, and we should thus question whether *-i* and *-o* are ON endings or if they in fact

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<sup>17</sup> *Clapa, clapa süda*

*Boochina schölinna Bjöda*

*Swala clovena vjenta in*

*Bauta deema kjota schin*

*Roompan pöman söda*

In the Skekla-rhyme, *tuna* appears to reflect *tunit* (n), *hesta* < *hestin* (m) and *fomten* < *fimtán*.

*Skekla komöna rina tuna*

*swarta hæsta blæita bruna*

*fomtena hala*

*and fomtena bjadnis a kwara hala*

represent adaptations to Sc morphology.<sup>18</sup> The latter explanation appears more probable since *-y*, *-ie* /i/ is a very productive suffix in Scots. It is widely used to coin diminutives or pet forms of names, e.g. *Willie* and *Sally*. Moreover, it can be used to derive adjectives from nouns and verbs and nouns from verbs and other nouns (EHSL: 401).

An alternative diminutive suffix in Sc. is *-ock*. Variant forms such as *-ack* and *-ick* /ɔk/ can be found in the Southern Isles and East Mainland (OrknN: xxix) as well as in Shetland<sup>19</sup>. Its equivalent in the northern and western dialects of Orkney is *-o*, however. Thus words ending in *-ck* in the east and south will normally end in *-o* in West Mainland and the Northern Isles. To test the productivity of *-o*, I checked all the OrknN entries under *k-*, *l-* and *m-*, ca. 575 words altogether. Out of these, 54 end in *-o*. Two are verbs, the rest are nouns. Thus, unlike *-ie*, *-o* does not appear to be used to derive adjectives and it is mainly a marker of nouns.<sup>20</sup>

In some place-names *-o* would certainly appear to reflect ON *a*-morphemes, for instance *Pulswarto* < *pollinn svarta* m acc. We should note, however, that *a* > *o* is not a regular development (OrknN: xxix, cf. 4.4.1.4.).

In other names, *-o* can be interpreted as a Sc derivatives. The specific in *Manso Pow* appears to be a pet form of *Magnus* and the same could apply to *Quoy Basso*. The field-name *Vedo* can be compared to the Shetland dialect word *vedek* ‘small brook, ditch’ (< ON

<sup>18</sup> “Typically, though not always, the borrowed words are treated as stems in the borrowing language—that is, they take the usual affixes for the relevant stem-class”. Thomason and Kaufman (1991: 37).

<sup>19</sup> The suffix possibly enters into a few West Mainland place-names: *Hagock* and *The Hallack*, see 6.2.

<sup>20</sup> Among the quoted nouns are *klavo* < *klafi* m and the originally strong nouns *kleppo* < *kleppr* m and *lisso* < *flis* f. A number of words have alternating forms, e.g. *leero* - *lyrie* < *lira*, cf. the place-name *The Clivvo* as opposed to the common noun *klivvy* ‘track, pathway’). Alternation between vowel and consonant endings is also seen: *liss* - *lisso*, *kuiv* - *kuivy*.

#### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

*veit* f ‘ditch’, ShetLN 1037). Both contain local diminutive endings; we saw above that *-ek* in Shetland corresponds to *-o* in West Mainland. *Pittos of Dale* and *Cuppo* may also be diminutive forms, referring to small holes or pits and a small hollow. The latter is also found in the form *Cuppin*. In a number of cases, *-o* is used to coin short forms of farm-names, such as *Bretto* < *Brettobreck*, *Freeo* < *Quoyfree*.<sup>21</sup> This may even be true for *Picto*, which is the name of an old hill-dike. *Pickie-dykes* or ‘picts’ dikes’ is a general term for old dikes. A final example is *Goldero*, the name of a former house in the hills. Folk etymology explains this as formation containing *golder*, ‘laugh loudly’ (cf. ON *galdra* v.).

For names ending in *-ie/-y*, correspondence with ON morphology is even more tenuous, as very few can be derived directly from ON *i*-morphemes. Out of a total of more than 250 names from Evie, only one name, *Grandie* < *grandi* m, seems to reflect an ON nominative form. According to Marwick, *Boray Niggly* and *Skiddy* may be derived from ON dative forms *borgi*, *knykli* and *skeiði*. However, an ON interpretation is problematic considering that the first record of *Neiglay* and *Skiddie* is in the 1841 rental and the first recorded form for *Boray* is actually *Bora* (1688). It would thus appear that *-y* is an adaptation to Sc morphology in many (most) cases.

*Cubby* in *Cubby Roo Stone* is a diminutive form of uncertain linguistic origin. The name refers to the saga chieftain *Kolbeinn Hrúga*, and *Kobbi* could certainly be an ON pet form for *Kolbeinn* (cf. *Kuikobba* 1329, 8.3.1.1). Alternatively, *Cubby* could be a Scots pet form similar to *Robie* in *Robie’s Knowe*. Place-name short forms derived with *-ie* include *Blackie* < *Quoyblacke* and *Troondie* < *Trundigar*. Some names have probably been coined from dialect words with *-ie*-suffix. *Waddie* is a common name for burnside localities, and rather than regarding each one of these as coinings from

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<sup>21</sup> Short forms in *-o* are also found in Icelandic: *menntó* < *menntaskóli*, *strætó* < *strætisvagn*, where they appear to be a recent innovation. According to Svavar Sigmundsson (pers. comm.), such forms emerged in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

ON *vað* n ‘ford’ with *-ie* added, it seems more likely that they have been coined from the dialect word *waddie* (OrknN: 205).

Adjectives derived with *-y* are common as specifics. For instance, they enter into a number of names of ‘geos’ or creeks along the coast: *Crinky Geo*, *Gressy Geo*, *Skibby Geo*, *Scarry Geo* and *Verry Geo*. The pattern has obviously been strong enough to attract place-names of ON origin such as *Skibby Geo* < *Skipagjá* (in which initial *sk-* is clearly indicative of ON origin) and *Hundy Geo* < *Hundagjá*. Here, *-y* replaces the genitive morpheme. In *Keelylang* < ON *Kjölrinn langi*, *-y* serves as an adaptation of the ON def. article. The first element is a correct translation of ON *kjölr* ‘keel’ (semantic adaptations are treated in ch. 9), and the morphological adaptation may have taken place at the same time. As we see, *-y* may function as a replacement for different ON morphemes.

Finally, *-y*-derivatives form a particular class of names containing no generic, e.g. the house-name *Crankie* from the adj. *crank* ‘crooked, distorted’ (Jamieson 1867: 133), roughly the ‘the lopsided one’. Other examples include the field called *Peeky* ‘the triangular one’ from the noun *peak* and *Fuffy*, a tidal shoal, coined from the verb *fuff* ‘to blow, puff’ (ibid: 215).

A number of names are recorded with different ending vowels, e.g.

- Brenda* 1848 – *Brendo* (present form)
- Baramira* – *Baramero* (both forms 1931)
- Sinnakild* 1848 – *Sinnakilda* (present form)
- Bora* 1688 – *Boray* 1762
- Burn of Desse* 1846 – *Burn of Desso* (present form)
- Quinnamoan* 1897 – *Quinni Moan* (present form)
- Quinni* (Rendall) 1882 OS – *Queena* (present form)

On the basis of the discussion so far and the fact that the forms are rather unstable, I think it is safe to conclude that we should be very careful to assume correspondence between original ON case morphology and the present form. When suggesting such correspondences, Marwick does not seem to consider the morphological simplification that took place in ON in medieval time. Even more importantly, he overlooks the influence of the Scots linguistic system



## 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

and the conspicuous fact that the most common endings, *-o* and *-i*, are productive in the dialect.

### 8.2.2. Word-final consonants

We have seen that the distinction between strong and weak nouns has not been sustained. In the same way as a final vowel may be added in original strong nouns, the word-final vowel has been dropped in a number of original weak vowels of all genders: *ak* < *alka* f ‘auk’, *bait* < *beiti* n ‘pasture’, *skift* < *skipti* n ‘division’. This also pertains to common place-name elements such as *breck* and *taing* < *brekka* f and *tangi* m.

#### 8.2.2.1. /ən/

The ending /ən/ (occasionally /in/: *Hewin*, *Kewin*, *Cuppin*) is very common in place-names: *Breckan*, *Fursan*, *Gravan*, *Hayon* etc. It enters into ca. 80 of the names or around 12 %. The vowel spelling is inconsistent, as the pronunciation is normally /ə/. For instance, *Grandon* is spelt *Granding* 1642, *Grandon* 1754, *Grandan* 1841. The oldest form may suggest the pronunciation /in/ just as in ON, but from the subsequent variation we may conclude that the vowel has been weakened and is pronounced as schwa.

The origin of the /ən/-forms is unambiguous; they clearly reflect the post positioned definite article. This article was traditionally seen as an innovation in the Middle Norwegian period (1350–1500, e.g. Indrebø 1951: 260), but the date is being pushed backwards in modern research. Bakken (1998) quotes examples of names in the definite form slightly prior to 1350: e.g. *hakavikinni* 1340 (DN V 137), *kalsvikinni* 1349 (DN X in 38), *koparwikinni* 1340 (DN V 137), and a house name *matraudhinum* 1336 (DN XI 30). The definite form is still rare in names well into the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> The definite form is still rare in names well into the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however. Grøtvedt 1974: 293f. quotes *wnder Hafutøynæ* 1436 (DN VI 462) as opposed to *j Hofut øy* 1408 (DN iii 585). In documents from Trøndelag the first in-

Considering that the suffixed definite article appears rather late in Norway, it is not a matter of course that the development should reach the North Sea colonies. For this reason, it is interesting to observe the abundance of definite articles in the Orkney place-names, and this may also support an earlier dating of the definite article.<sup>23</sup> When definite forms are rare in rentals and other early documents, it may be due to the selection of names in these sources. They mainly include township-names, i.e. farm-names of rather high age. This group tends to retain indefinites forms until today in most areas of Norway (Helleland 1990: 82) and this would seem to apply to Orkney as well.

As shown in table 8.3, the final *-n* of the feminine is dropped in modern Norwegian. This is a part of a systematic dropping of short *n* in unstressed syllables in ON (Torp & Vikør 2003:77). Feminine words functioning as place-name elements in the investigation area normally retain the *-n*: *Breckan*, *Cruan*, *Gravan*, *Tooin*, *Cringlin*, though occasional *a*-forms can be found: *Meera*. The nasal has consistently been dropped in names with the generic *mýrrin*.<sup>24</sup>

The occasional *a*-forms indicate that the loss of nasal also affected the ON language in Orkney, but to judge from the name-forms, the development was never completed. Rather, *a*-forms appear to have spread by lexical diffusion, affecting all instances of *mýrrin*. This rather frequent place-name element may have followed the development of the common noun. Alternatively, the consistent drop of the nasal from *meera* would have to be explained as onomastic adaptation, see 9.3.2.1.

/ən/ can also reflect various ON plural morphemes when names refer to ‘more than one of a kind’. For instance, the farm *Gitterpitten*

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stances as late as the 1470s: in *Aasenn* 1475 (DN II 898), *Bivgne holmen* 1478 (DN XVI 269. Thanks to the late Jørn Sandnes for providing these examples).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Torp and Vikør (2003: 46), who date that development of the definite article to the early Old Norse period.

<sup>24</sup> The examples include *Boondamira*, *Grindamira*, *Barameera*, *Bismira* and *Lamira*. E. Marwick also notes *Brymyiree* in Evie, in which the spelling suggests a final /i/.

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lies next to a number of small ponds in a marsh, and the generic can probably be derived from ON *pyttarnir* ‘the ponds’. *Chinyan* in Har-ray denotes two small connected lochs. The name can probably be derived from ON *tjarnarnir* ‘the lochs’<sup>25</sup>. There are no examples of two-syllable morphemes (cf. ON definite plural) in the material. Neither are there any obvious reflexes of the dative plural morpheme *-um*, which is rather common in Norw names. It may be represented by /ən/, however. The change of final *m > n* in unstressed syllables is attested in DN II 691, 1425 and *The Lord’s prayer*, see 4.4.1.3. According to Marwick (OFN: 234), this development may explain the present ending *-ston* in *staðir*-names. The form may have emerged from dat. pl. *stöðum*, in which *ð* regularly drops and *m > n*. An alternative explanation is suggested in 9.3.2.2.

In a linguistically unstable situation, certain morphological features may become strong and oust less frequent forms. As can be seen from table 8.2, forms ending in *-n* (*-inn*, *-in*, *-an* etc) dominate the paradigm and it is not unlikely that this form should win the competition, just as the *s*-genitive ousted the *ar*-genitive in the transformation to modern Norwegian.

The combination of the ON and Sc definite article is virtually nonexistent, which may suggest that /ən/ was perceived as a marker of definiteness for a long period (cf. 9.3.1) This is no longer the case, however, which means that at some stage, /ən/ changed into an unintelligible but frequent place-name suffix. It is, in fact, so common that it appears to form a pattern for the adaptation of names, cf. 9.3.2.1.

##### 8.2.2.2. Final dental

The definite article of ON neuters is *-it*. The only apparent instance of *-it* in the material is (*Burn of*) *Dieth Hellia*, where *Dieth* seem to represent *dýit* n def. The *it*-morpheme may have been lost because it was perceived as deviant (see above). But we should also note that

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<sup>25</sup> Even *Lunan* may be an original plural form. This rather common name contains *lón*, borrowed from Gael *lòn* ‘meadow, marsh’, cf. 5.5.11. The parallel Sc form is always plural, *The Loons*.

the final *-t* of the article is not pronounced in Norwegian. Thus, the development in Orkney can be seen as a more realistic rendering of the oral form. Loss of *-t* is evident in names with postpositional specifics, e.g. *Kergurn* (Harray) and *Housnea* (Sandwick) < *kjarrit græna*, *húsit nýja*. In such constructions, a generic in the definite form is required, cf. *Cuppingua* and *Queenamuckle*.

More surprisingly, a dental has been added where it does not belong in the ON system. The variant form *Tumalt* for *Toomal* < *tún-völlr* ‘privately owned field next to the houses’ can certainly be explained as an adaptation to the noun *tumult* (cf. 9.3.2.2). Other forms escape obvious explanation, e.g. (*Well of*) *Deealt* < dial. *deal* ‘wet patch of ground’ (ON *dili m* ‘patch’, OrknN: 30). The hill-name *Aglath* reflects *öxl(in)* ‘the shoulder’ and the field-name *Lobath* probably contains a dialect word *loba* ‘coarse grass’ (OrknN: 108). In the 1595 R, *Fealquoy* in Evie is recorded as *Fealtquoy*. Additional examples are found in the neighbouring parishes. There is *Linneth*, *Midhiest* (< *hliðinna*, *miðhús*) and a field name *Lint Flaws* < *lín* 1787 in Harray. *Midhiest* could certainly reflect *Miðhúsit* n. def., but there are no other examples of *hús* in the definite form. The Birsay names *Scuant* < *skógrinn* and *Leeants* < *hliðin* (Marwick 1970: 30, 93) are puzzling, as *-t* is added to an original definite form. *Leeants* even has an ostensible Sc plural marker added – thus boasting three morphological endings.

The added dentals are difficult to explain. As we have seen, the neuter definite article would hardly seem strong enough to serve as a pattern for analogy and there is no dental suffix in Scots.

### 8.2.2.3. /ər/

The ending /ər/ occurs in a handful of names: *Bruar* < ON *brúar*, *Cupper* < ON *koppar* (Rendall and Evie), *Climpers* < dial. *klimper*, *Crowrar* < ON *krúar* and *Langalour* < ON *-lóar*? The ending *-er* may reflect various ON indefinite plural morphemes ending in *-r* as well as a masculine nominative. The latter goes for *klimper*, a dialect word denoting ‘a big lump of stone’ (OrknN: 90, xxix, cf. 8.1.2.8).

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The fact that *-er* is quite rare in place-names, whereas *-s* is relatively frequent, even when the generic is of ON origin, may suggest that ON the plural morpheme has been replaced by Sc, cf. 9.2.1.

##### 8.2.2.4. *-s*

I Scots nouns, *-s* is the only possible inflectional morpheme, marking plural as well as genitive (as the latter, it is common to ON and Sc). In place-name generics, *-s* can only be a plural marker, however. Names ending in *-s* are either Scots formations or secondary adaptations. The combination of *s*-plural and generics of ON origin is rather common, e.g. *Dees*, *Flaws*, *Quoys* and *Wades*. Such forms may be purely Sc formations coined from dialect loan words. In some cases, they may also have emerged as translations of the ON plural morpheme, cf. 7.1.3 and 9.3.1.

##### 8.2.3. *Weakening and loss of case morphology in specifics*

As a general rule, unstressed vowels are liable to weakening and loss. This is certainly true for the case morphology in Orkney place-name specifics. In many cases, the case morphology has been weakened or lost in the first rental records. Pre-rental source forms showing the original morphology are exceptional. Only four compounded names from the investigation area have been recorded in the Saga or in early documents:

*á Þingavöll* > *Tyngwell* 1492 (Tingwall)  
*til Rennudals*, in *Rennadali* > *Randale* 1492 (Rendall)  
*Daminsey*, *Damisey* (Damsay)  
*Renaland* 1425 > *Raynland* 1502 R (Redland, Firth).

