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A RECONSIDERATION OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE SHIELING IN THE KINGDOM OF MAN AND THE ISLES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO MAN.

Gillian Quine
Ph.D. 1990

The starting point was a reconsideration of Peter Gelling's research on a new type of site identified on Man in the 1950s and 1960s: the shieling. This is a temporary pasture site, used in the summer months, generally to be found in areas with considerable tracts of upland, and usually associated with cattle. Gelling concluded that shieling owed its main development to the Norse period. More recent research in Britain, Norway and the North Atlantic islands on seasonal pasture sites and naming elements translated as 'shieling', suggested that his theories and fieldwork would repay examination, with the placing of Man in a wider context, the Kingdom of Man and the Isles. Part 1 provides a framework for the study of the shieling in the Kingdom: examining the background to the study; the definition of 'shieling', and associated terminology and literature; the general historical, archaeological, linguistic and onomastic evidence; the geographical background, and the evidence of shieling as part of the traditional pastoral economy of the Isles. Part 2 concentrates on sites identified as shielings: considering Gelling's evidence and developing a methodology to examine a number of the identified problems; examining previous research in the Isles; presenting new evidence concerning the morphology of sites in the Kingdom; identifying of a number of different types of site; and considering the questions of site distribution and organisation. Part 3 concentrates on dating, reviewing Gelling's theories, and those of Eleanor Megaw on the place-name element 'eary'. A new approach, an archaeological and geographical examination of sites with names containing elements, both Gaelic and Norse, translated as shieling, in Man and the Isles, produced results at odds with current theories concerning their use in the Norse period. Examination of comparative archaeological material from Norse (Norway and the North Atlantic islands) and Insular (Wales and Ireland) contexts, suggested that the sites of Man and the Isles owed their development more to the latter than to the former.

A RECONSIDERATION OF THE EVIDENCE OF THE SHIELING IN THE KINGDOM OF MAN AND THE ISLES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO MAN.

(IN TWO VOLUMES)

VOLUME ONE: TEXT

GILLIAN QUINE

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Plate 66. — Upper Kentmere - shieling hut (R.J. Brickstock).

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I, Gillian Quine, declare that no part of this material has previously been submitted for a degree to any university.

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INTRODUCTION

In the 1950s Peter Gelling identified a new type of archaeological site on the Isle of Man - the shieling. The sites consisted of groups of mounds, of varying number, which had previously been regarded as Bronze Age tumuli. Their location at the headwaters of rivers, and on the banks of small tributaries, suggested to Gelling that they were seasonal sites exploiting the upland tracts of pasture. Excavations at two of the larger sites identified, showed that the mounds were created by the superimposition of flimsy turf and wattle structures. The nature of the structures confirmed that the sites were not in use permanently. Dating evidence was unfortunately confined to a single penny discovered in the upper layers of one of the mounds. From this silver penny of Edmund (12th century), Gelling concluded that the excavated sites dated to the Norse period, and that the other sites, being of a similar form, could probably also be dated to this period. He contrasted the number of 'shieling' mounds with that of hut circles in the uplands, and deduced that the practice of taking the stock to the uplands in the summer increased significantly during the Norse period.

The identification and excavation of these sites by Peter Gelling was a major step forward in the study of the exploitation of upland resources. However, there are many problems and questions associated with the above work which would repay exploration: the dating is one obvious area, and another is the conclusion that all the groups of mounds identified had the same function.

This thesis is divided into three parts. The first provides a framework for the study of the above type of site, and begins by examining some of the problems in more detail and indicating ways in which it was believed these could be tackled. A major starting point was the decision to expand the area of study and to place Man in the context of the Norse Kingdom of Man and the Isles. The function of Part 1 is, thus, to provide historical, geographical and ethnographic frameworks for the study of shieling in this area. In Part 2 sites on Man are considered in detail, and comparisons and distinctions are drawn between these and sites examined in the Hebrides. Part 3 examines

the question of the dating of the sites and concentrates on the evidence of place-names and comparative material from both Norse and Insular contexts.

A data-base of sites (Catalogues 1 to 5) is to be found in Volume 2, together with additional material (Appendices 1-15), figures and plates.

PART 1: THE FRAMEWORK

PART 1: THE FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The aim of Part 1 is to provide a background for the study of the shieling in Man and the Isles, and to create a framework within which to examine not only the two fundamental aspects of this study, namely the identification of sites on Man as shieling sites and the dating of these sites to the Norse period, but also to look at these questions in a much wider context. Traditionally, much of the archaeology of the Isle of Man has been studied in isolation, and there have been few works which have attempted to put the island in a wider context, such as the Isles, the Irish Sea area, or even the Norse colonies. The aim of this part is, thus, to examine Man as an island which was part of a much larger group of islands during the Norse period, hence the Sudreys and the Kingdom of Man and the Isles.

