

Report on a Journey to Shetland March 2010



Stanydale



From the collections of the National Museum

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Northern Wolds report Series 2010:01

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Danmarks Oldtid / Danish Prehistory.

Short Diary

March 16th 2010

Arrival at Sumburgh Airport at 4 pm., where Jenny Murray was kind enough to take me to Lerwick Museum and Archive at Hay's Dock. Here Dr Ian Tait and curator Carol Christiansen waited with tea and discussions of the project and the coming program for the next two days. 7 pm. dinner.



Hay's Dock

March 17th 2010

9.30 at the Museum, guided tour in the exhibition by Ian Tait. At 11 am. first paper on the Shetland project with a power point presentation followed by discussions and suggestions. Present were Ian Tait, Jenny Murray, Carol Christiansen (all Lerwick Museum), Val Turner (Amenity Trust) and John Hunter (Lerwick Museum). Generally a very positive reaction and the Museum appreciates that it is the Neolithic period, which is in focus as Shetland has a very rich Neolithic not generally known abroad. 1.30 lunch at the Museum.

At 2 pm. power point presentation of the Faroese ærgi economy during the Viking Age and Early Medieval Ages followed by a paper about the economic development during the same period in the North Atlantic. Present were Ian Tait, Jenny Murray, Carol Christiansen, Val Turner, Brian Smith (The Archive, Lerwick) and Simon Clarke (The University of The Highlands and Islands).

4.45 pm. guided tour in the exhibition by Ian Tait until 6 pm.

March 18th 2010

Excursion together with Jenny Murray and Ian Tait, 10 am. until 4 pm. Scord of Brouster, knapping site in Walls Area, Grutting, Stanydale, Bixter, Tingwall (Lawting Holm) (Viking Age and Medieval ages), Asta (Bronzeage), Scallowy Castle (17th Century) Clickhimen (Bronze Age- Older Iron Age).

March 19th 2010

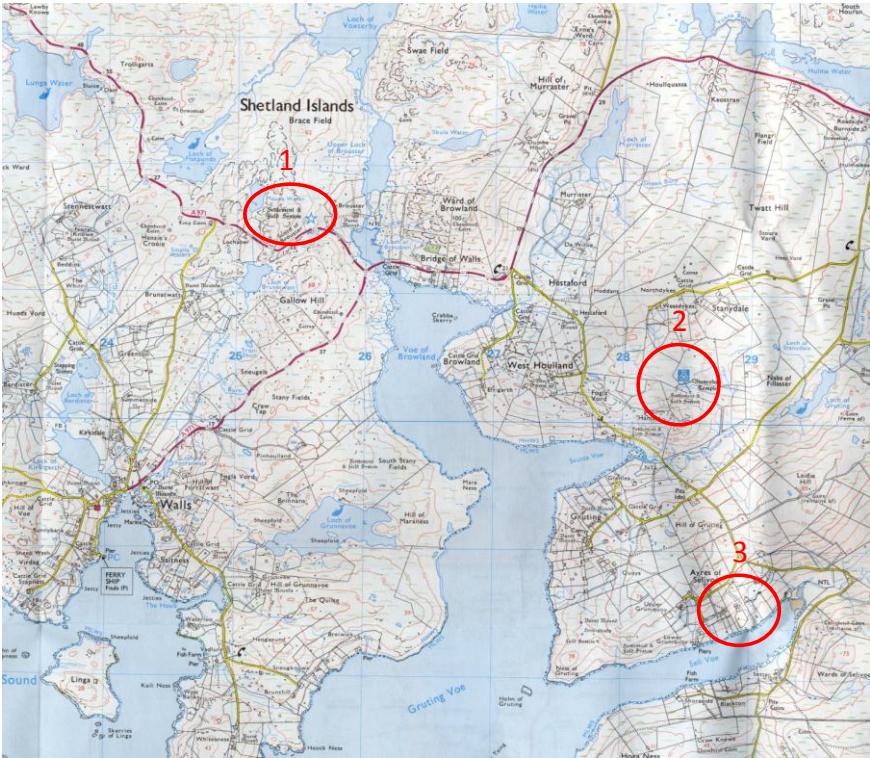
10 am. at the Museum, discussions about future work and the coming of the first season in Shetland, how to focus the Shetland Project. Off to Sumburgh with Jenny Murray. 11.55 from Sumburgh to Aberdeen. Home at 9 pm.



From the exhibition, Lerwick Museum

Excursion, March 18th

The Walls Area



- 1: Scord of Brouster
- 2: Stanydale
- 3: Gruting



From the exhibition, Lerwick Museum



Scord of Brouster, House 3 and banks.



Scord of Brouster, House 1; Neolithic landscape



Knapping site near Walls, presumably Neolithic



Gruting, Neolithic house site



Gruting. Neolithic structure with recent shed built upon.



Stanydale. Neolithic house structure



Stanydale; standing stones



Stanydale

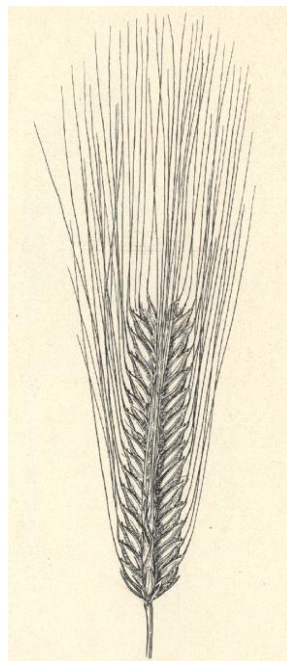


And inside

Shetland – the Border of Farming 4000 – 3000 BC

Preliminary Conclusions (after three months)

- All elements seem to be present to some extent: Cereals, Animal Husbandry, Geometrical ornamented Pottery, Ritual Offerings, Monumental Graves, Causewayed Enclosures (?)
- A question of quantity
- And when
- A foundation for further studies in the years to come!



After Hatt 1937



From the left: Dr Ian Tait, Jenny Murray, Dr Ditlev L. Mahler and Val Turner at the Museum in Lerwick

Conclusions

After discussions and the very successful excursion my conclusion on my short journey to Shetland is as follows:

- The Shetland network group unanimously points at Dr Torben Bjarke Ballin, Stirlingshire, as the Scottish member of the Shetland project
- 2010 focus on the area between Walls and Tingwal Valley: A very rich area on Neolithic sites
- Survey the Stanydale area in order to create the fundament for electronic mapping in 2011
- Concentrate on post 60ies excavation as all the documentation is in Lerwick Museum
- Amenity Trust (Val Turner in my network) will open it's archive on Neolithic Shetland
- Collect the present ¹⁴C dates in order to recalibrate (Oxcal) them and make them comparable
- In order to question in which order and when the Early Neolithic elements are present compared with South Scandinavia
- What implications will this comparable analysis have for the field work this year and during 2011?