The genitive-*s* is retained in *Damsay*, but an unstressed syllable is lost. The case morphology of all the other specifics is lost in the first rental entry. The vowel may have been weakened to a schwa sound prior to the loss. This is suggested by the alternation between *-e-* and *-a-* in 1425 (DN II 691): *Kærkewaw*, *Kattenæs* but *Næsta gard*, *Renaland*. The form *Kirkwaw* is recorded in a letter in Latin from 1422 (REO: 84). In some names, the medial vowel is dropped at a later stage:

*Binzæscarth* 1601, *Bingascarth* 1794 > *Binscarth*

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

*Howaquoy* 1596 > *Hacco*, Rendall.  
*Growagarth* 1492, 1503 > *Grudgar*, Evie.

The most common endings for specifics in the material are /ə/ and no ending, the two forming almost equally large groups. Medial /ə/, spelt *a*, can possibly have formed a pattern for new name formation. This may be the case for *Rushabreck* (cf. 7.2.2), which seems to contain a Scots specific *rush* and a number of names in which *a* appears to be a later addition: *Setscart* > *Settascarth*/*Settiscarth* and *Cotscarth* > *Cottascarth* (Cf. 9.3.2.1, as well as 8.3.3 for an alternative interpretation).

The ending *-s* is somewhat less frequent and /i/ is the least common form. As stated above, *-s* is a common genitive marker for Scots and ON. It is thus to be expected in names containing personal names or place-names as their specifics. *Rummerdale* seems to be the only example of a retained ON *ar*-genitive. The specific is probably the genitive form of a burn name. Other instances of *ar*-genitives may have been reduced to /ə/ or dropped altogether, or they may have been replaced by the more common morpheme *-s*.

Since different morphemes may develop into /ə/ or drop, we are not normally in a position to reconstruct the original morphology of the specifics. For instance, some /i/-forms may be due to adaptation to the Scots suffix *-ie/-y*, e.g. *Skibby Geo* < *skipagjá* (cf. 8.2.1. above) and *Etherigeo* /'iθəriqjo/ < *iðragjá*. In other names, *-i* may actually reflect an ON morpheme, however, for instance *Evrigert* < *øfrigarðr* m.

The loss of ON case morphology was possibly reinforced by Scots scribes. In that case, we would expect habitation names, which are often recorded in writing, to be more adapted to Sc than the non-habitation names, which have little tradition in writing. A check of the habitation names in two parishes reveals a slight over-representation of the forms acceptable in Scots, i.e. *s*-morpheme and *θ*-morpheme, in the habitation names in Evie, whereas the habitation names in Firth show no deviation from the average. Thus, scribal conventions do not seem to have played a major role in the loss of ON morphology. In fact, the weakening and loss of case morphol-

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ogy in Orkney place-names is more or less a parallel to the development of Norwegian names. In a detailed study from the Oslofjord area, Grøtvedt (1974: 20 f.) demonstrates how contracted forms appear in the records from the mid 14<sup>th</sup> century.

### 8.2.4. Recent changes of morphological form

A handful of names undergo morphological changes from early to late written sources. The change from *Breck* in 1656, 1680, 1797 to *Breckan* 1841 stand out, as it appears to be a change within the Scandinavian linguistic system, from indefinite to definite form. Considering the late date, it is more likely that the new form follows the pattern of other names ending in *-an*. (see 9.3.2.1.)

Scots morphological endings vary in a number of names. Two Rendall field-names *The Dale* and *The Hammar* have shifted from indefinite to definite form. The former was a farm in 1786, called *Deal with the Miln*. The latter also appears to have been a farm, and is recorded as *Hamyr* 1503, *Hammer* 1619. The name may still be used without the article. Some names change from plural to singular, e.g. *Mirk*, recorded as *Merks* in 1786, and the OS-form *Burn of Bluebrae* compared to *Bluebraes* on the 1848ComR. Other examples include *Boughts* in the 1841 Census for modern *Bught* and *Lowrie's Waters* on 1846 ComE, which is now called *Lowrie's Water*. *Bigging(s)* in Rendall can have singular form as well as plural. A hill in Evie is called *Kews* on OS maps, but the Evie folklorist Ernest Marwick uses the form *Kuwo*, apparently an *o*-suffix formation (cf. 8.2.1). The present name *Brim* is particularly unstable from a morphological point of view, changing number as well as definiteness: The first record is *The Brim* in Carfin's Rental, the 1841 Census form is *Brim* and OS-maps use *Brim*s consistently.

### 8.2.5. Conclusion

As the discussion above will have shown, it is problematic to deduce the original morphology of place-names on the basis of the available forms, as few regular correspondences between the present forms and the assumed formation forms can be established.

What we can observe is a radical simplification. The complex ON case morphology has been converted into a limited number of endings in the present name forms. This may have a number of reasons, but first of all it seems likely that the ON grammatical system was simplified in Orkney as ON in Norway in the late medieval period. It is difficult to assess whether the original language contact situation contributed to this development, but it is clear that the Scots linguistic system in which the names have been transmitted have contributed greatly to the present forms. The most frequent endings are *-y* and *-o*, i.e. forms productive for nominal derivations in the Scots dialect. This suggests that Scots patterns have been of greater importance than the original ON case morphology and that the names have been adapted to suit the living language (cf. 9.3.1).

Unambiguous instances of ON plural forms are rare. There are no two-syllable suffixes corresponding to ON definite plural forms and only a handful of names ending in *-er* (ON indef. plural or masculine nominative).

The only really frequent ending of ON origin in the place-name material is the suffixed definite article, regularised into one form /ən/. This is interesting, as the article appears quite late in Norwegian place-names. The fact that /ən/ and *the* are rarely combined in the same name may indicate that Orcadians perceived /ən/ as a marker of definiteness well into modern times. At some point, however, /ən/ lost its semantic content. Today, it is probably perceived by Orkney speakers as a suffix generally fit for place-names, which would explain a late shift *Breck* to *Breckan*.

### 8.3. Morphosyntax

This section deals with the internal syntax of names. The normal syntax of Scandinavian compound names is specific followed by generic: *Nýhús*, *Nyhus*. This is also the rule for English and Scots names: *Newhouse*. In younger names, the specific and generic tends to be written separately, e.g. *Heathery Brae*. Most Orkney names



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follow this standard pattern. In the following discussion I will mainly deal with the names that do not comply with this pattern.

### 8.3.1. Postpositional specifics

A number of Orkney place-names are so-called inverted compounds, i.e. the specific follows the generic. In most cases, the specific is an adjective: *Queenamuckle* < *kvin mikla* ‘the quoy big’ *Bakkan Swarto* < *bakkann svart* ‘the slope black’ *Howena Gruna* < *Haugrinn græni* ‘the mound green’ etc. A masculine name occurs once: *Quilaverans* < *kvi + Lafranz* ‘quoy Lawrence(?)’.

In British onomastics, such names have been interpreted as the result of Celtic interference (Ekwall 1969: 35, 1977: xxiii). This seems highly unlikely. Even if postpositional specifics are virtually non-existent in modern Norwegian, the pattern was current in the older stages of ON. In runic Danish, the attribute was more often placed after the noun than in front of it, and for weakly declined adjectives postposition was consistent (Skautrup 1944: 142). A relict of this pattern is found in place-names such as *Ølsemagle* (*magle* < *mikill* ‘big’). Postpositional adjectives are also a characteristic feature of early ON. This syntax disappears from the records ca. 1400 and in diplomataric sources it is mainly found in stereotype phrases (Lundeby 1965: 143). Lundeby gives some place-name examples, which are stereotypical in the sense that 10 out of 14 contain the generic *ey* ‘island’.

- i eyjunnu iðri* (Hskr)
- i Eynni helgu i Mjörs*, in *Eynni miklu* (Fms)
- i æynni bygdu in Tyri* (DN V 131, 1339)
- i Eynni yttri* (DN V 212, 1349)

All names that are still in use have been adjusted to the current word order (i.e. specific first): *Inderøya*, *Helgøya* and *Ytterøya*. The syntagmatic form of the original names may have contributed to the process; it is probably easier to change the word order of a phrase *Eynni yttri* than of a compound *Ytterøya*. To my knowledge, the archaic word order only survives in two Norwegian names, *Holmen-grå* ‘islet the grey’ and *Landegode* ‘land the good’. The latter is used

as a taboo name for different coastal localities, which may explain why the old syntax is preserved (NSL 244, 282).

However, it is clear that postpositional attributes are a possible pattern in early ON and a few names coined according to this pattern can actually be found in Norwegian diplomataric sources. Other names may have been adjusted to current word-order (i.e. specific first) before their first record. In Denmark and Scania, there are more records of postpositional specifics in early sources, and it has been possible to study the transition to modern word order century by century (Weise 1969, see maps pages 135, 141, 161, 166). In the Faroes, the pattern is still productive.

#### **8.3.1.1. Postpositional specifics in Orkney place-names**

There are about 20 examples of names with postpositional specifics in the place-name material. Some of these appear to be Scots formations. Just as their Scandinavian counterparts, these names stand out in carrying the main stress on the second element.

About one third of the names contain a generic in the definite form: *Backan Swarto*, *Broonalonga*, *Cracka Longi*, *Cuppingua*, *Howena Gruna*, *Queenamuckle*, *Wheenobrya* and the somewhat dubious example *Queenamidda*. Apart from the latter, all the names contain adjectives as their specifics, and thus follow an archaic pattern (cf. 8.3.1 above). The oldest recorded form is *Quyna-mekle* in the 1492 rentals, which denotes a fairly large farm. The other names are actually field-names, and for such names early records are rare. On the other hand, one generally assumes that as a group, these names are younger than farm-names. This may suggest that pattern was productive longer in Orkney than in Norway.

The remaining two thirds of the names contain a generic in indefinite form: *Brae Vingus*, *Cup Stephen*, *Gemuglo(?)*, *Ha'white*, *Hallbreck(?)*, *Keelylang(?)*, *Pulkitto*, *Puldrite*, *Pulswarto*, *Queenhammeron*, *Quilaverans*, *Quoybeezie*, *Quoyblackie*, *Quoyfegy*, *Quoyfree*, *Quoyhenry*, *Quoy Sinclair*, *Stygault*. To these could be added *Eynhallow*, name of an island between Evie and Rousay, which is a parallel to *Eyin helga* in Norway. We notice that the generic is *kvi/quoy* in half the names. In other ways, this group is more

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complex than the one above. The pattern may be more difficult to explain, there are more Scots elements and the specific is not necessarily an adjective. In *Queehammeron*, the specific is probably a place-name. Other names appear to contain personal names as their specifics: *Lavrans/Lawrence, Henry, Sinclair* and possibly *Blackie*.

A name of this type (though not from the investigation area) is mentioned in one of the earliest Orkney documents: *Kuikobba* (DN II 170, 1329). The specific appears to be gen. *Kobba* of a masculine nick-name *Kobbi*, short for *Kolbeinn* or *Kolbjörn*. This is a parallel to the Faroese pattern *Urð Mans* (Matras 1963: 148 f.) Matras compares the *Urð Mans*-type with names like *Briggethorfinn* postpositional specifics have been seen as reflections of Celtic influence (Ekwall 1969:35, 1977:xxiii). In Orkney however, interference from Celtic languages seems unlikely, as the contact with Celtic-speaking people have left no other traces in the onomasticon. In my opinion, an ON pattern should be preferred.

#### *Quoy-x*

Nygaard (1966: 129) deals with the possessive genitive in his treatise of Old Norse syntax. He states that the possessive is normally attributive, including a number of examples. In most of these, the possessive is placed *after* the noun: *skip Arnviðar* ‘ship Arnvid’s *kringla heimsins, limar trésins, þræll konungs*. The possessive can thus be seen as a syntactic and semantic parallel to the attributive adjective. *Skip Arnviðar* and *Kuikobba* follow the same pattern, a noun + personal name in the genitive. We have thus identified an ON pattern, but it does not cater for all the names in the group.

These regular ON constructions seem to be rare; examples from the 1492 rentals (Thomson 1996) include *Quybernardis* (p. 52) and *Quyskega* < *Kvi Skegga* (p. 75). The vowel genitive morpheme of weak masculine names is not very conspicuous, and it is conceivable that names such as *Kuikobba* and *Quyskega* have served as a pattern for a new group of *quoy*-compounds. These names also have postpositional personal names as their specifics, but not in the genitive. This pattern has remained productive well into modern times. For instance, *Quoysinclair* appears to be a 19<sup>th</sup>-century formation.

In some names, *quoy* appears to function as a facultative addition. Alternation between forms with and without *quoy* is well attested. *Lythe* in South Ronaldsay is called *Lið* in 1369, *Qwylith* in the 1492 rental and other forms including *Quoy-* in later rentals. The element *Quoy* does not occur in modern forms. In such cases, we can assume that *quoy(land)* is used in a technical sense ‘untaxed land’. The alternation between *Smiddie* and *Quoysmiddie* in the 1595 rental may serve as an illustration: The farm is called *Quoysmiddie* when it comes to the king’s taxes (“pro rege”) and *Smiddie* under the “pro episcopo”-heading. Even if *Smiddie* was free from tax, it had to pay its “teyndis” to the bishopric. The same is true for *Cott* in Rendall, and it is similarly reflected in the forms in older sources: *Cot quoyland* 1595 R, *Cotquoy* 1601 UB and presently *Cott*.

*Quoy* may thus be added to the original farm-name to specify that the farm is untaxed (cf. 9.3.3). In these formations, *quoy* is normally placed first. *Quoy* is also added to compound names, giving such three-element names as *Quoyneipsetter* and *Quoyingabister*. The additional *quoy* is normally dropped at a later stage. This process has been over-generalised, so that in some cases *quoy* has been dropped even if it is actually the generic. *Neo* is recorded as *Quoy-*nia** in 1595 and *Mugly* as *Queenamigle* in 1665. Both examples are from Rousay. The variation may also be simultaneous, cf. *Smiddy* above. The alternative names *Faegie* and *Quoyfegy* denote a field in Rendall (formerly a small farm).

There may be a difference in style or formality between the forms with and without *quoy*. Two crofts in the investigation area are written *Quoyblackie* (*Quoyblacke* 1722) and *Quoyfree* respectively, but the colloquial forms are *Blackie* and *Freeo*.<sup>26</sup> On the whole, *Quoy-x* formations are overrepresented in rentals and other documents, and some of them may be scribal constructions rather than names in everyday use. However, Scottish scribes can hardly have coined the *quoy-x* pattern themselves, as it is foreign to Scots English. It seems more likely that these names have also been modelled on the ON *Kuikobba*-pattern.

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<sup>26</sup> The derivational suffixes are Scots (see 8.2.1 above)

## 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

### 8.3.1.2. Postpositional specifics with other generics than *kvi*

Postpositional specifics are also found with other generics than *kvi/quoy*. We note that *Pul-* < *pollr* ‘pool’ enters into three of the names. Similar proportions are found in Birsay “inverted compounds”: ten have *Quoy-* and four have *Pul-* as their generics (Marwick 1970). This would seem to demonstrate how new names are coined according to patterns from other names, even when it comes to syntax. Postpositional specifics are found sporadically with other generics, e.g. *toft* in *Taftnica*, Burray and *sker* ‘skerry’ in *Skerhua* and *Skerandas*, Birsay. A few names in the material (*Brae Vingus*, *Ha’white*) contain Scots generics, which proves that the pattern has been adopted in Scots name formation. *Quoy Sinclair* and *Quoyblackie* are also likely to be Sc formations. Finally, *Pulkitto* /pʌl’kito, ’kito/ is a parallel to *Quoyfree* and *Quoyblackie* in that only the final element is used colloquially. This may indicate that prosodic patterns play a role: an unstressed first element is liable to be dropped.

### 8.3.2. *of*-periphrasis

We saw above (8.2.3) that the specific often ends in *-s*, which is a genitive marker common to ON and Scots. It is frequent in names coined with personal names or place-names as their specifics. In Scots formations, *of*-periphrasis is an alternative way of expressing relationship. *Brecks of Scarataing*, *Park of Fursan*, *Styes of Aikerness*, *Knowe of Desso* and *Point of Hellia* are only a handful of the 50 periphrastic formations found in Evie alone.

*Of*-periphrasis is no innovation when it appears in Orkney place-names. Periphrastic genitive formations are a common innovation in most Germanic languages, and can be observed in English prior to 1300 (Thomason and Kaufman 1991: 317, 320, 326). EHS (p. 166, 209) mentions briefly that *of*-periphrasis emerges as a strong alternative to the *is*-genitive during the Early Scots period, possibly under influence from Latin and French, which have *de*-periphrasis. The

transition from synthetic to analytic languages paves the ground for such constructions<sup>27</sup>.

Periphrastic genitives are widely used in spoken Norwegian, e.g. *hatten til mannen* and *huset til Anne*, ‘the hat of the man, the house of Anne’, but the form is foreign to Norwegian place-names. Periphrastic place-names occur sporadically in England, e.g. *Isle of Wight*. The core area for such names are certain regions of Scotland, particularly the northeast, Orkney and Shetland.

Nicolaisen discusses *x of y*-constructions in *Scottish Place Names* (1976: 57–64) with particular focus on *Burn of X*. Based on the distribution – *of*-periphrasis is absent from the early anglicized areas as well as the Gaelic core areas – he concludes that the pattern arose where Gaelic and English met. According to Nicolaisen, the periphrastic names emerged when Gaelic names like *Allt a’ Chaoruinn* were translated into English, with *of* replacing the Gaelic indefinite article *a’*. Even if there was no direct contact between speakers of Gaelic and Scots in Orkney and Shetland, Nicolaisen assumes that the pattern 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’ –’ are ultimately, but indirectly, also responsible for that plethora of ‘X of Y’ names in Shetland, Orkney and the eastern (‘Scandinavian’) half of Caithness. Independent creation must be ruled out”.