The framework is divided into five very broad chapters, largely dictated by the complex question of what exactly the shieling was and the extensive evidence that exists for the presence of Norse settlers in Man and the Isles. Chapter 1 outlines the background to the problem on which this thesis is based, how the Isle of Man, and in particular shielings, were selected for further research, and explains the selection of the islands of Skye, Lewis, Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist and Barra, of the islands which once belonged to the Kingdom, to provide the main source of comparative material.

Chapter 2 examines the definitions of *shieling*, the terminology associated with it, and the literature which is available on the subject in Britain. At this point, the study is not restricted to Man and the Isles, the determination of what exactly a shieling is being a complex matter because of the variations in the terminology from one region to another, and the lack of indications in the literature as to what is meant by shieling in those contexts. The shieling has an almost chameleon quality, in that a definition can be reached on the basis of terminology and sites in one region, only to have to be changed to suit another.

Having considered the problem of the definition of shieling, and deciding upon the most suitable one for this thesis, the second major area of the study is introduced. This is the Kingdom of Man and the Isles. Chapter 3 examines the historical, archaeological and onomastic evidence of Norse settlement in this area.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the geographical framework for the study of the shieling and the Norse period. Man and the Islands are considered separately, and the chapter concentrates on the evidence of the physical environments, past and present land-use, and territorial divisions in the case of Man.

In Chapter 4, the shieling practice, which is fairly well documented in the Isles, is not examined in detail. This is carried out in Chapter 5, in which contemporary descriptions and folk-material are used to examine the role of shieling as part of the traditional pastoral economy of the Isles. The chapter is divided into a number of sections, designed to explore specific questions concerning the form of the sites and the nature of the practice.

It is intended that by the end of Part 1, the reader will know exactly what a shieling is, why it was necessary and how the practice operated. Also he/she will now be familiar with the evidence of the Norse period in the Kingdom, and particularly with the nature of the settlement. However, information on later settlements patterns and land-use has also been provided, as most of the physical evidence of the Isles belongs to much later periods, and in order to examine the question of the survival of the practice in Man.

CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Inspiration for a re-examination of sites described as Norse period shielings by Peter Gelling in Man (Fig.1) came from three sources.

The first was an undergraduate dissertation by Andrew Johnson at the University of Durham (1986), in which he summarised the complex question of the relationship between archaeologically identified shieling sites on Man and those indicated by the Gaelic place-name *ary*, and presented new field-work. An examination of this work and the published material of Peter Gelling (1961;1963a) suggested that there was much research yet to be carried out on the sites.

The second source was in the field of place-name research. Dr. Fellow Jensen (1980), considering the question of the adoption of the Gaelic word *áirge* (translated as 'shieling') in preference to the Old Norse word *sáetr*, concluded that there was something characteristic about the location or function of the former. She suggested that the Gaelic word may have applied to shieling sites placed near the home-farms, but believed that 'Only further examination of the sites of places with names in áergi and sáetr by archaeologists, ethnographers and geographers can substantiate or refute this suggestion'. The examination, by an archaeologist, of sites bearing specific place-names, was also encouraged by the comments of Professor Nicolaisen (1980b:228-9) with regard to the *pit*-names of Scotland. Nicolaisen praised the research of Whittington and Soulsby (see Whittington 1975), two cultural geographers, who:

> 'added to the sterile map of Pit-names full-blooded data about each site involved (at least for those found in Fife), producing a real sense of location. Altitude, distance of one site from the next, soil preference, slope value, shelter factors, drainage requirements can all be shown to have played an important part in the choice of Pictish habitation sites, a choice that appears to have been deliberate and knowledgeable, and by no means haphazard, hasty or primitive. As name scholars we shall have to learn to take such factors, as provided by cultural geographers and other colleagues, more and more into account.'

The detailed examination of the *erg* sites of Northern England by Mary Higham (1978a-c;1985) also demonstrated the value of this type of study.

The third source of inspiration was the growing interest in Norway and the North Atlantic islands (Fig.2) in the exploitation of upland resources, and particularly in transhumance of the Viking and Mediaeval periods. The research of Martens (e.g.1972;1973;1989), Magnus (1983;1986), Bjørgo (1986) and Kvamme and Randers (1982) in recent years, has produced evidence of the use of mountain areas in Norway for a range of activities from a very early period, and has confirmed that the historical seter practice was in existence in the Viking period. That the Viking settlers practised this form of transhumance in the new North Atlantic colonies has been indicated by the research of Albrethsen and Keller (1986) in Greenland, Harstrup (1989) and Sveinbjarnardóttir (forthcoming) in Iceland, and Mahler (1986;1989; forthcoming) in Faroe. The apparent use of *ergi-/argi-*, rather than the Norse word, to denote a 'shieling' in the latter case, points to an important link with the Gaelic areas.