I have questioned the Gaelic origin hypothesis elsewhere (Sandnes 1997). In this connection, I pointed to a possible French pattern, a theory that has also proved controversial. It should be made clear first of all that *of*-periphrasis is a productive pattern in Scots at the time when the first periphrastic place-names are recorded in Orkney, which means that the names can be seen as unproblematic Scots formations. This does not explain the immense productivity of the pattern, however.

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<sup>27</sup> The language contact may have enhanced *of*-periphrasis, considering that periphrasis is typical for pidgin languages (McMahon 1994: 258 f.). Moreover, periphrasis may be a way of avoiding the ambiguous morpheme *-s*, which fulfils a number of different functions in Scots.

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The oldest recorded instances are found in the 1492 rental, for instance *Nethirtown of Grenyng*, *Bordland of Swarhmale*, *Bull of Kerston* and *Bull of Hove*. In this period, *Bull of X* (cf. 5.5.5) becomes a standard designation for old central farms acquired by the Scottish gentry and new large units emerging from amalgamations. It is clear from the rentals that these units belong to members of the social élite, for instance *Bull of Ropness* is owned by the earl's brother William Sinclair and *Bull of Karstane* belongs to William's son Magnus. It thus appears that periphrastic names arose among the Scottish gentry. The element *bull* appears to be a borrowing of ON *bú* 'estate' (cf. 5.5.5) and as suggested above the pattern could be inspired by French. The 1502–03 rentals contain a number of French forms such as *le Bow*, *le borland* and *le bordland de Snarthmall* (Peterkin 1820: 18, 80, 82). The latter could be the pattern we are looking for.<sup>28</sup>

From its assumed upper class origin, *of*-periphrasis grows into a household pattern in Orkney place-name formation. More than 100 names in the material or about 16 % of the total are periphrastic formations. The first instances recorded in the investigation area are *Hen of Gersa* 1662 and *Holm of Grimbuster* 1664. Most of all, periphrasis is used to coin secondary names, i.e. names in which the specific is another place-name: *Burn of Wasdale*, *Slap of Velzian Bay of Hinderayre*, *Holm of Rendall*. Appellative specifics are exceptional but appears in *Holodyke* < *Hole of Dyke*. Alternation between *of*-periphrasis and normal word order is quite common. One of my informants says *Nearhouse Burn* and *Varmadale Burn*, where 19<sup>th</sup>-century maps have *Burn of Nearhouse* and *Burn of Varmadale*, and modern maps have *Hamar(s) Hill* instead of *Hill of Hammer* on the old maps.

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<sup>28</sup> The French impact on Scots was massive (see EHSL: 189–208). For instance, 27.6 % of the vocabulary is of French origin and French diphthongs and palatal consonants were borrowed, suggesting a large degree of bilingualism. In addition to the French impact on English in general, "The Auld Alliance" from 1295 to 1560 meant that Scotland had close cultural ties with France for a long period.

As stated above, *of*-periphrasis is a Scots construction. Thus, periphrastic names are inherently Scots formations and their generics are always Scots (cf. 7.1.3).<sup>29</sup>

### 8.3.3. Preposition names

A number of West Mainland names have the form of prepositional phrases. The pattern is most frequent in Harray, which boasts a number of fields called *Above the Boats*, *Atween the Dykes* etc. These have parallels in England: *Above Town*, *Beneath the Town*, *Between Ways*, *Tweengates* (Field 1993: 143, 268 ff.), and Cameron gives early examples of prepositional names.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the Harray examples may have been coined according to British patterns. However, some of the Orkney prepositional names are clearly coined from ON elements, e.g. *Quinamillyoar* < *kvína milli á* and *Milahamer* < *milli hamra*.

Most prepositional names lack generics. In names such as *Above the Boats* and *Atween the Dykes* do not specify the type of locality that is found above the boats or between the fences, they are merely located in relation to other features. This is also the case for Norwegian preposition names: *unde Bergo* ‘under the cliffs’ and *me Vatne* ‘by the lake’. Apart from *Milahamer*, all Orkney examples have been coined from Scots words, e.g. *Tween Burns*.

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<sup>29</sup> There seems to be nothing in Scandinavian toponymy to support *of*-periphrasis (cf. Nicolaisen 1976: 63). A vaguely similar pattern emerges when names are specified by a prepositional phrase, e.g. *Gran på Hadeland* and *Mo in Rana* (cf. 8.3.3). However, these are parallel to *Stoke on Trent* and *Newcastle upon Tyne*, and the word order cannot be reversed. In ON, personal names are often specified by a prepositional phrase: *Dóra á Rimul*, but place-name examples are hard to find. And even if *Toomal o' Curcabreck* could be derived hypothetically from ON *\*túnvöllr á Kirkjubrekk*, this would only account for a fraction of the periphrastic names.

<sup>30</sup> Cameron treats preposition names of the type *atten Ashe* > *Nash* in connection with elliptical names (1997: 95–101). His examples contain reflexes of case morphology. However, the pattern seems to be limited to certain areas, in particular Devon.



#### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

Some names actually contain a generic which is specified by a prepositional phrase. This pattern hardly occurs in Norway,<sup>31</sup> but is quite frequent in the Faroes. Matras (1963: 141 ff.) quotes such examples as *Tangin á Barmi* ‘the point at Barm’ and *Áin í Rók* ‘the brook in Rók). *Quinamillyoar* mentioned above proves that the generic + preposition phrase-type occurs in Orkney.<sup>32</sup> *Keek-up-under* should be seen in relation to *Keek*, a farm further downhill. The final preposition is exceptional and suggest that ellipsis has taken place, e.g. from an original \**Keek up under Vishall*.

Marwick assigns some farm-names the Faroese-type pattern. He derives *Binscarth* from *bærinn í skarði*, *Settiscarth* from *setr í skarði* and *Cottascarth* from *kot in skarði*. Marwick’s interpretation would seem to be contradicted by two-syllable forms in the rentals: *Set-scarth* 1502, 1595 and *Cot-scarth* 1595. On the other hand, *Scarth* is used as an area name including both farms on ComF, and *Skart(h)* is found in several documents from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The prepositional phrases in names of this kind typically contain place-names.

When such names are written in one word the original structure is obscured, but it can often be reconstructed if the generic can be identified. For instance, *Howea Breck* (OS, *Howeabrake* 1897 OSNB) denotes a small knoll on a slope south of Aikerness. Here, *howe* is clearly the generic, since the locality is a *haugr* ‘mound’ rather than a *brekka* ‘slope, bank’. We can thus reconstruct an original form *Haugr á brekka* ‘mound on the slope’. *Howenalidna* in Harray is recorded as *Heuon a Lidna* in the 1790s (Clouston 1927: 165). The latter form clearly points to an ON origin *Haugrinn í/á hliðinni* ‘the mound on the slope’. This is supported by the morphological form, as the specific of a compound name does not take the

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<sup>31</sup> Norwegian names may be specified by prepositional phrases to avoid confusion, e.g. *Bø in Vesterålen – Bø in Telemark*. They resemble the Faroese names in that the final element is a place-name. The name status of the prepositional phrase is somewhat dubious, however. Rather than being an inherent part of the names, it is added in certain contexts (cf. addition of *quoy*, 8.3.1.1).

<sup>32</sup> According to Matras, the pattern is found in Orkney, but only with the preposition *á*. This restriction is hardly valid. *Milli* certainly enters into a couple of names, and the *scarth*-group may contain *i*, see below.

definite form (cf. the discussion of *Cruanbreck* in 7.2.2). For the same reason, *Quinni Moan* should be interpreted as *kvín á mórinn*, and *Crovnofínya* as *króin á feni*. *Tuanabackan* should probably be derived from *þúfan á bakkinum* ‘the hillock on the bank’. These names are Orkney parallels to Faroese names such as *Áin í Rók*.

#### 8.3.4. Verbal constructions

Verbal constructions functioning as place-names are found (in small numbers) all over Scandinavia, e.g.: *Kikut* ‘look around’ and *Vendom* ‘turn round’ (NGIndl.: 19, Christensen and Kousgaard Sørensen 1972: 228). They are normally referred to as imperative names, but this term may be too narrow. The pattern is found in Orkney and elsewhere in Britain, too. Field quotes such examples as *Starveall* and *Break Back*, as well as the more or less pious wishes such as *Make Me Rich* and *God Speed*.

Verbal construction names show no indication of high age. They typically refer to houses in isolated location, and no names of this type in the investigation area are recorded prior to 1841. This also means that most of them are transparent Scots formations, like *Falldown*, denoting a croft near a steep slope in Rousay. The material includes *Keek* ‘look’ and *Mounthooly* ‘tread carefully’, denoting abandoned crofts far up on the slopes of Vishall and *Seekaboot* ‘look around’, a cot house. The former name can be seen as an incitement that the visitor should enjoy the view, whereas the latter is a recommendation to walk the hills slowly. *Benlaw* in Evie could possibly be rendered as *bend law*, referring to an illegally built house. *Clickimin* is a recurrent name, probably a transfer of a Scottish inn name (cf. 7.2.1). The precise meaning is not clear, but it appears to be a verbal construction containing the verb *cleek* ‘hook’ (CSD 101). As we saw above, the names may also express a wish. For instance *Standpretty* and *Blinkbonnie* (probably coined from ‘glance, look’ and ‘pleasant’) seem to express from the part of the namers that the house should be pleasant to look at.

The examples so far contain Scottish elements only. There is thus reason to doubt Marwick’s derivation of *Vindon* < *vend om* ‘turn round’ (OFN: 118). The name type is not recorded in ON at

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all. Rather, verbal constructions would seem to represent a late (Scots) stratum of names, and the pattern is most likely to be British.

##### **8.3.5. Conclusion**

The morphosyntactical features discussed above vary in age and linguistic origin. As for postpositional specifics, ON patterns offer a perfectly satisfactory explanation and there is no reason to assume Celtic interference. The archaic word order may have remained productive in Orkney longer than in Norway, and it has even been borrowed into the Scots dialect. *Of*-periphrasis is a younger pattern of Scots origin. The pattern seems to have spread from a social élite. It becomes highly productive, especially for the coining of secondary names with existing place-names as their specifics. Again, there is no reason to assume Celtic patterns.

Preposition names are common to Scots and Norwegian. Most of the names in the material are coined with Scots elements, but there are some instances of ON formation as well. This means that the pattern goes back to the ON period. Preposition names in Orkney may contain a generic. This pattern is more or less absent in Norway, but it is rather common in the Faroes. Verbal constructions are also common to both languages. In Orkney, these names show every sign of being young: They refer to peripheral houses and the earliest recorded forms are less than 200 years old. For this reason, we may be quite confident in assuming Scots origin for these names.

## **8.4. Lexicon and semantics**

### ***8.4.1. Semantic field and etymological origin***

Words frequently functioning as place-name elements have been discussed in ch. 5 above. This section will deal with the proportions of place-name elements of ON and Sc origin in different semantic fields. This does not necessarily reflect the language of formation; the names can rather be assumed to reflect the origin of the word-stock in the various semantic fields. An index of generics including

translations is found in appendix 3. The index contains ca. 115 generics of ON origin compared to about 70 generics of Scots origin. A closer examination makes it clear that the most massive ON majority is found for elements denoting topographical features.

*a) Elements denoting topographical features*

*Elevations:*

The ON dominance is most conspicuous for elements denoting elevations. The following words have been recorded:

ON: *dys, fjall, hól?, haugr, hryggr, kambr, kjölr, kleppr, kollr?, kúfr?, nabbi, þúfa, varða*

Sc.: *head, hill, knowe, kame*

*Braehead* is the only name coined with *head* in the material, which means that *hill* functions as the standard term for major elevations and *knowe* for minor elevations in Orkney Scots. Each of the Scots elements thus covers a wide semantic range (cf. Nyström 1988: 171). The ON generics are more descriptive as to the size and shape of the elevations. For instance, *þúfa*, *kollr* and *hól* denote rounded hills, while *kjölr* and *kambr* refer to ridges

*Slopes and precipices*

There is also a majority of ON terms used to denote slopes and precipices.

ON: *bakki, barm?, brekka, berg, hamarr, hallr, hlið, kleif*

Sc.: *brae, hill, face, foot*

Some of the ON words refer to the slope as being rocky, e.g. *berg* and *hamarr*. A special study is required to find out to what extent the words refer to slopes of different heights and grades of steepness, but for the author, a *kleif* is steep with a road or track in it and a *hlið* is quite long, leading up to a hill or mountain.

*Lochs and burns*

In most cases, names of lochs and burns are Scots coinings, but even here, the range of variation is greater for ON elements:

ON: *á, árkvísl, fors, pollr, pytr, renna, óss, tjörn, (vatn)*

Sc.: *burn, grip, loch, pow ('pool'), water*

#### 8. Structural features observed in the place-name material

Nearly all Orkney burn-names follow a standard pattern containing *burn* as the generic and the name of the farm by which it flows as the specific. Occasionally, *grip* is used when referring to small burns. The ON words *á* and *renna* seem to cover more or less the same areas. *Árkvísl* ‘forking of a burn’, *fors* ‘stream, waterfall’ and *óss* ‘mouth of a burn’ convey more specialised meanings which appear to be absent in the Scots nomenclature.

Just like *burn*, *loch* covers a wide semantic field ranging from large lakes to quite small ponds. *Water* appears to be of mixed origin, a semantic extension of a Scots word influenced by the polysemy of the ON word *vatn* = ‘water’ + ‘lake’ (cf. 5.4.).

#### *Marshes and waterlogged land*

There is slightly more variation in ON terms for waterlogged land:

ON *dý*, *fen*, *fit*, *kjarr*, *mýrr*, (*mór*?)

Sc. *moss*, *myre*, *gutter*

The origin of names containing the generic *myre/mire* is uncertain, as this element is common to ON and Sc. A possible semantic extension of ON *mór* is discussed in 5.5.12.

#### *Valleys, depressions*

The following terms are used to denote various kinds of depressions:

ON: *dalr*, *skarð*, *gröf*, *koppr*

Sc.: *cup*, *hole*, *slunk*

We note that *dalr* and *scarth* are the only place-name elements that denote a valley.

#### *b) Words denoting fields and buildings*

As mentioned above, the proportion of ON and Sc origin is more or less even for generics denoting human exploitation of the land and manmade constructions.

#### *Fields and enclosures:*

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

ON: *akr, brenna, flá, land, ló, lun, teigr?, túnvöllr, völlr, garðr/gerði, hagi, \*höfning, krú, kvi, rétt? stía, lun*<sup>33</sup>  
Sc.: *field, green, land, lea, meadow, park, plank, rig, sheed, spot, square, yard, dyke, fald, paddock, pen, sty, loon.*

Field-names reflect changes in the organisation of the land. There was certainly a loss of names of rigs and strips of land when the run-rig system was abolished. This took place around 1840 in the investigated area, i.e. after the language shift, which means that in the new names emerging from the reforms, the generics were always Scots (including loan words). We may thus distinguish between a newer (Scots) stratum of generics belonging to the modern agriculture and an older stratum belonging to the run-rig system. The new stratum includes *park, field* and *green*. Run-rig terms include Sc *rig, plank* and *sheed* as well as terms of ON origin.<sup>34</sup> Some of the ON generics are quite rare, whereas others are frequent. Frequency indicates that the words have been borrowed into Orkney Scots, e.g. *crue* < *krú*, *toomal* < *túnvöllr* and most importantly, *quoy* < *kvi*.

### *Houses and other man-made structures*

Farms, houses, buildings:

ON: *bær, hús, kot, setr, skáli, staðir, tún, ærgi*  
Sc.: *bigging, cott, house, damaschool, hall, kirk, town*

Other man-made structures:

ON: *brú, borg, gata, grind, leið*  
Sc.: *brig, ditch, gate, slap, snabuil, stack*

On the basis of this short survey of the linguistic origin of generics, we may conclude that Scots names, especially topographical names, are more stereotypical than ON names in Orkney. This would appear

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<sup>33</sup> Quite surprisingly, there are no certain instances of ON *eng* f ‘meadow’. It may not have been used, for it is also unattested in Iceland. Alternatively, it may have been replaced by the loan word *lun* < Gael. *lòn* ‘meadow’ (see 5.5.11) and *ma*, cf. South Scand. *mad(e)* ‘meadow’. The latter enters as a specific in *Maeshowe*.

<sup>34</sup> A list of names of the rigs in Netherbrough in Harray from the 1780s, i.e. before the reforms, include ON names such as *Medale Muglafurs* as well as Scots names such as *Snuff Rig*.

#### 8. *Structural features observed in the place-name material*

to contradict Nicolaisen's assumption of stereotypy in colonial names (cf. 7.3.2). It may actually be wrong to compare Orkney and Shetland to other colonised areas in Britain, since ON survived for so long. The fact that ON names may have been coined in a period of nearly 1000 years certainly contributes to variation.

Various factors, such as the nature of the localities and the Scots-speaking Orcadians' attitude to existing names may explain the proportions of generics of ON and Scots origin in Orkney. Hills, valleys and lakes remain unchanged throughout the centuries. Most of these must have been named before the influx of Scots speakers to the isles, and the incomers clearly saw no reason to replace the established names by their own.<sup>35</sup> Fields and buildings are more liable to changes, and once the named object is changed, the name itself may also change. As we saw above, many of the names from the run-rig period did not survive agricultural improvement. They were either lost or replaced by Scots names. Houses are also being built continuously, and after the language shift, only Scots house names are coined (the calque *Kirkatof* being the only exception). This explains the variation in Scots field and house names.

So far the generics have been organised according to their semantic contents. If habitation names are isolated, the proportions are even more striking. More than 60 ON generics enter into habitation names, as opposed to some 20 Scots. This reflects that the established ON farm-names are retained. These old units have often been subsequently divided, but the range of generics in the names of the new farms and crofts is rather limited: *bigging*, *house*, *hall* and the ubiquitous *kvi/quoy* constitute a vast majority.

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<sup>35</sup> This seems sensible for the sake of communication in a bilingual community, though the Norsemen clearly chose a different strategy upon their arrival.

## Chapter 9. Integration of loan-names

Whereas chapter 8 deals with the embedding of various linguistic features of ON and Scots origin in Orkney place-names, this chapter is devoted to the integration of loan-names viewed as linguistic units. The term loan-name implies a place-name taken over by speakers of a different language and integrated into their nomenclature (cf. Rentenaar 1987: 222). In the present case, we are dealing with Old Norse names borrowed and integrated into the Scots language. We shall look at the strategies chosen by Scots speakers when ON place-names are integrated. There is a close connection between chapters 8 and 9, since loan-names have to be adapted into the linguistic system of the recipient language. When original ON names end in *-ie/-y*, the reason is often that Scots speakers choose a familiar morphological ending, cf. 8.2.1.

An adapted version of Walther's model for the integration of loan-names is presented in 3.3.3. Primary and secondary adaptations are the main groups in Walther's original model. The two groups relate to adaptation on different linguistic levels. Primary and secondary normally refer to time or phase, and a chronological differentiation may be of less relevance in Orkney, where adaptation on most linguistic levels may have taken place in the course a long period. The exception is adaptation to Scots phonology and phonotax, which is compulsory at the moment of borrowing. A brief overview of phonetic adaptation is given initially. As for other types of adaptations, I have drawn a distinction between adaptation following a correct etymological analysis and adaptations that do not reflect such an analysis. The speakers' ability to analyse names is discussed in 9.1.2.



### **9.1.1. Phonetic adaptation**

Phonetic adaptation differs from all other types of adaptation in being compulsory at the moment a name (or word) is borrowed into another language. All loan-names have to adapt to the phonology and phonotax of the recipient languages in the sense that unacceptable sounds and combinations of sounds are substituted. Now, the phoneme systems of Old Norse and Scots are not radically different (apart from quantity, see 8.1.1.1), though minor differences can be noted. The vowel sound /y/ is not found in Scots, where it is habitually replaced by /i, i/ or /ø/. Neither does Scots have the diphthong /øy/, which is normally substituted by /ai ~ ei/ (see 4.4.1.4). As the languages are rather close, phonetic adaptation is required less often than when less closely related languages are concerned, e.g. German and Slavic. We should note, however, that an ON sound is not always rendered by the Scots phoneme closest to the original. This situation is treated in 4.4.1 and will not be described again here.

It is evident that the integration of loan-names of ON origin in Orkney Scots is often limited to phonetic adaptation. In the three parishes covered by the present study, the percentage of names that are phonetically adapted only lies between 65 and 80 %. This ties in well with loan-name studies from Finland (Zilliacus 1980: 333 f.).

### **9.1.2. Analysability and adaptation**

There are actually examples of etymologically correct substitutions of place-name elements in the material and these will be discussed in 9.2 below. Though the number is limited, the implications are well worth noting. It means that the name users are able to uncover the morphological structure of compounded names and actualises the complex question of the meaning of names. According to Dalberg (1991: 34 f.), the original morphological structure is lost in established proper nouns, and these nouns have no meaning apart from referring to a certain place. What the speaker perceives is not the etymological elements but synchronous elements which may or may not coincide with the etymological ones. The name elements can only be understood via homonymous nouns.

It is clear that that the speakers' perception of names is based on the current name form, but the strict distinction between name element and appellative may seem too rigid. According to cognitive linguists, the linguistic competence of speakers enables them to deal with simple units and complex structures simultaneously. In an onomastic context, this enables the speaker to handle compounded place-names as well as the elements of which they are formed (lexemes, derivational and morphological suffixes). The speaker's linguistic competence even includes the patterns (or schemas) used when names are coined (Langacker 1987: 57 f, Aitchison 1990:106–117). Another term borrowed from cognitive linguistics is *analysability*, which pertains to the speakers' ability to recognise the compositionality of complex structures (Bakken 1998: 77 ff.).

As Bakken points out, analysability is dependent on the linguistic competence and thus subjective and hence to be regarded as a potential problem. When discussing name formation and the development of names, however, I think it is important to underline the role of individuals. A name is coined by an individual (even if it has to be accepted in a smaller or larger circle of speakers to become established). An adaptation of a loan-name may also result from one scribe or speaker substituting one element for another – providing the new form is accepted by other users of the name. So even if analysability should not necessarily be seen as a very active process, it may be a rather passive process of recognition, the speaker should be seen as an active party. This is true for the coining as well as the development of the names.

The speakers' perception of the place-name elements rather than the place-name as a whole would seem to be most important with regard to the adaptation of loan-names. In many cases, only one element of a compound name is adapted or replaced. And as stated above, these elements do not necessarily coincide with the etymological elements, but are construed by the name users on the basis of the current form. As long as the name users see the names as composed of elements, they can also substitute these elements by others. In some cases, this implies a translation. They may also choose a new element which is seen as being more appropriate. For instance, a hill-name was changed from *Kellerimäki* 'cellar hill' to *Koulumäki*

> ‘school hill’ after a school was built there (Ainiala 2000: 36). If the name users no longer perceive a compound place-name as being compositional, the place-name has to be treated as a unit in adaptation and secondary place-name formation (see *Cruanbreck* 7.2.2).

As I see it, the new focus on the speaker and his/her ability to analyse names entails a new and more dynamic view of the development of names. The present form is not merely determined by the formation form and general structural changes. As long as names are in use, they can be adjusted by name users replacing individual elements of it.<sup>1</sup> This does not mean that such changes can be predicted, nor are they very common. It is far more common for place-names to be retained in their original form with the necessary phonetic adaptation (see 9.1.1).

In the following discussion, I shall draw the distinction between adaptations which presuppose a correct analysis of the original morphological structure (see 9.2) and the ones which do not correspond with the original form (see 9.3). The former are actual translations, whereby the semantic content of the original form is transferred into another language. I have used the term semantic adaptation, although it may be a matter for discussion whether grammatical morphemes convey semantic information.

## **9.2. Semantic adaptations - correct analysis**

### ***9.2.1. Substitution of grammatical morphemes***

Morphological adaptation can only be proved to have taken place if an ON source form can be compared with a modern Scots form and an original ON morphological form has been replaced by the corresponding Scots form. Due to the scarcity of ON sources this is rarely the case.

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<sup>1</sup> Such changes imply new name formations, which are special in that the new name presupposes the existence of a former name (cf. Dalberg 1991: 117).

*Plural morpheme*

There is one documented case of the substitution of an ON plural morpheme by the corresponding Scots one, though not from the investigation area. *Stews* /stu:z/ in South Ronaldsay is spelt *Stowis* in the 1492 rentals, but *i Stufum* (pl. dat.) in a document dated 1329 (DN II 170). This isolated example should be used with care, but at least it proves morphological adaptation to be an option. In most cases, the 1492 rental is the first record of a name, and by this time the substitution may already have occurred, as we see in the case of *Stews*. This implies that substitution is also conceivable for other names containing an ON generic and the Scots plural morpheme *-s* in the 1492 rental, e.g. *Fitts* (Rendall), *Quoyis* (Evie) and *Tofts* (St. Ola) Marwick assumes *Banks* to be a translation of ON *Bakkar*, see 9.2.2. Alternatively, such formations may be Scots coinings containing loan words.

The material offers some indirect indications of morphological substitution, however. A generic unrecorded as a loan word in Orkney Scots can normally be taken as an indication of ON formation, cf. 7.1.1. For instance, *tjörn* ‘small loch, pond’ is not known to be a local loan word. For this reason, I prefer to interpret the form *-gens* in *Verigens* (denoting a number of ponds) as a morphological adaptation of *tjarnar*, plural of *tjörn*. Objections can certainly be raised to this explanation, for even if there is no record of *tjörn* in Orkney Scots, it may have been current at an early stage. Another possible indication of substitution of the ON plural morpheme is the fact that only a handful of names in the material end in /ɔr/ (reflecting the ON indef. pl., cf. 8.2.2.3), whereas *-s* is rather common even in names containing a generic of ON origin.<sup>2</sup>

The shift from ON to Scots plural in *Stowis* and possibly in other names cannot merely be explained as an adaptation to the Scots linguistic system as such. Most of the ON plural endings (see the tables in 8.2) are either acceptable in Scots or only require phonological

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<sup>2</sup> To support this assumption, I checked some 200 names recorded in *Retours* 1610–48. 10 of these combine ON generics and Sc plural *-s*: *Aikiris*, *Clettis*, *Gravis*, *Halfquoyis*, *Quoyis* (3 instances), *Stowis*, *Wallis*, *Pentland Skerries*.

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adaptation to be acceptable (e.g. /ər/ < -ar, -ir). But even though -er is common in verbal nouns such as *winner*, *teacher*, it may be perceived as foreign to place-names. The substitution may thus bring the names in accordance with other items in the onomasticon. It may also convey information about plurality to speakers unfamiliar with the ON linguistic system.

### *The definite article*

The material contains no certain instances of the substitution of an ON definite article by the corresponding Scots. Overall, the Scots definite article is rare in old names. Names combining an ON generic and the Scots definite article tend to be late recorded topographical names such as *The Geo*, *The Ouse* and *The Wart (s)*. Such names are most likely to be Scots coinings from loan words.

What we do see, however, is the secondary addition of the Scots definite article, e.g. *Deal* 1786 > *The Dale* (see 9.3.1). The substitution of the suffixed ON definite article by the prepositioned Scots definite article would appear to be a rather complicated operation, even for a bilingual speaker. Moreover, the ending /ən/ reflecting the ON definite article seems to be retained, rather than substituted, as it is very frequent in the place-name material. In fact, it the ending appears to be sufficiently frequent to function as a pattern for adaptations (cf. 9.3.1).

### **9.2.2. Substitutions of generics or specifics**

There are few examples of the substitution of place-name elements in the material and there is no striking difference between generics and specifics.

### *Generics*

Simplex names can be seen as consisting of generics only. *Fjaurþ* (normalised *Fjörður*) is recorded in the OrknSaga. The present form is *Firth*, coinciding with the Scots noun *firth* which is also derived from ON *ffjörður* (CSD: 197). The place-name and the noun are of the same origin and develop in the same way, and it is thus difficult to determine whether this is a case of translation. But *ffjörður* can also be

adapted in other ways. In the name *Wideford Hill*, *ford* serves as a lexical substitution for *fjörðr*.

The shift from *Bailliefjold* 1848 ComF to *Baillie Hill* OS 1882 is conspicuous, as the substitution takes place a century after the death of Norn. *Fjold* is not recorded as a loan word in OrknN, but the adaptation presupposes the identification of *fjold* as ‘hill’. If the name could not be analysed, we should expect an epexegetic formation *Bailliefjold Hill*. The late translation indicates that the speaker’s knowledge of individual place-name elements is independent of an overall competence in ON or Norn, cf. 9.2.5 below.

*Keelylang Hill* is a more complex adaptation, involving the epexegetic addition of *hill*. The specific thus reflects the original ON name, which was probably *\*Kjölrinn langi*, literally ‘the keel long’ (see the discussion of post-positioned specifics in 8.3.1). The generic *kjölr* has been replaced by Sc *keel*, whereas *-y* appears to be a Scots rendering of the ON definite article (cf. 8.2.). It is not quite clear whether *keel* is a translation, *kjölr* and *keel* are so closely related that immediate understanding is conceivable, cf. 9.2.4.

Marwick’s interpretation of the recurrent name *Banks* as translations of ON *Bakkar* ‘banks’ is somewhat hypothetical. The ON form is unrecorded, and Marwick bases his assumption on early records. *Banks* in Birsay and Orphir are recorded in the 1492 rentals, and at this stage, Scots formations are virtually non-existent.

An interesting example of the substitution of generics is actually recorded outside the investigation area, though. In six Sandwick farm-names, the generic *-yord* < ON *jörðr* ‘soil; land’ (*Eriksyord*, *Brekisyord*) in the 1503 rentals is replaced by *-land* (*Eriksland*, *Brekisland*) in the 1595 rentals (OFN: 148 f.). In this case, the adaptation form is linguistically neutral; *-land* is used in both languages.

### *Specifics*

The derivation of *Hackland* from ON *Haukland* ‘hawkland’ implies a semantic adaptation of the specific. The name is recorded as *Halkland* in the 1503 and 1595 rentals. In the same rentals, *hawk* is spelt *halk*. Every household is charged with a “*halkhen*”, which served as forage for the king’s hawks and falcons. We may presuppose the pronunciation /hak/ as in modern Scots (CSD: 273). The vocalisa-

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tion and loss of *l* in Scots is discussed in 8.1.2.2. Considering that *au* > /a/ is otherwise unattested (cf. 4.4.1.4), it is not satisfactory to explain the development of the name in terms of phonetic adaptation. It is more likely that the Scots term for the bird has replaced the ON one. As for *kjölr* – *keel* discussed above, the ON and Scots words are so close that mutual understanding is conceivable.

The specific of *Woodwick*, pronounced /wid, wud/ can be derived either from the ON noun *viðr* ‘wood, timber’ or the adj. *viðr* ‘wide’. The rental forms have *i* throughout, e.g.: *With-* 1492 and the form *Widwick* is recorded as late as 1727. The first record of *Woodwick* that I could find is in a charter from 1600. The form *Wood-* suggests that the speakers analyse the specific as ‘*viðr* ‘wood, timber’’. The adapted form can thus be seen as a correct translation. However, this is not necessarily the case. Scots speakers may have construed the meaning ‘wood’ based on the spoken form. /wid/ is a traditional pronunciation of *wood* (CSD: 804) as well as a possible development of ON *viðr*. The vacillation between the forms /wid/ and /wud/ may thus be seen as competition between a Scots dialect form and an English standard form.

*Gitter-*, *Gutterpitten* contains an ON generic in the definite form, *pyttrinn* or *pyttarnir* ‘the ponds’, suggesting an ON formation. The Scots specific *gutter* is thus unexpected, and one is inclined to interpret it as a translation of an ON element.<sup>3</sup> Alternatively, it could be a later addition.

*Hundy Geo* and *Dog Geo* refer to two narrow inlets side by side on the Evie coast. *Dog* can be regarded a translation of the cognate ON *hundr*. Considering that *hund* is also a Scots word (CSD 304), *Dog Geo* could also have been coined as a parallel to an existing name. Thus, *Dog Geo* and *Hundy Geo* may be regarded as a similar pair as *Horse* and *Mare*, referring to two boat-launching sites. From a formal point of view, *Hundy* appears to be primary, however. The suffix *-y* is probably an adaptation of an ON grammatical morpheme, most likely gen. pl. *-a* (cf. 8.2.1).

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<sup>3</sup> A 19<sup>th</sup>-century estate map depicts a number of small pools or mud holes supporting the interpretation ‘gutter ponds’.

*Compound names*

There is no example of a Scots translation superseding an entire ON place-name in the material, but in one case an ON name and its Scots translation survive side by side. *Starra Fiold* < ON *starafjall* ‘starling hill’ (or ‘rushes hill’) and Sc *Starling Hill* refer to two summits of the hill forming the border between Birsay, Harray and Evie. It seems highly unlikely that the Scots name was formed independently of the ON name.

The rental records for *Newhouse* in Evie are *Newhouss* 1492, *Newhous* 1503 and *Newarhouse* 1595. Both elements are in concordance with the Scots linguistic system. The only indication that the name might be of ON origin is the 1595 entry, which may reflect ON case morphology and thus suggest an ON formation *Nýjarahús*. If *Newhouse* is actually an adaptation of an ON name, it can be partly explained by the close relation between ON and Scots (cf. 9.2.4). We can assume that a Scots speaker will immediately recognise the element *hús*. The substitution of *nýr* by *new* can also be undertaken with only a minimal bilingual competence.

**9.2.3. Substitution by synonymous elements in the same language**

Place-name elements are occasionally replaced by more or less synonymous elements in the same language. This may not be part of the integration process as such. However, such replacement has implications for the notion of analysability of names (cf. 9.1.2) and will thus be discussed briefly.

As mentioned above (9.2.2), the change of generic from *yord* to *land* may be a semantic adaptation. Alternatively, it could be interpreted as a substitution of elements within an ON linguistic system. This is certainly the case for *Geitaberg* in OrknSaga, which appears as *Gaitnip* in the rentals. The development is irregular, and presupposes the replacement of ON *berg* ‘rock, cliff’ by one of the more or less synonymous ON *gnípa* f or *nibbr* m ‘protrusion’. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the spellings *Obreck* and *Oback* alternate for *Oback* in Harray. There is a record “Obreck or Oback” in 1787, but subsequently the latter becomes standard. *Brekka* and *bakki* may both refer to slopes, cf. 5.5.1.



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A Rendall house-name *Sundiehouse* is recorded 1629. The house-name does not occur today, but there is a *Sandyha* in Rendall. This could reflect *Sundiehouse* after a substitution of the generic. In this case, both elements appear to be Scots (cf. 5.5.9, 5.5.10). *Coatfeggie* in Rendall is recorded 1786. The first element is *cot* 'small house' (cf. the spelling *Coat* for *Cott* in the same document). Later sources have *Quoyfeggie*, with *quoy* replacing *cot*. *Quoy* is a common element in names of small crofts (cf. 5.5.13), which means that from a functional point of view, *cot* and *quoy* are interchangeable.