This recent research on both sites and place-names linked with transhumance in a Norse context suggested that it was the right time to reconsider the evidence and conclusions of Peter Gelling concerning the Manx sites and the use of the Gaelic word *áergi*. However, it was clear, that a study of the Manx evidence alone would not help to solve the problem of the adoption of the Gaelic word, the majority of *ary* names on Man being Gaelic formations and there being a lack of names in Old Norse *sáetr*. It was, thus, necessary to widen the study area. Ireland and Wales (Fig.3), although having a Gaelic connection and plentiful evidence of shieling transhumance, lacked the place-name evidence (Fig.4), and could not be used in this study. Galloway, another area with the Gaelic connection, has numerous examples of Gaelic *ary* but lacks the Norse loanword and *sáetr*. This left two areas - Northern England and the Hebrides, and as the former has been the subject of detailed study by Higham (see above) and Whyte (1985), this left the latter area. This proved to be particularly appropriate, Man and the Hebrides forming the Norse Kingdom of Man and the Isles from the

eleventh to thirteenth centuries (Fig.5).

The choice of this area also served another purpose. The shieling practice survived in Lewis into the twentieth century, there are records of the practice in certain other islands in the nineteenth century, and there are plentiful shieling remains. The Hebrides were, thus, an invaluable source of information concerning the shieling practice, and a source of comparative material for the Manx sites. There was, however, one major problem - the size of the study area. It was clearly impossible for a single researcher to carry out field-work on all of the Hebridean islands. A choice of islands, therefore, had to be made. This was based on historical, archaeological, onomastic and ethnographic considerations.

In the case of the historical considerations, it was believed that as Gelling had suggested a Norse origin for the nameless sites on Man and it had been decided to place this research in the context of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles, those islands which remained part of the Kingdom for its duration should form the basis of the study. The Argyll islands were annexed by Somerled of Argyll in 1156, whereas the rest of the islands remained part of the Kingdom until they were bought by Alexander III in 1266. The archaeological considerations were the distribution of Norse settlement sites, burials and hoards. On the basis of these, Rum, Canna, Raasay and many of the smaller islands of the Outer Hebrides were rejected. This left the larger islands of the Outer Hebrides, Skye and Eigg, though the latter was subsequently rejected because of the lack of shieling remains. The remaining islands, besides having plentiful physical evidence of shielings, possessed place-names containing the Norse loanword, Norse *sáetr* and other Norse habitative elements.

It was recognised at the outset of this research that the sites identified by Peter Gelling may owe more in their origins to Gaelic traditions than to Norse. Although the Hebridean material could be regarded as comparative Gaelic evidence, the possibility that the practice had also been introduced into this area by the Norse could not be dismissed. Information was, thus, drawn from Wales and Ireland for the purpose of Gaelic comparisons.

CHAPTER 2: THE SHIELING - DEFINITIONS, TERMINOLOGY AND LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the main aim is to examine exactly what the word *shieling* means, to explore the body of terminology used in addition to *shieling*, and to examine the literature which exists on the subject in Britain generally.

2.1 DEFINITIONS OF SHIELING

The O.E.D. lists a bewildering variety of spelling forms under *Shieling*: *schaeling*, *schealling*, *schilling*, *scheilling*, *scheeling*, *schel(l)ing*, *sheallng*, *sheelin*, *sheeling*, *sheilin*, *shealing*, and *shieling*. *Shieling* is a Scottish word, which, in the vernacular form, has not been found earlier than the latter half of the sixteenth century. However, in thirteenth century documents there is a Latinized *scalinga*, which represents either this word, or an etymological equivalent **skáling*, from the Old Norse *skáli*. The meaning of the word is given as: (a) a piece of pasture to which cattle may be driven for grazing, and (b) a hut of rough construction erected on or near such a piece of pasture: a *shiel*. Looking at the definition of the word *shiel*, there are the following meanings: (a) a temporary building, usually of boards, a shepherd's summer hut, a shanty, shed, *shieling*; (b) a small house, cottage, hovel; (c) a piece of pasture ground having a shepherd's hut upon it, a summer pasturage.