*Stack of Rush* 1841 ComR > *Tower of Rush* in 1900 OSNB > *Tooin of Rusht* on modern OS-maps is a late and rather puzzling example of element replacement. *Stack* > *Tower* appears to be a shift from one Scots element to another. The subsequent substitution of *tower* by ON definite *tooin* is far too late for ON to be a living language. The replacement is more likely to follow the pattern from other names, considering that all the surrounding hills bear names containing the generics *Tower* or *Tooin*.

Such synonym substitution has not been studied systematically but examples are found in various areas. In parts of Norway *vatn* has ousted its cognate *sjø* (NSL: 483). Holmberg (1985: 123) gives the example *Kastelsodde* in Bornholm, which was formerly recorded as *Kastelshukken* and *Kastelpynten*. The generics are different terms for a 'promontory'. Icelandic examples include *Sæmundarlækur* > *Sæmundará* (*lækur* and *á* both mean 'stream', see Sigmundsson 1985: 128). In the Danelaw, there are examples of the alternation between the two common habitation elements *by* and *tun* in names: *Blesetun* 10<sup>th</sup> century, later *Bleasby*, *Scotebi* in *Domesday Book* > *Scofton* (EPNS XVII: xix f.). In some cases, the new form replaces a term which is no longer current, but this is by no means consistent. And the fact that elements can be replaced would appear to prove that speakers may actually analyse names in their search for meaningful elements, even though opaque names fulfil their function perfectly well.

**9.2.4. Immediate understanding of ON name elements?**

We have already mentioned the possibility of immediate understanding rather than actual translation, e.g. in connection with *Hackland*, *Woodwick* and *Firth*. The situation is similar to the assumed mutual understanding between Scandinavians and hanseatic tradesmen speaking Low German. The languages are seen as a dialect continuum, and both parties may have used their own language, a situation which has been termed semicommunication (Braunmüller 1998: 19, cf. Pedersen 1995: 62 f.).

Even though ON and Scots are rather closely related languages, they do not appear to be mutually intelligible. This is evident from records quoted in 2.4.1. For instance, in 1663 Robert Monteith writes that the incomers in Orkney speak “the Scots language as well as the Norse”. This implies that speakers of Norn do not automatically understand Scots. The opposite is clear from court records from 1703: Scots-speaking witnesses do not understand Norn. Statements like these make it clear that real communication required some amount of knowledge of the other language.

The situation is somewhat different when it comes to individual place-name elements. Many words are so close in ON and Scots that mutual understanding is likely, e.g. *hús* – *hoose*, *sandr* – *sand*, *lítill* – *little*, *mikill* – *muckle*, *pollr* – *pow*, *krókr* – *cruik*. In such cases, a Scots speaker does not really need to translate the element. This implies that the language of formation cannot always be determined (cf. ch. 7). We cannot tell whether *Appietoon* (*Uppetoon* 1629) is a semantic adaptation of ON *Uppitún*, a phonetic adaptation of the same, or possibly a Scots formation. Neither can we determine whether *Boat Geo* can be derived from ON *Bátgjá* (cf. 7.1).

Fellows-Jensen’s Danelaw examples (1985: 195 f.) also demonstrate the problem of distinguishing between phonetic and semantic adaptation between OEng and ON. A phonetic adaptation may result in a correct translation, e.g. OEng. *āc* ‘oak’ > ON *eik*, *stān* ‘stone’ > *steinn*, *wulf* ‘wolf’ > *ulfr*, *e(f)en* ‘even’ > *jafn*.

The possibility of mutual understanding means that it is more difficult to pinpoint actual translations between closely related languages such as North and West Germanic, as opposed to unrelated

languages like Scandinavian and Fenno-Ugrian. The term semantic adaptation would still seem to be appropriate as long as the new form means the same as the substituted form.

#### **9.2.5. Degree of bilingual competence**

Morphological and semantic adaptation as presented above occurs when the name has been adopted into a Scots context but when there are still speakers able to recognise the ON morphemes. Considering that a certain amount of bilingualism is required, one would assume such adaptations to have taken place before the death of Norn. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century adaptation of *Bailliefiold* to *Baillie Hill* (9.2.2) thus raises the question how bilingualism should be defined. Haugen gives different definitions of bilingualism; the widest of these is being non-monolingual (Brautaset 1998: 82 f.), which also covers a rudimentary passive bilingualism.

A wide definition seems useful for the study of place-names. Many place-names are coined from certain recurring elements with which speakers will easily become familiar in a contact situation. I was born in a parish in Trøndelag where many of the place-names in the mountains were coined by the South Sami. Wandering in these mountains, one becomes familiar with the most common Sami place-name elements such as *jaevrie* 'lake' and *gaejsie* 'mountain'. Generics in particular tend to denote identifiable localities and this is certainly true for *jaevrie* and *gaejsie*. This means that non-natives may deduce the meaning of certain elements by comparing name element and locality type. Nyström (1995: 86) demonstrates how the meaning of a common noun may be deduced from the onomasticon. His example pertains to a noun on the verge of becoming extinct, but it would seem to apply to nouns across language borders as well.

We may thus assume that Scots speakers with a rudimentary bilingual competence are able to identify some frequent ON place-name elements, even if the words as such have never been current in the dialect. I suspect that the main reason why Orcadians know that *quoy* is an old term for enclosure is its massive occurrence in the onomasticon; the word is recorded as a current noun in OrknN. *Ness* and *taing* are not recorded, but an Orkney informant was able to distinguish between the two. She defines a *ness* as a broader tongue

of land than a *taing*, in accordance with Norwegian usage. Translating an ON plural morpheme into Scots requires a basic competence in ON morphology, but it can still be rather simplistic, e.g. “-*ar-/ir* at the end of nouns signal plural”.

According to Pellijeff and Walther (3.3.1, 3.3.3), substitution of the generic is more common than substitution of the specific. There are too few examples of semantic substitutions in the investigated material to draw any tenable conclusions, but there is no difference in numbers between specifics and generics (three of each). It still seems that generics undergo more changes than specifics, however. Substitution by synonymous element only occurs for generics, and the generics are dropped altogether in some names, see 9.3.5.2.

### **9.3. Adaptations without correct analysis - reanalysis**

So far, we have looked at changes that require correct morphological analysis of the names, i.e. recognition of the elements which entered into the name when it was coined. Correct analysis is no prerequisite for the adaptation of names, however. The following section is a presentation of adaptations which are independent of the original morphological structure. Such changes also imply an analysis, but they are normally based on the Scots linguistic system and do not involve reconstruction of the original form.

According to Walther, secondary adaptation strategies include epexegetis and lexical adaptation to familiar words in the recipient language, see 3.3.3. A few more categories will be included here. I have included morphological adaptation as well as a new category ‘name-internal adaptation’, which means that the two elements in a name adapt to one another. Moreover, I have divided the category ‘lexical adaptation’ into ‘lexical’ and ‘onomastic adaptation’. The latter is included to account for adaptations following patterns from the onomasticon rather than the lexicon.

### **9.3.1. Morphological adaptation**

Morphological adaptation is only treated under primary adaptations by Walther, but it may also occur independently of correct analysis. Even unanalysed ON morphemes may be replaced by Scots grammatical morphemes or suffixes, or Scots morphemes may be added to original ON names.

#### *Adaptation to Scots grammatical morphemes or suffixes*

We saw above (8.2.5) that there is no clear correspondence between ON case morphology and the present endings of names. The most frequent vowel endings in originally ON names are *-ie/y* and *-o*, which coincide with productive Scots morphemes for nominal derivation (8.2.1). In some names, *-ie/y* and *-o* replace ON morphemes, e.g. *Skibby Geo* < *Skipagjá* and *Brettobreck* < *brattabrekka*. In other cases the Scots suffixes are an addition: *The Clivvo* (place-name) and *klivvy* (noun), both appear to be derived from ON *klyf* ‘a cleaving’. Normal phonological development cannot account for the shifts from *Skipa* > *Skibby* or *kleif* > *klivvy*. It is more likely that the modern forms contain Scots derivational suffixes, either as a substitution for an ON morpheme or as an addition. Either way, the Scots morphemes contribute to the integration of an ON name into the Scots linguistic system, without carrying its normal semantic content. In other words, the shift implies an adaptation to the *form* of the suffix, rather than to the semantic contents.

#### *Secondary addition of Scots articles*

The combination of ON name elements and Scots morphology is rather common. The formation or development of such forms has been discussed above. Many of these seemingly hybrid forms are likely to be Scots coinings from ON loan words and thus unproblematic as far as formation is concerned. Possible replacement of ON morphemes by Scots forms has been discussed in 9.2.1 above. Finally, a Scots article may be added to an existing name. This development is recorded for a few names:

*Deal with the Miln* 1786 Sas. > *The Dale*  
*Hammer* 1619 Sas. > *(The) Hammar*

Some names appear to contain Scots grammatical morphemes as well as ON ones. The examples include:

*Dishans* < ON *dys* + ON def. art + Sc plural?

*Waswyns* < ON *-kvi* + ON def. art + Sc plural?

*Geerons* < possibly ON *geiri* + ON def. art + Sc plural?

*The Hallans* < ON *hallr* + ON def. art + Sc plural?

*The Leeans* < possibly ON *hlif*, *hlifð* + ON def. art + Sc def. and plural articles?

In these names, the Scots morphemes seem to be secondary additions. The Scots definite article *the* does not seem to appear in original ON names ending in /ən/ unless in combination with plural -s, which suggests that Orkney speakers have recognised /ən/ as a marker of definiteness until quite recently. The examples demonstrate that Scots plural forms, indefinite or definite, can be coined from originally ON definite forms. It is clear that the new forms are based on the original forms without initial analysis. If the names had been analysed, *-an/on* might have been dropped, but the Scots speakers who add Scots articles to the name have probably perceived the ON article as an integrated part of the name. Cf. the discussion of *Cruanbreck* in 7.2.2.

Finally, (*The*) *Divaults* /(\ðə) ˌdɔːˈvɔːlts/ may be a monolingual parallel to the names above, containing the Scots definite article twice. /dɔː/ is the old pronunciation of the definite article, still used in Shetland (cf. 4.2.1.4). The stress on the second syllable indicates that /dɔː/ is not an ordinary specific; in normal compounds the first element carries the main stress. The form *The Divaults* can emerge when /dɔː/ is analysed as part of the name rather than an article and the modern form of the article is added.

Scots suffixes and grammatical morphemes contribute to the integration of ON names in the Scots linguistic system, whether they come in as translations or secondary additions. From a formal point of view, names like *Dishans* and *Wades* are Scots. Etymological knowledge is needed to identify the ON element.

### 9.3.2. Lexical and onomastic adaptation

Lexical adaptation implies the substitution of name elements by items in the living lexicon. As mentioned above (9.3), I have chosen to include onomastic adaptation as an additional category, to account for the numerous instances where the living onomasticon rather than the lexicon forms the base or pattern for adaptation.

#### 9.3.2.1. Onomastic adaptation

I have chosen the term onomastic adaptation to refer to the replacement of one place-name element by another, typically more common place-name element. Various other terms have been used, cf. Dalberg (1991: 26 ff.), who prefers the term *analogisk stednavneomdannelse* “analogical reshaping of place-names”. Onomastic adaptations are quite rare in the material and additional examples have been collected from other parishes (with indication of the parish in question).

In South Ronaldsay, an original generic *akr* m ‘ploughed field’ has been replaced in two names:

*Thurdrakir* 1502 R, *Thurregar*, *Thurrogar* 1584 R > *Thurrigar*  
*Gossakir* 1492, 1502 R, *Gossaga(i)r* 1595 R > *Gossigar*.

In both names, *akr*, pronounced with an anaptyctic vowel (cf. the written form *akir* and modern Norw. *åker*) has been interpreted as a case morpheme (cf. 8.2.3) + the common place-name element *gar(th)* < *garðr* (5.5.7). *Gar* has also been the base for adaptation when the simplex name *Rigga* (1629, originally a case form of ON *hryggr* m ‘back; ridge’) later appears in the form *Redgarth* (1841 ComR, modern).

The shift from *Bailleyfold* (1848) to *Baillieval* on OS maps can be seen as a change from one rather frequent generic to another. The register in OFN lists more than 20 names with the generic *val*, *wall* etc, to which nature names should be added. The element *val* itself has emerged as an adaptation of various ON words, for instance *fall* ‘hill, mountain’ as in this case, *völlr* ‘natural pasture’ in *Hestaval* and *Tingwall* and *vágr* in *Kirkwall*. Alternation between two rather unusual name elements is attested in the alternative names *Crovnofinya* (< *fen* ‘marsh’) and *Croonafea* (< *fall* ‘hill’) for a house in Firth.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

The oldest records suggest that the original generic of the farm-name *Nistoo* is *haugr* ‘mound’. The recorded forms are:

*Nestahou* 1577 Ch, *Nesthow*, *Nestahow* 1594 Sas., *Nestahall* in  
Gairsnes 1656 Ret., *Nistahow* 1679 Ret., *Stoo* ca. 1850 OA D  
7/3/54, *Nistoo* 1857, *Stow* 1882 OS, *Stow*, *Nestown* OSNB 1900

The generic has clearly been a puzzle for the scribes. It has been interpreted as *hall* in 1656 and *town* in 1900, but from 1850 onwards *Nistoo/-stow* emerges as the standard form. Phonological developments such as the loss of the final *-g* and the initial *h-* leave little of the original generic, possibly just /o/. This explains why the element is liable to reinterpretation. It is rather unexpected that the forms *stoo*, *stow* should win in the end, however. These forms normally reflect ON *stofa* ‘house’, which may denote an individual farm in a tunship, but it is no common place-name element. The element is not productive in Scots, which means that the onomasticon must have served as a pattern. Why a rather unusual element should function as a pattern for adaptation of the quite common farm-name element *haugr/howe* is quite puzzling, however. A functional explanation as suggested by Dalberg (1991: 42), i.e. that the reshaped name signals its properties as a place-name more clearly seems unsatisfactory in this case.

A functional explanation could possibly be applied to the adapted hill names *Grunshall* and *Vishall*. The specific *hall* (replacing ON *hóll* m ‘rounded hill’ or *hjallr* m ‘shelf’) clearly indicate that *Grunshall* and *Vishall* are place-names, for *hall* is a familiar element in house-names. The generic *hall* may signal that an item belongs to the onomasticon, but it is clearly inappropriate from a semantic point of view when referring to a hill.

The material also demonstrates how names of etymologically different origins adapt to one another. There are three localities called *Jubi-*, *Jupadee* in Northwest Mainland, two crofts and a valley, not necessarily of the same origin. The name of the valley is spelt *Jewa Dale* 1846, and the generic can certainly be derived from ON *dalr* m ‘valley’. An ON specific *dý* n ‘gutter’ seems more likely for the house Jubidee on flat, low-lying and waterlogged ground in Harray.



*Norsk resumé*

As for the three farms in Orkney called *Knarston*, both the specific and the generic may have undergone adaptation.

Harray: *Narstain* 1492, *Nerstaith* 1503, *Knarstane* 1595.

Rousay: *Knarstane*, *Knerstane* 1500, *Knarstane* 1595.

St. Ola: *Knarrarstaupum*, *-staði*, OrknSaga, *Knarstane* R

*Knarston* in St. Ola lies near the beach of Scapa, which is a good place for mooring ships. The name can be reasonably derived from *knarra(r)stöð* ‘boat stance for *knörr(s)*’, i.e. a large Viking (trading) ship.<sup>4</sup> *Knarston* in Rousay is also located near the sea and has a boat stance called *Kirk Noust*. *Knarston* in Harray is located inland, and has to be explained otherwise, possibly from ON *Narfastaðir* ‘Narfi’s place’ (OFN 143). We may note that the generic *stöð* ‘boat stance’ tends to merge with *staðir* ‘place, farm’ in Norwegian place-names as well.

The *Knarston*-example shows that specific can undergo adaptation. This is clearly the case for *Isbister*, which occurs as a farm-name in three parishes. The original specific of the Rendall is *óss* ‘mouth of a burn’. The specific of the Birsay and South Ronaldsay names are *Yzti-* or *Eystri-*, i.e. ‘outer’ or ‘eastern’, cf. the following recorded forms:

Birsay: *Est(er)buster* 1492, *Eisterbuster* 1500, *Ysbuster* 1566

S. Ronaldsay: *Estirbuster* 1492, *Ystabustare* 1500, *Isbyster* 1584

Rendall: *Ossbustir* 1492, *Osbuster* 1595, *Ysbust* 1601, *Isbuster*  
1664

A development *Ossbustir* > *Isbister* is clearly irregular from a phonological point of view; /o:/ does not normally develop into /ei/ (cf. 4.4.1.4). It must thus be ascribed to analogy with the two other *Isbuster* names. We note that the more explicable change to *Ysbuster* occur in these names well before the shift in the Rendall name, suggesting that the shift may have been initiated by scribes and/or speakers familiar with the form *Ysbuster*.

A similar merger of specifics may lie behind some low-lying Orkney *Holland*-farms. In most cases, the specific can be derived from ON *hár* adj. ‘high’, and *Holland* may even have become a

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<sup>4</sup> OrknSaga ch. 76 describes how Svein Asleiverson and his men anchor at Skalpeid (Scapa) and walk over to Kirkwall. This saves a long and potentially dangerous voyage for anyone arriving from the south.

## From Starafjall to Starling Hill

standard name for houses on elevated sites (cf. 7.2.3). The spelling form is unusually stable, possibly under influence from the name of the country. In some names the specific may be *haugr* m ‘mound’ however, cf. *Howland* in Firth 1662 (Blaeu). This is more satisfactory for low-lying Holland-farms situated close to a mound, e.g. the one in Sanday (OFN: 10). Postvocalic *g* had been vocalised or dropped before the first rentals (cf. 8.1.2.1), and a scribe familiar with *Holland* could easily include *Howland* in the same group.

There are two farms called *Redland* in the investigation area, as well as one in Stromness. The etymology and development of these names are rather difficult to disentangle but old records suggest that they all have different origins.

Firth: *Renaland*(?) 1425, *Raynland* 1502 R, *Redland* 1595 R.

Evie: *Roithland*, *Rothland* 1492, *Rothland* 1503 R (subsequently disappears from the rentals), *Redland* OS.

Stromness: *Raland* 1492, 1500 R, *Redland* 1595 R.

The Firth name may contain the name of a burn as its specific. *Renna* may enter into other names in the area (cf. *Rendall*), but the shift  $n > d$  cannot be explained. The early records suggest a derivation from *Ruðland* ‘cleared land’ for the Evie name. The shift from  $\delta > d$  is regular (see 4.2.1.4) whereas the shift from ON *u* to /e/ is irregular. The early Stromness forms may suggest original ON *Ráland* ‘border land’. None of the names develop regularly; the present form is more like a lowest common multiple between the three. It could possibly have emerged as a result of mutual adaptation, but adaptation to the Scots word *red* has certainly played a role.

Finally, onomastic adaptation occasionally affects morphemes as well. The ending, normally reflecting the ON definite article (e.g. *Hayon* < *haginn* and *Grandon* < *grandinn* m def.), sometimes functions as a pattern for adaptations. The original morphological significance has probably become irrelevant, and the speakers may have seen /ɔn/ as a normal place-name suffix. This is not surprising, considering that ca. 12 % of all names in the material end in /ɔn/.

### *Norsk resumé*

The change from *Breck* to *Breckan* in Costa is too late to reflect changes in ON morphology: *Breck in Costa* in 1656, *Breck, Outer Costa* 1797, *Breckan* 1841. The addition of *-an* occurs in the Scots period and can only be explained as an onomastic adaptation. The influence from other names may also explain why *Garson* becomes the standard spelling for ON *Garðsendi* in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Earlier spellings vary between *Garsend*, *Garsand* and *Garsent*. *Garson* may have won because the ending was so familiar from other names. In this case, phonetic changes may also have played a role, however. We saw above (8.1.2.8) that the *d* is often dropped in the cluster *nd*. The addition of /ən/ (spelt *an*, *en*, *in* and *on*) is more or less parallel to the addition of *-y* and *-o* in other names (see 8.2.1). In the latter case, the living Scots lexicon functions as a pattern rather than the onomasticon.

ON case morphology in the specific is often reduced to /ə/ (cf. 8.2.3). In some cases, a vowel has been added after the first records, e.g. *Settiscarth* /ˈsetəskarθ/: *Setscart* 1502, *Setscart*, *Settiscarth* 1595, *Setskairth* 1601. Henceforward the spelling is *Setti-* or *Setta-* throughout, in accordance with the current tri-syllable pronunciation. Similarly, *Cottascarth* /ˈkɔtə-/ is first recorded as *Cotscarth* 1595 and *Cottascarth* 1623. The vowel insertion eases the pronunciation of a tri-consonant cluster, but other original ON names containing reflexes of the case morphology may still have served as a pattern.

#### **9.3.2.2. Lexical adaptation**

Lexical adaptation implies the substitution of place-elements by lexemes in the living language regardless of semantic contents. A well-known Orkney example of lexical adaptation is *Kirkwall* < ON *Kirkjuvágr* ‘church bay’, in which the Scots word *wall* replaces ON *vágr*. The phonological development is a necessary precondition for the substitution. When postvocalic *g* is lost in ON and *ll* is vocalised in Scots (cf. 8.1.2.1–2), the name element *va* and Scots *wa* are phonetically close, and this is the fundamental condition for the lexical adaptation. Whether or not the new name makes sense as a description of the place it refers to is irrelevant. The specific, the generic or

the name as a whole can be adapted in this way. We may note that the distinction between phonetic and lexical adaptation is not always clear. ON *varða* is adapted in the form *Wart* in a number of hill names (and as a noun, cf. OrknN: 206), e.g. *The Warts* in Evie. This can be interpreted as a lexical adaptation to Scots *wart* but a phonetic adaptation  $\delta > t$  gives the same result (cf. 4.2.1.4, 4.4.1.3).

One place-name element causing recurrent problems for scribes is ON *tjörn* ‘small lake’. It normally undergoes phonetic adaptation and appears as *shun* or *chin* but old maps offer examples of lexical adaptation. On a Stenness map from ca. 1855, *Jenny Fiold* denotes an elevation with a loch on it, and on another old map from Harray one may be surprised to find a *Loch of Gin*. In these names, *Gin* and *Jenny* serve as adaptations of *tjörn*.

ON *þúfan* ‘the mound’ is rather common as a generic in names of hills. Record forms vary between *Tower* and *Tooin*: *Ernie Tooin* in Firth was written *Ernie Tower* in 1848, whereas *Mid Tooin* in Rendall appears as *Mid Tower* 1841 ComR. We may note that *Tower* is mainly a map form. The word *þúfa* was borrowed into the dialect in the form *tuo* (ONorn: 196), but was clearly unfamiliar to non-local cartographers and the word *tower* (Scots /tur/) was chosen as a lexical adaptation. What is special in this case is that the new form may actually serve as a description of the locality – a hill could be compared to a tower. The form *Tower* on maps thus contributes to a certain semantic specification (cf. the discussion of epexegesis in 9.3.3). This is quite unusual, as will be demonstrated by the following examples.

A ruined house on a hill above Binscarth in Firth is called *Snaba* (*Snaba* 1841, 1931, *Snowball* 1846), and the hill is known as *Snaba Hill*. *Snaba* is Scots for ‘snowball’, cf. the 1846 form. This peculiar house-name is most easily explained as a lexical adaptation of an older name. In Shetland, *snaa-buil* refers to a “C-, T-, S-, or Y-shaped ... place where sheep might shelter in bad weather” (Baldwin: 1996: 210). The situation in the hills supports this interpretation, even though the compound *snaabuil* is unrecorded in the dictionaries of Shetland and Orkney Norn. The generic *buil* ‘a stall or lair for cattle or horses’ < ON *ból* (OrknN: 23) is a dialect word, however. Alternatively, S. Scand. *snabe* ‘gore’ could lie behind.

### *Norsk resumé*

In the run-rig days, *toomal* or *tumalt* < ON *túnvöllr* denoted the privately-owned patch of ground next to the houses. It is also a frequent field name. According to J. Storer Clouston, the pronunciation was always ‘tumult’, but the form *Tumalt* only occurs once in the present material. A dental is sometimes added to Orkney names (cf. 8.2.2.2), but in this case a lexical adaptation to the word *tumult* seems more likely.

Some lexical adaptations only appear sporadically. For instance, *Cruan* in Evie is rendered as *Crown* on 1846 Division of the Com-monty map. Other adaptations become permanent, e.g. *Chair of Lyde* (1848 ComF and current), in which Scots *chair* has replaced ON *kjarr* n ‘brushwood on marshy ground’. In the case of *Hinderayre*, the original form is recorded: *Inerair* 1594, *Innerair* 1625. The generic is of ON origin and the specific is thus likely to be ON *innri/iðri* ‘inner’.<sup>5</sup> Why this should be replaced by *hinder* is rather puzzling, considering that the ON and Scots words are so close phonetically.

*Tumult* and *Chair of Lyde* clearly illustrate the total irrelevance of semantic content when names are lexically adapted. The lexemes *tumult* and *chair* are familiar but they make no sense whatsoever with reference to pieces of ground. The same is true when ON *eyrrin* f. def. ‘the gravel(ly beach)’ is adapted as Scots *iron* in the name *Iron* in Evie. As a rule, speakers accept place-names as labels for locations regardless of their potential meaning (or lack of meaning)inclination tendency. A local informant thus commented upon the inappropriateness of the element *blubber* in *Blubbersdale*. The name refers to a valley and a house in the hills of Rendall. The origin appears to be ON *blábersdalr* ‘blueberry valley’. It is somewhat surprising that ON *bláber* should be substituted by *blubber*, considering that its Scots cognate *blaeberry* is phonetically quite close and *blubber* is perceived as inappropriate for the location. Moreover, blueberries can actually be found in the valley. This suggests that the adaptation was done by non-locals, possibly by mapmakers.<sup>6</sup> Any-

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<sup>5</sup> The shift from *nn* > *nd* is attested in other names, cf. 8.1.2.8.

<sup>6</sup> A closer study may reveal that names of topographical features such as hills and lochs are adapted in other ways than habitation names, with more lexe-

way, the shift is another illustration of the fact that the phonological form rather than the semantic content is what matters when names are lexically adapted.

We mentioned above that man looks for meaning and a place-name that does not make immediate sense sometimes gives rise to an explanatory legend. This has happened to *Fairy Gate*, the name of a path leading from Howe and Georth in Evie up into the hills. According to the local lore, “it was along this path that the hill fairies travelled”. I have suggested a more worldly interpretation. Considering its referent, it makes sense to see *Fairy Gate* as a lexical adaptation of ON *Fjárgata* ‘cattle track’.

Lexical adaptations are by no means restricted to areas that have undergone language shift. It can occur in any name, regardless of its age and origin, whenever the speakers are unable to reconstruct the original elements. The name *Spy on Cope*, named after the Boer War battle site *Spion Kop* (Afrikaans: *Spioenkop*) has been mentioned above (7.2.1). Once the battle was forgotten, the specific was reinterpreted as *spy on*. A local legend ties *Spy on Cope* to events during the Jacobite rebellion in 1745. What is unusual in this case is that the adaptation as well as the rise of the legend has to post-date 1900, which is when the battle was fought.

In some cases, current name forms suggest adaptation to familiar lexemes, though there is no way of reconstructing the original form. One of the most peculiar names in the material is *Hang the Cow* /ˈhaŋlaku/, referring to a hill on the border between Rendall and Evie (*Hang-the-Cow* 1846 ComE). It can only be interpreted as some sort of lexical adaptation, and we may only speculate as to its original form. *Broon Deer Pow* ‘Brown Deer pool’ denotes a deep pool in a burn in Costa. Since there are no deer in Orkney, the specific may be a lexical adaptation. ON *brunnr* m ‘well’ or *brú* f ‘bridge’, could be suggested, but with no records of an original form, interpretations remain hypothetical.

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matic adaptations and epexegesis. These names are typically unrecorded before the first mappings, and the name forms may bear the stamp of non-local map-makers, cf. 9.3.3.

### *Norsk resumé*

The ON place-name element *staðir* has changed through a number of stages that presuppose influences from the lexicon as well as the onomasticon. The current form is regularly *-ston*. Marwick's proposed development from dat. pl. *stöðum* (cf. OFN: 234) is not supported by the written forms. The normal form *-sta(i)th* in the rentals from 1492 and 1502–3 reflects singular *stað(r)*. In the 1595 rentals, the element appears quite regularly as *-stane*: *Knarstane*, *Cloustane*, a form which turns up sporadically in older documents as well. This can probably be interpreted as lexematic adaptation to Scots *stane* 'stone'. Later forms suggest that the speakers have interpreted the element as *s + toun* (*town*, cf. 5.5.15): *Grymestoun* 1595, *Cloustoun* 1607, *Unstoun* 1627. The current form may be influenced by the common English place-name element *-ton* (< OEng *tūn*). At the same time, the development of the *staðir*-names is an illustration of adaptation within the group. Some kind of internal adjustment is bound to have taken place, considering that more than 20 *staðir*-names in Orkney end in *-ston* at present. Such patterns appear to be quite local. If we look to Shetland, there is only one *ston*-name, and the normal development is *-sta* or *-ster* (Waugh 1987: 70).

The individual examples of lexematic and onomastic adaptation may be conspicuous and the forms stand out but such adaptations are quite rare in the West Mainland material. I reckon that 35 names or a little more than 5 % of the total material have been lexematically or onomastically adapted. The Scots lexicon serves as a pattern for the adaptation in 19 instances and the onomasticon serves as the pattern in 14 instances.

I have chosen *adaptation* instead of the term *attraction* used by other scholars (e.g. Dalberg 1991) because attraction may give the impression of an automatic process. It may be impossible to determine whether *Fairy Gate* and *Spy on Cope* are conscious etymologies by the speakers or whether they reproduce what they think they hear. The latter view is advocated by Dalberg (1991: 17). Even if this may be true, it is difficult to see how adapted forms such as

*Blubbersdale* and *Tumult* can be functional improvements, as suggested in the same context.

In my opinion, a component of analysis by the speaker is a condition for lexematic and onomastic adaptations as well as for the etymologically correct adaptations treated in 9.2, even if the speakers do not reconstruct the original form. In both cases, the substitutions take place because speakers think that they recognise elements from the living language in the names. These elements may or may not coincide with the etymological elements, and the perceived elements may not correspond to the original morphological structure at all. In my opinion, neither structural nor functional factors can fully account for such changes. We have to include the human mind with its capacity for analysis and its quest for meaning.

### 9.3.3. *Epexegetis*

Epexegetis in place-names implies the addition of an element denoting the nature of the locality (cf. Dalberg 1991: 47). However, I have found it extremely difficult to distinguish between epexegetic formations and secondary formations containing an ON place-name as its specific in the material. The only example of a current epexegetic name that is also recorded in its original form is *Keelylang Hill* (< ON *Kjölrinn langi* ‘the long keel’, see 8.3.1.1), which is recorded as *Keelylang* in 1846.

The typical cases of epexegetis contain two name elements referring to the same locality, for instance *Point Scarvataing*, *Loch of Loomachun* and *Loch of Sketchan*. *Scarvataing* is a regular ON formation with the generic *tangi* ‘point’ and the Scots cognate *Point* is clearly added later as a specification of the locality. The ending *chun* in *Loch of Loomachun* is a reflection of ON *tjörn* ‘(small) lake’, and *loch* is its Scots cognate. *Burn of Woo*, *Braes of Stron* and *Lyde Road* are all compounded of one ON element and its Scots cognate, but may represent different types of formation. *Lyde* > ON *leið* must originally have denoted a road. When this name was transferred to a croft, the road got a new epexegetic name *Lyde Road*. *Burn of Woo*, on the other hand, is most likely to be a secondary formation with the farm-name *Woo* as its generic. The farm-name (< ON *á* ‘burn’) obviously refers to the burn, but we do not know



### *Norsk resumé*

whether the burn was ever called *Á*. In some cases, the generic is ambiguous. *Moss of Hatamo* may be epexegetic if *mo* refers to ‘moss’ (see 5.5.12). Names containing *Knowe of* and a specific ending in *-o*, e.g. *Knowe of Dishero*, *Knowes of Smersso* and *Knowes of Uro*, may be epexegetic if *-o* is derived from *haugr*, but they may also be secondary formations in which existing place-names specify the knolls.

Some of the epexegetic forms found in written sources appear to be “map forms”. For instance, local informants maintain that *Vishall Hill* on OS maps is always called *Vishall* locally and that *Hill of Dwarmo* is normally referred to as *Dwarmo*. In some cases, the epexegetic addition has been omitted on modern maps, e.g.:

*Loch of Lumigan* 1846 ComE, *Looma Shun* OS.

*Torness Point* 1900 OSNB, *Tor Ness* OS.

*Wart Hill* 1848 ComE > *The Warts* OS

The observation that epexegetic forms may be restricted to written sources is by no means peculiar to Orkney; it has been pointed out in various areas (cf. Huldén 1998: 111 f.). A place-name functions perfectly even if the speaker does not recognise its etymological elements, but some contexts may require a specification of type of locality (cf. Dalberg 1991: 84 ff.). On early maps without contour lines, elevations must be specified by the words *hill* and *knowe*, for instance. Cf. the addition of *quoy* to names of unskatted lands in rentals (8.3.1.1). The fact that frequent generics of ON origin like *howe* and *taing* have been understood locally down to the present day may also be part of the explanation. There is only a need to add *Knowe* and *Point* when names are used in a non-local context, e.g. on maps.

The function of epexegesis is to specify the locality. The meaning of place-name elements may become opaque even in monolingual areas but a language shift is bound to increase the number of elements that cannot be analysed. This situation might have given rise to a number of epexegetic formations in Orkney but it is clearly not the case. As we have seen, the definition of epexegesis is problematic, but no more than 12–20 names can be interpreted as epexegetic formations (the higher number includes uncertain examples).

From a formation point of view, the epexegetic form is a new coining with the original name as its specific and an element denoting the nature of the locality as its generic (Dalberg 1991: 116 ff.). This is evident in epexegetic names in Orkney containing an original ON name as its specific and a Scots element as its generic, such as *Loch of Loomachun* (cf. 7.1). Even if the epexegetic formations are new, they cannot have been conceived without the original name form, however. For this reason, epexegetic forms could possibly be regarded as ultimate adaptations.

#### **9.3.4. Name-internal adaptation – rhyming names**

A peculiar development can be observed in some compound names: The two elements adapt to each other and the names appear as rhymes or riddles. West Mainland examples include *Purtna Lurtna* and *Yimma-Yamma* in Birsay, *Hellian Kellian* or *Kellian Hellian* in Sandwick, *Rovacova* in Harray and *Cupster Nelster* in Firth.

Original elements can be reconstructed to a varying extent. *Hellian Kellian* refers to a well, and can probably be derived from ON *Keldan helga* ‘the holy well’. *Purtna Lurtna* is a tidal pool. *Purt* denotes a stagnant pool or dirty puddle in Shetland (ShNorn: 670), and *lurtna* should be compared to Norwegian *lort* ‘dirt, filth’. The second element in the sea-mark name *Yimma-Yamma* contains *jafn* ‘even’, referring to two localities in line (cf. the illustration in Lamb 1993: 55). The only identifiable element in *Cupster Nelster* is *cup* or *koppr* ‘hollow’. A sporadic rhyme form *Howakow* 1629 is recorded for *Hucco*. The origin is ON *Haugakví* ‘mound enclosure’, cf. the record *Howaquoy* in 1595 R.

The phenomenon can also be observed in nouns, e.g. in the favourite magic formula *hocus pocus*, derived from the phrase “hoc est corpus” in the Latin communion ritual. The phrase has developed a somewhat different meaning in English. Jakobsen’s “Fragments of Norn” from Shetland (ShNorn: XCI f.) include the phrase *kwarna farna?* ‘where are you going?’ The ON elements *hvar* ‘where’ and *fara* ‘go’ can be identified.

Creating rhyme-names can be regarded as an unusual strategy for the adaptation of unanalysed names. It stands out as being strictly name-internal. The name elements are adapted to one an-

other independently of patterns without the syntagm, and the semantic contents may become totally obscured. Such adaptations are extremely rare, including no more than three names in the investigated area.

### **9.3.5. Why are names adapted?**

Names may be adapted for functional reasons, e.g. when epexegetic formations develop in contexts where precise information about the precise nature of the locality is required. However, most adaptations can be accounted for linguistically, i. e. they occur because names relate to the linguistic system in general as well as to a specifically onomastic system (cf. 3.5). Being compulsory, phonetic adaptation is the most conspicuous expression of adaptation to the linguistic system but even morphological and lexical adaptation may contribute to the integration of names in the linguistic system. The onomastic system has its specific requirements. First and foremost, it requires an unambiguous *identification* of localities. The *classification* of the localities is not compulsory but may be an advantage in certain contexts. The classificatory function can be linked to the generic, whereas the identifying function is typically linked to the specific.

#### **9.3.5.1. The function of the place-name elements**

Walther uses the term *classifying morpheme* for the generic, underlining its function: to classify the locality type. The identifying property, which is the true function of a place-name, is linked to the specific (cf. Walther 1980: 149). Thus, the classifying morpheme or generic is redundant for the function of a place-name in a strict sense. The classificatory property cannot be irrelevant, however. It appears that generics are more often translated than specifics (see Walther 1980: 149, Pellijeff 1980: 22 f.), though this is not necessarily true for the West Mainland material. Moreover, epexegetic elements are clearly added to classify the locality. It seems as if we can distinguish between a normal variety and an “ideal variety” of place-names. The identifying property of a place-name is independent of its analysability, and this is why names are so easily borrowed into a new language. On the other hand, a meaningful generic that classifies the locality appears to be preferred in certain contexts.

Epexegetis is arguably the most explicit means of forming meaningful generics (or classifying morphemes). The interaction between identifying and classifying can be demonstrated by an instance of double epexegetis from the Hebrides. The present form is *Ardtornish Point* (Nicolaisen 1996: 551). The origin is ON, probably *Torfnes* ‘peat headland’. The name is borrowed into Gaelic, and the element *ard* ‘headland’ is added. Finally, the name is borrowed into English, and the element *point* is added. The unanalysable element grows longer every time the name is borrowed. A Gaelic speaker can identify a meaningful element *ard* in *Ardtornish* whereas the whole sequence is opaque to an English speaker. Thus *Point* is added to define the locality. From a strictly functional point of view the added generics are redundant. *Tornish* would suffice to identify the place for Gaelic speakers, as would *Ardtornish* for English speakers. Retaining the existing name in the new name formation<sup>7</sup> is important, however, for otherwise the identifying function of the name would be lost.

A transparent generic contributes to the linguistic and semantic integration of a place-name. Sami *Biedjovággi* falls outside all Norwegian systems but a hypothetical *\*Bidjodalen* falls into a large group of Norwegian valley-names ending in *-dalen*. It should be noted that the tendency to create transparent generics pertains to names in general and not just loan-names. We may compare this with Scandinavian simplex names to which a classificatory element is added: e.g. *Sams* > *Samsø*, *Njót* > *Nøtterøy* (*ø(y)* ‘island’) and *Hyi* > *Hyeffjorden* (*ffjorden* ‘the fjord’). The ideal or prototypical thus seems to contain an identifying specific and a classifying generic.

We have seen above that a word may cover a wider semantic range as a place-name than as a common noun (8.4.1). This could be due to the same need for a classification of the locality – a common place-name element immediately gives the speaker a rough idea of the locality. This primary sorting appears to be more important than a precise reference to the height and steepness of a hill for instance.

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<sup>7</sup> I agree with Nicolaisen that such formations are new coinings, cf. 9.3.3. Rather than being translations, the elements *ard* and *point* are added to the current names, as specifications of the locality.

### *Norsk resumé*

In addition, a familiar generic signals to the speaker that the place-name is actually a name. The same is true for onomastic adaptations in which a familiar element replaces a more unusual one. Anyone familiar with the Orkney onomasticon will immediately identify *Vishall*, *Thurrogar* and *Baillieval* as being place-names.

#### **9.3.5.2. The loss of generics**

I have observed the loss of generics in Orkney as well as in Norway. South Sami *Gerekejavre* (according to the spelling in old maps) is shortened to *Gereke* by Norwegian speakers, whereas *Brannsfjellet* has become *Praantse* in Sami. When names are borrowed across language borders, the specific may suffice.

Some Orkney names consist of nothing but an adjective, e.g. *Gamla* (*gamla* ‘old’), *Rounda* (rigs), *Brya* (< *breiða* ‘broad’, a shoal). In such cases, one would assume the loss of a generic,<sup>8</sup> even though no original compound forms are recorded. *Picto* ‘Pict-’ is another apparent ellipsis. We saw above (8.2.1) that the Scots suffixes *-o* and *-ie* are used to derive short forms of names. In these cases as well, the generics are lost: *Bretto* < *Brettobreck*, *Freeo* < *Quoyfree*, *Blackie* < *Quoyblackie* and *Troondie* < *Trundigar*.

Generics may be lost for a number of reasons. *Quoy* is a special case, cf. 8.3.1.1. *Quoy* is added to names in certain sources to specify that a unit is free of skat and may be omitted in other sources. Omission is occasionally generalised to names where *quoy* was the original generic, cf. *Freeo* and *Blackie*. The fact that opaque generics lose their classificatory function and thus their relevance may also explain the loss of generics in some cases; cf. the Norwegian–Sami examples discussed above. This underlines Walther’s point: the specifics carry the identifying property which is fundamental for the function of names. If generics lose their classificatory property, they become irrelevant and liable to loss.

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<sup>8</sup> Alternatively, the names are elliptical formations: ON *hinn breiði*, *hinn gamli*, *hinn rundi*, meaning ‘the broad one’, ‘the old one’ and ‘the round one’.

**9.3.6. Conclusion**

As opposed to phonological adaptation, lexical and onomastic adaptations are optional and irregular. The primary function of a place-name, i.e. singling out a certain locality, is fulfilled even when the name is opaque. In some contexts, a classificatory generic may be useful, however. If the speaker can identify elements, they can be translated, if not, a classificatory element may be added.

We have noticed a tendency for names of different origin to become homonymous, cf. *Isbister*, *Redland* and *Holland*. By means of onomastic adaptations, new names can be included in familiar groups, cf. the examples *Thurrogar* and *Vishall*. Common elements clearly contribute the identification of the names as part of the onomasticon but it is difficult to explain the occasional substitution of place-name elements by more unusual ones.

The primary function of lexical and morphological adaptations is an adaption of the names to the linguistic system of the recipient language. Integration of loan-names thus implies a correspondence with the onomasticon as well as a (partial) correspondence with the general lexicon of the recipient language. Below, the various kinds of adaptation are shown in a table.

At the moment of borrowing	Integrated names	
	<i>correct analysis</i>	<i>reinterpretation</i>
- phonetic adaptation	- morphological adaptation - semantic adaptation (= translation)	- morphological adaptation - lexical and onomastic adaptation - semantic specification - name-internal adaptation
compulsory/regular	optional/sporadic	

Fig. 9.1. Different types of place-name adaptations.

## List of IPA phonetic symbols

### Vowels

The symbols are used according to IPA standard, apart from /ɪ/, which is used to represent a more centralised vowel typical in Orkney Scots, cf. 4.2.1.3. The example words contain the value as translated by Scots speakers (e.g. no diphthong in *gate*).

- a as in *man*
- e as in *gate*
- ɛ as in *pen*
- ə as in *about*
- i as in *leaf*
- ɪ as in *pig*
- ɔ as in *autumn*
- o as in *close*
- u as in *loose*
- ʌ as in *bus*
- ø as in *boot* (cf. Ger. *schön*, Fr. *peu*)

### Consonants

Most IPA consonant symbols have the same value as in the ordinary language. Only the ones different from the standard are listed below.

- ʃ as in *she*
- ʒ as in *treasure*
- tʃ as in *child*. Often replaces dʒ in *job*.
- dʒ as in *job*
- ð as in *father*
- θ as in *cloth*
- χ as in *loch*
- ʌ as in *white*
- ŋ as in *sing*
- rʃ pronunciation of *rs* as in *Furso*, *horse*, see 4.2.1.5, 8.1.2.8

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- 1629 wt = witch trial in Rendall 1629. Printed in Hossack 1900:256 f.
- Blaeu = Johan Blaeus map “Scotia Regnum. Orchardum et Schetelandiæ”. In *Atlas Major*, Amsterdam 1662.
- Carfin’s Rentals. Undated between 1678 and 1727, when A. Nisbet of Carphin owns land in Woodwick. (D Traill’s notebook in E. Marwick’s notes, OA D 31/1)
- C = census. The first census (1841) contains all house-names in Firth and Evie and the tunship names in Rendall. (Microfilm in Orkney Archives).
- Ch. = charters. Excerpted from register volumes in the Orkney Archives.
- Collins = Captain Greenville Collins’ map ‘The chiefe harbours in the islands of Orkney’ fra 1688. Printed in *Great Britain’s Coasting Pilot*, London 1693.
- ComE 1846 = Map of the division of the Commonty of Evie from 1846 (OA D 7/3/10).
- ComF 1848 = Map of the division of the Commonty of Firth from 1848 (OA D 7/3/22).
- ComR 1841 = Map of the division of the Commonty of the Parish of Rendall from 1841 (OA D 7 /3/48).
- Court Book = *Orkney and Shetland Court Books* 1612–13. Transcribed and edited by Robert S. Barclay. Kirkwall 1962.
- DN = *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*. Christiania 1847–.
- Ffn 1868: List of field names in the Binscarth area, Orkney Herald 3.3.1868. (OA D 46/1/6/13.)
- Ffn 1931: List of Firth field names by Robert Scarth in Binscarth. (OA D 29/1/10).
- Firth 1920 = List of field names in John Firth: *Reminiscences of an Orkney Parish*. First published 1920, new edition 1974. Stromness.
- Gr = Various documents pertaining to Grimbuster in Firth and neighbouring darms, e.g. Division of Grimbuster 1642 and Sasines 1630–. (From Hugh Marwicks notes, OA D 29/5/8.)
- Mackenzie = Murdoch Mackenzies map ‘Orchades’, 1750. Orkney County Library.
- mF = A map of Firth from 1846. In West Register House, Edinburgh.
- Notes of Ernest Marwick. (OA D 31).
- Notes of Hugh Marwick. (OA D 29).
- Notes of J. Storer Clouston (OA D 23).
- OA refers to archive numbers in the Orkney Archives.
- OFN = Hugh Marwick: *Orkney Farm-Names*, 1952. In many instances, I have quoted Marwick’s name forms.
- OS = *Ordnance Survey* maps. The references are from the Pathfinder-series 1:25 000, based on surveys 1964–76, revised 1979–1987.
- OS 1882 = The first edition of Ordnance Survey maps of Orkney.
- OSNB = *Ordnance Survey Name Book*. Evie and Firth 1897, Rendall 1900. Register of all place-names from the first edition of OS, including short descriptions of the locations. (Microfilm in National Archives, Edinburgh.)
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- R (preceded by a year) = Rentals or tax lists. The oldest extant Orkney rental is *Lord Henry Sinclair's 1492 Rental*, published by W. Thomson 1996 and the 1502–3 and 1595 rentals, published by A. Peterkin 1820. 1794 rental forms are quoted according to OFN. A rental from 1740 from Rendall has been excerpted by Robert Bakie and his forms are quoted.
- REO = *Records of the Earldom of Orkney*. J. Storer Clouston (ed.). Publications of the Scottish History Society. Second Series. Vol VII. 1914.
- Ret. = Retours. *Inquisitionum ad Capellam Domini Regis Retornatarum quae in publicis archivis Scotiae adhuc servantur. Abbreviato*. Printed by command of his majesty King George III. Volume I–III, 1811–16.
- Sas. = Sasines. The oldest ones are printed in OSR III. The others are excerpted from register volumes in the Orkney Archives.
- Scotland Place-name database. List of names from OS Pathfinder maps (1:25 000).
- Sheriff Court Records. Summaries of trials in Orkney from 1601–. The names are excerpted from register volumes in the Orkney Archives.
- Traill = D. Traills account books from the 1720s and 30s. In H. Marwick's notes. (OA D 29/6/1).
- UB = The Uthell Buik of Orknay, 1601. Unpublished manuscript, Orkney County Library.

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## Appendix 1. Onomastic and lexical adaptations

### Onomastic adaptation

<i>present form</i>	<i>original form</i>
Baillie Hill	<i>fiold &lt; fjall</i>
Baillieval	<i>fiold &lt; fjall</i>
Croonafea	<i>Crovnofinya &lt; fen</i>
Grunshall	<i>-hóll</i>
Holland	<i>Háland + Haugland?</i>
Isbister	<i>-óss- + eystri-/yzi</i>
Jubidee	<i>dý + dalr</i>
Knarston	<i>staðir + stöð</i>
Nistoo	<i>haugr</i>
Redgarth	<i>Rigga &lt; hryggr</i>
Redland	<i>renna + ruð?</i>
Stenso	<i>Stanesakir &lt; -akr?</i>
Vishall	<i>-hóll</i>

### Lexical adaptation

<i>present form</i>	<i>original form</i>
Blubbersdale	<i>bláber</i>
Broon Deer Pow	<i>?</i>
Chair of Lyde	<i>kjarr</i>
Crown	<i>Cruan &lt; krúin</i>
Dieth Hellia	<i>?</i>
Ernie Tower Tooin	<i>&lt; þúfan</i>
Fairy Gate	<i>fjárgata</i>
Hang the Cow	<i>?</i>
Hinderayre	<i>innri-</i>
Iron	<i>eyrrin</i>
Langiron	<i>-eyrrin</i>
Loch of Gin	<i>tjörn</i>
Mid Tower Tooin	<i>þúfan</i>
Owar	<i>aurr</i>
Snaba	<i>snaabuil, snabe?</i>
Spy on Cope	<i>Spion Kop</i>
-ston	<i>staðir</i>
Tumult	<i>túnvöllr</i>
Wart	<i>varða</i>

## Appendix 2. Personal name specifics

### *Certain/probable*

Annie's Rig  
Ballantyne Field  
Barneysheet  
Beeniesfield  
Coubister  
Cubby Roo Stone  
Crismo  
Damsay  
Dicksquoy  
Gairsay  
Geodiestoon  
Gilleston  
Graemshall  
Grimbister  
Grugar  
Ingashowe  
Lowrie's Water  
Manso Pow  
Quoyblackie  
Quoyhenry  
Quoylaverans  
Quoysinclair  
Robie's Knowe  
Sandyha'  
Scott's  
Scotts Hall  
Willha'

### *Possible*

Arsdale  
Arwick  
Blans  
Bansquoy  
Clairvale  
Cuthsgarth  
Ellibister  
Durrisdale  
Gorseness  
Grimis Dale  
Henley  
Quoy Bano  
Pulkitto  
Rennibister  
Stenso  
Trundigar  
Wallice

*Appendices*

**Appendix 3. Index of generics**

<i>á</i>	ON ‘burn’	Woo
<i>akr</i>	ON ‘cereal field’	Stanesakir (see Stenso)
<i>apron</i>	Sc	Apron of Fedgeo?
<i>árkvísl</i>	ON ‘burn fork’	Orquil
<i>bakki+</i>	see 5.5.1	Bakkan Swarto (Knowe of), Croo Back, Goesback, Golback, Oback, Roondback, Tuanabackan?
<i>barmr</i>	ON ‘breast’	Barm
<i>bank</i>	Sc	Banks
<i>bay</i>	Sc	Bay of Hinderayre, Bay of Isbister, Bay of Puldrite, Bay of Tingwall, Rusnes Bay, Waswick (Bay)
<i>berg</i>	ON ‘rocky precipice’	Hisber (Point of), Shuber
<i>bigging</i>	see 5.5.2	Upper & Lower Bigging(s), Midbigging, Thickbigging, Upper Bigging
<i>bight</i>	Sc ‘bay’	Bight of Lindy
<i>blett</i>	ON ‘green spot’?	Blaten
<i>bólstaðr</i>	ON ‘farm’	Ellibister, Isbister, Skelbist, Coubister, Grim bister, Rennibister.
<i>borg</i>	ON ‘fortress; steep elevation’	Boray, Boray, Peedie Boray, Bugar?
<i>brae</i>	Sc	Brae of Aglath, Brae of Muckquoy, Braes of Stron, Brae Vingus, Burry Brae, Creu Brae, Drowins Brae, Haggis Brae, The Sandy Braes
<i>brekka</i>	see 5.5.4.	Breck, Breckan, Brecks of Scarataing, Bretto breck, Brockan (Loch of), Clibberbreck, Cruanbreck, Curcabreck, Ha(ll)breck, Headlabreck, Kirkbreck, Laybreck, Rushabreck, Windbreck
<i>brenna</i>	ON ‘burnt land’	Brendo
<i>brig</i>	Sc ‘bridge’	Millbrig
<i>brim</i>	Sc ‘burn’?	Brim
<i>brú</i>	ON ‘bridge’	Broonalanga, (Moss of), Bruar, Stymbro
<i>bú</i>	ON ‘estate’	see 5.5.5. The Bu, Bull of Rendall
<i>burn</i>	Sc	Appietoon Burn, Berry Burn, Bigging/ Nearhouse Burn, Blubbersdale/ Sweenalay/ Isbister Burn, B. of Breck, B. of Bluebrae, B. of Crowrar, B. of Cruan, Burn of Desso, B. of Dieth Hellia, B. of Ennisgeo, B. of Etherigeo, B. of Hamarsquoy, B. of Holland, B. of Lyd, B. of Orquil, B. of Redland, B. of Syradale, B.

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

		of Wasdale, B. of Rumerdale, B. of Woo B. of Wood-wick, Ellibister/Hackland Burn, Leisburn, Layburn, Skiddy Burn, Stackaday Burn, Varmadale Burn
<i>bukt/</i>	ON ‘bay’/	Bught
<i>boucht</i>	Sc ‘sheepfold’	
<i>bær</i>	ON ‘farm’	Estaben
<i>craig</i>	Sc	Craig of Rittin, Pantland Craigs
<i>dalr</i>	ON ‘valley’	Aviedale, Arsdale, Blubbersdale, Dale, Dale of Cottascarth, Durrisdale, Grimisdale, Heddle, Jubidee, Jupadee, Kingsdale, Little Eskadale, Lyradale (Hill of), Norrisdale (Kirk of), Rendall, Risdae?, Rummerdale, Turrieday?, Turriedale, Wasdale, Syradale, Varmadale, Varsadale
<i>damaschool</i>	Sc ‘school held in a private home’	Damaschool
<i>deéal</i>	ON ‘wet spot’?	Deealt (Well of)?
<i>ditch</i>	Sc	Leslie’s Ditch
<i>dyke</i>	Sc ‘fence’	Dyke, Muckle Dyke
<i>dý</i>	ON ‘gutter’	Bletadith, Dees
<i>dys</i>	ON ‘tumulus’	Dishans, Desso, Burn of & Knowe of
<i>ey</i>	ON ‘island’	Gairsay, Damsay
<i>eyrr</i>	ON ‘gravel(ly beach)’	Hinderayre, Iron, Longayran
<i>face</i>	Sc	Blateface, Moyaface
<i>fald</i>	Sc ‘enclosure’	The Faald
<i>fen</i>	ON ‘mire’	Finyeu
<i>field</i>	Sc	Brookfield, Ballantynes Field, Beeniesfield, Black Knowe Field, Castle Field, Dongerfield, Farafield?, Manse Field, Smoo Field
<i>fit</i>	ON ‘meadow’	Fidgeon (Sands of)
<i>fjall</i>	ON ‘mountain’	Fiold, Bailliefield, Baillie Hill, Fibla Fiold, Muckle & Little Billia Fiold, Stara Fiold, Studja Fiold
<i>flötr/flat</i>	Sc/ON ‘flat’	Stoo Flats
<i>foot</i>	Sc	Foot of Aglath
<i>flá</i>	ON ‘flat’	Flaws
<i>fors</i>	ON ‘stream’	Fursan, Gaifers, Fursan (Park of)
<i>fjörðr</i>	ON ‘fjord’	Firth
<i>garðr</i>	ON ‘farm’	see 5.5.7. Bakegar, Bisgarth, Bradgarth, Cuthsgarth, Ervigjar/Evrigert (Styes of, Burn of), Georth, Gorn, Grugar, Haagar?, Hammiger, Hogar R, Langie-

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		gar (Slap of), Longiger, Midgarth, Neigar, Trundigar, Smogarth, South Hunigarth, Urigar
<i>gata</i>	ON ‘road’	Fairy Gate
<i>gate</i>	Sc	Gate of Bull
<i>gå</i>	ON ‘ravine’, see 5.5.8	Back Geo of Clett, Billy Geo, Boat Geo, Clay Geo, Crinky Geo, Dog Geo, Doo Geo, Ennis-geo, Eteriegeo, Fedgeo (Apron of), Fed Geo of Arsdale, Fed Geo of the Leeans, Geo, The Geo, G. of Longa Tonga, G. of Pass, G. of Rivacliff, Geo of Smoo, Geo of Verron, Gressy Geo, Holt Geo, Hundy Geo, Kirk Geo, Knocking Stane Geo, Millgeos, Millgoes, North Gue, Peat Geo, Ramna Geo, Sand Geo, Scarry Geo, Skibby Geo, Sole Geo, Trolle Geo, Verry Geo
<i>geiri/</i>	ON ‘point, gore’/	
<i>geyr, geyro</i>	dial. ‘patch of grass in heather’	Gayro of the Wart
<i>grandi</i>	ON ‘sand or pebbles near water’	Grandon, Grandie
<i>gras/grass</i>	ON/Sc ‘grass’	Ethergrass
<i>grind</i>	ON ‘gate’	Grind
<i>gröf</i>	ON ‘hollow’	Gravan
<i>green</i>	Sc Green of Risdae, Hay Green, North Green	
<i>grip</i>	Sc ‘small burn’	Greeny Grip, Mester Grip/Grip of Loonan
<i>hagi</i>	ON ‘enclosure’	Brinhyan, Haan?, Hayon (transferred?)
<i>hall, ha’</i>	Sc	Gallowha’, Graemshall, Greenhall, Ha’white, Sandyha’, Scotts Hall, Stone hall, Willha’
<i>hallr</i>	ON ‘steep slope’	The Hallans
<i>hals/hass</i>	ON/Sc ‘neck’	Hass, Upper Hass
<i>hamarr</i>	ON ‘hammer’	Hammeron, (The) Hammar, Hamars of Syradale
<i>haugr</i>	ON ‘mound’	Hewin, Hewing, Horraldshay, Howa Breck?, Howa, Howe, Howenagrana, Ingashowe, Nistoo?, Smersso (Knowes of, Point of), Yarsow
<i>head</i>	Sc	Braehead
<i>heather</i>	Sc	Heather of Blate
<i>hella</i>	ON ‘flat rock’	Boats Hellia, Fisk Hellya, Haafs Hellia, Hellia, (Point of), Lee Hellia

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

<i>hill</i>	Sc	Baillie Hill, Cuiffie Hill, Enyas Hill, Gorse-ness Hill, Hackland Hill, Hammers Hill, Himmon Hill, Hill of Heddle, Hill of Huntis, Hills of Lyradale, Keelylang Hill, Starling Hill, Vishall (Hill)
<i>hlíð</i>	ON ‘slope’	Lettaly, Staveley, Leeon?
<i>hlífð/lee</i>	ON/Sc ‘shelter’	The Leeans
<i>hole</i>	Sc	Holodyke, Pelkie’s Hole, Tunder Hole
<i>holmr</i>	ON ‘islet’	Holm of Rendall, Holm of Grimbister
<i>hóll</i>	ON ‘rounded hill’	Grunshall?, Vishall?
<i>hryggr</i>	ON ‘back, ridge’	Rigga
<i>hús/house</i>	ON/Sc ‘house’	Appiehouse, Backhose?, Braethus, Midhouse, Mill House, Nearhouse, Newhouse, Nist-house, Overhouse, Smerhouse, The Walker-house
<i>*höfning</i>	ON ‘pasture’?	Hoemin
<i>jib</i>	Sc	The Jib
<i>kambr/kame</i>	ON/Sc ‘comb’	The Kam
<i>kelda</i>	ON ‘well’	Sinnakilda
<i>kirk</i>	Sc ‘church’	Kirk of Norrisdale
<i>kjarr</i>	ON ‘brushwood on marsh’	Chair of Lyde
<i>kjölr</i>	ON ‘keel’	Keelylang (Hill)
<i>kleif</i>	ON ‘steep road’	Hellikliff
<i>*kluk</i>	ON ‘elevation’	Clouk
<i>kollr</i>	ON ‘rounded elevation’	Hang the cow?
<i>*klimpr</i>	ON/ dial.	
<i>/klimper</i>	‘lump, knoll’	Climpers
<i>knowe</i>	Sc ‘knoll, mound’	Knowe of Bakkan Swarto, K. of Desso, K. of Dishro, K. of Evrigert, K. of Gurness, K. of Ryo, K. of Smersso, K. of Steeringlo, Knowes of Uro, Reeky Knowes, Robie’s Knowe
<i>koppr/cup</i>	ON/Sc ‘cup’	Cupper, Cuppin, Cuppingua, Cuppo, Cupster Nelster, Liscups
<i>kot/cot</i>	ON/Sc ‘small house’	Cott, Cottascarth
<i>kringla</i>	ON ‘sth. round’	Cringlin
<i>krókr/cruik</i>	ON/Sc ‘bend’	Crook, Cracka Longi
<i>krú</i>	ON ‘inngjerding’	Croan, Crovnofinya, Crowrar, Cruan
<i>kúfr</i>	ON ‘low, rounded elevation’	Kuwo/Kews
<i>kví</i>	ON ‘enclosure’	Aversquoy, Backaquoy, Bailliequoy, Bal-lasquoy, Binnaquoy, Bransquoy, Buckquoy, Cramfire’s Quoy, Croanies Quoy, Curquoy,

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		Dicksquoy, Fealquoy, Goltsquoy, Hacco?, Hillquoy, Lamasqueen, Lamesquoy, Lerquoy (Upper & Lower), Millquoy, Miravallhvi, Mossquoy, Muckquoy, Nisnaquoy, Norquoy, Ouraquoy, Quatquoy, Queehammeron (Point of), Queena, Queenamidda?, Queenamuckle, Quilaverans, Quinamillyoar, Quoy Bano, Quoybeezie (Slap of), Quoyblackie, Quoyfagie, Quoyfree, Quoyhenry, Quoys, Quoy Sinclair, Scrapsquoy, Sketway, Spithersquoy, Vinquin, Waswyns, Wheean, Wheenobrya
<i>land</i>	ON/Sc ‘land’	Blaland, Greenland, Hackland, Hiveland, Holland, Midland, Pullaland, Redland
<i>lea</i>	Eng ‘meadow’	Gaither Lea
<i>loch</i>	Sc	Loch of Brockan
<i>loam</i>	Sc	Clay Loam
<i>leið</i>	ON ‘rad, track’	Lyde, The Lydes of Orquil, The Lydes of Tingwall
<i>leikvin</i>	ON ‘sports field’	Lyking
<i>leirr, leira</i>	ON ‘clay’	Lyron
<i>ló</i>	ON ‘meadow’	Langalour, Leuan?
<i>lón</i>	see 5.5.11	Loonan, Lunan
<i>meadow</i>	Sc	Boat Meadow, Burry Meadow, Dam Meadow, Golmeadows, Meadow (Peedie & Big), Meadow of Cruan, Ola Meadow
<i>merk/mörk</i>	ON ‘outfield, border land’	(The) Mark, Mirk
<i>mildo</i>	dial. ‘back, peaty soil’	Milldoe
<i>mór</i>	see 5.5.12	Blythemo, Blythemor, Crismo, Hatamoa (Moss of), Hammera Moa, Moa
<i>mýrr/myre</i>	ON/Sc ‘mire’	Baramira, Bismira, Boondamira, Brymyiree (Styes of), Lamira, Mires, Rossmyre, Sandy Myres
<i>moss</i>	Sc	Moss of Broonalanga, Moss of Cruan, Moss of Hatamo, Moss of Hyon
<i>nabbi</i>	ON ‘protrusion’	Nabban
<i>ness</i>	ON ‘headland’	Aikerness, Burness, Crookness, Gorseness, Grit Ness, Gurness, Ness, Rusness (Bay), Saltness, Tor Ness
<i>óss/oyce</i>	ON/dial. ‘mouth of burn or lagoon’	The Ouse, Oyce of Isbister, Oyce of Rennibister
<i>paddock</i>	Sc	Paddock
<i>park, perk</i>	Sc ‘field’	Burn Park (Upper & Lower), The Holm Park,

From Starafjall to Starling Hill

		Overpark, Park, Park of Basso, Park of Fursan Park of Heddle, Perks/Sandy Perks, Quoy Park, Well Park, West Park, White Perks
<i>pen</i>	Sc	Cock Pen, Cra Pen
<i>pier</i>	Sc	Merchant's Pier
<i>pit</i>	Sc	Pittos of Dale
<i>plank</i>	Sc 'portion of land'	Plank
<i>point</i>	Sc	Point of Backaquoy, P. of Hellia, P. of Hisber, P. of Queehammeron, P. of Spurra, P. of Smersso, Thistleady Point
<i>pollr/pow</i>	ON/Sc 'pool'	Broon Deer Pow, The Cra' Pow, Manso Pow, Muckle Pow, Poolow, Pow, Puldrite, Pulkitto, Pulswarto
<i>pyttr</i>	ON pond, gutter'	Gitterpitten
<i>*renna</i>	ON 'burn, trickle of water'?	Rinnan
<i>rét</i>	ON 'fold'	Rittin (Craig of)
<i>rig</i>	Sc	Aanies Rig, Red Rigs
<i>rif</i>	ON 'reef'	Riff
<i>ruð</i>	ON 'clearing'	Benzieroth, Blomro
<i>sand</i>	ON/Sc	Sands of Fidgeon
<i>setr (sætr)</i>	ON 'seat, farm'	Cursetter, Inkster, Mosseter, Seater
<i>sheet</i>	Sc 'field'	Damsheet, Kirk Sheed, Longsheed, North Sheed
<i>shore</i>	Sc	Westshore
<i>skáli</i>	ON 'house, hall'	Langskaill, Skail
<i>skarð</i>	ON 'gap in a hill-ridge'	Cottascarth, Binscarth, Settiscarth
<i>skeið</i>	ON 'road, track'	Skiddy
<i>sker/skerry</i>	ON/Sc	Dill Skerry, Seal Skerry, Skerry of the Sound
<i>slap</i>	Sc 'gate'	Gallow Slap, S. of Faravill, S. of Geerons, S. of Langiegar, S. of Mark, S. of Onbrid, S. of Quoybeezie, S. of Quoyfree, S. of Smeravill, S. of Velzian
<i>slounk</i>	Sc 'wet, muddy hollow'	The Slounks
<i>snabuil</i>	dial. 'shelter for animals'?	Snaba
<i>spot</i>	Sc	Smero Spot
<i>square</i>	Sc	Damsquare
<i>stack</i>	Sc	Stacks of the Isle
<i>staðir</i>	ON 'place, farm'	Costa?
<i>stone</i>	Eng.	Cubby Roo Stone
<i>stía/sty</i>	ON/Sc	Styes of Aikerness, S. of Brymyiree, S. of Creya, Styes of Ervigjar, Stygault (Well of)
<i>stöð/steethe</i>	ON/Sc 'boat-stance'	Green Whyssteethe, Hushasteeth, Stooan.



## Appendices

<i>topt</i>	ON ‘house-site’	Aittitt, Kirkatoft
<i>tangi/tunga</i>	ON ‘point, tongue of land’	Broad Taing, Harpy Taing, Livera Tongue, Longa Taing, Longa Tonga, Salta Taing, Salty Taing, Scarataing, Scarva Taing, Taing of Midgarth, West Taing
<i>teigr</i>	ON ‘rig’	Stackaday (Burn of)?, Savday?
<i>tjörn</i>	ON ‘minor lake’	Verigens, Looma Shun
<i>tún/town</i>	see 5.5.15.	Appietoon, Backatown, Geordistoon, Gilliestoon, Toon
<i>túnvöllr</i>	ON ‘field next to the houses’	Mill Toomal, Miln Towmal, Scarpán Tumol, Toomal, Tumul of Loban, Tumul of Poall Cutto, Tumalt
<i>þúfa</i>	ON ‘small mound, tuft of grass’	Ernie Toor/Tooin, Ernie Tower, Mid Toor/Tooin, Tooin of Rusht, Tower?, Tuanabackan?
<i>varða</i>	ON ‘beacon’	Verron?Ward of Redland, Warran, Wart, The Wart, Wardo?, The Warts
<i>vatn</i>	ON ‘lake’	Lowrie’s Water E, Peerie Water E
<i>vað(ill)</i>	ON ‘ford’	Wades (North, South), Wadi, Wald
<i>vík</i>	ON ‘bay’	Arwick?, Waswick, Woodwick
<i>völlr</i>	ON ‘grassland’	Bingwall?, The Divalts?, Faravill (Slap of), Savil, Smeravill (Slap of), Tingwall, Velzian
<i>well</i>	Sc	Well of Dealt, The W. of Dum, W. of Gemuglo, W. of Hewin, W. of Ragan, W. of Sinnakilda, W. of Stygault, The Wells of the Yarsows
<i>yard</i>	Sc	Corn Yard, Yard o’ Muckle Pow
<i>ærgi</i>	see. 5.2.	Ayrean
<i>öxl</i>	ON ‘skulder’	Aglath? (Foot of, Braes of)

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