In The S.N.D. (Grant 1931), *shieling* is described as an upland or outfield pasture to which sheep and cattle were driven from farms on the lower ground for the summer season, and where their herds and attendants lived in temporary bothies. The word is derived from the Latinized *scalinga*, from an Old Scandinavian word. Under *shiel* (also *shiell*, *sheal(l)*, *sheel*, *sheil(e)*, *schiel*, *shel(e)*, *shield*, *sheild*, *sh(e)ld*) there are the meanings: (a) a temporary or roughly-made house or shed, a hut, bothy, frequently used to describe a shelter used by salmon-fishermen; (b) a sheepcot, a rough shelter for sheep or cattle, and their herds in a remote place, specifically one used in the summer when the sheep and cattle were removed to the higher and more distant pastures.

In the literature, this variety in spelling-form is reflected. This thesis has adopted the spelling shieling, not because the word is of particular significance in the study-area (compare with Bil 1983:4), but because it appears as the main form in the O.E.D., and has an almost neutral quality.

The shieling would, thus, appear to be both a specific area of pasture to which cattle, and sheep in some cases, were driven, used predominantly during the summer months, and a hut of temporary character which was erected on the piece of pasture and used by the herd, or shepherd. The S.N.D suggests that the pasture was some distance from the farms located on lower ground, and that a change in height was involved. The O.E.D. does not specify the type of movement, thus it could have been vertical or horizontal. There is no indication in the definitions of the length, or lengths, of continuous occupation of the huts in any one season, although the S.N.D. does state that the stock was taken to the pastures for the summer season. The O.E.D. would permit short- (e.g. overnight) or long-term (e.g. May to November) residence.

The annual movement of stock and people to grazing areas has been an important feature of traditional farming economies in many parts of the world, and is known as *transhumance*. The O.E.D. definition is the 'transfer of grazing animals to summer pastures and back, often over substantial distances.' One of the meanings of *transhumant* is migrating between regions with different climates. There are two important facts in these definitions. The first is that transhumance involves two movements, one to the grazings and one back to the permanent winter settlements. Also, part of the population, usually the greater, is occupied with cultivation and possibly fishing (E. Evans 1940b:172). There is frequently confusion between transhumance and *nomadism* (e.g. Stevens 1925:87; E. Evans 1957:27), but the latter is 'the practice, fact, or state of living a wandering life' (O.E.D.), thus, an unsettled mode of life. The two practices are clearly quite different. The second fact is that transhumance is often associated with an altitudinal movement, as well as a seasonal one.

Transhumance has been a common feature throughout the European

continent, and can be found wherever climate or topography cause a seasonal variation in the value or availability of pasture (Miller 1967a:193). Two distinct types of movement have been identified (a) Mediterranean Transhumance, and (b) Alpine Transhumance (Evans 1940b:174; E. Davies 1941a:155). The former is confined largely to the countries of Mediterranean Europe, and generally involves long seasonal journeys. The latter is found largely in the mountainous areas of Central Europe and Scandinavia, and is characterised by shorter distances but greater altitudinal ranges. Within Western Europe, this type of transhumance has been practised in three broad belts: the Alps, Scandinavia, and the uplands of North-West Europe. In the case of the Alps and Scandinavia, seasonal pastures have traditionally been placed at various altitudes, and the high lying pastures are reached by climbing to a considerable height. Transhumance is a necessity if the high pastures, lush during the summer months but snow-bound during the winter, are to be exploited to the full, and if the home ground is to be used entirely for crops for human consumption or for fodder.

The 'Alpages' of France, the 'Alms' of Switzerland and Austria, and the 'Malga' of Italy, particularly the Dolomite region and the Carpathians, are all 'Alpine' summer pastures (Miller 1967a:194). Frequently, they are tiered one above the other, and the flocks and herdsman move up and down the mountains in two or three stages depending upon range and altitude. This is also true of the Norwegian 'seters', but often they are placed away from the home farm rather than directly above it. The 'fabodar' of Sweden are different, being usually located in clearings in the heart of the forest. Their location is determined by distance and variations in soil and not by differences in altitude and aspect (Edwards 1942:67-8).

As far as Britain is concerned, *shieling* is a practice which had more in common with Alpine Transhumance than with Mediterranean. The annual movement from the home farm to the summer pastures would have meant that cultivation of crops was brought into balance with animal husbandry. The taking of the stock to the grazings would not only have been of benefit to the animals, in the form of sweeter grasses, but would also have ensured the protection of the crops at the permanent

residence. The pastures could have been near the farms or more distant, and would not necessarily all have been occupied for the same length of time.

The 'Shieling System'

One of the most important issues, which has been tackled by Bil (1983:147), is the use of the general phrase 'The Shieling System' (e.g. Whitaker 1959:167; Fenton 1976:126; Whyte 1985). Bil rightly pointed out that the movement to the shieling, and its use during the summer months, was not an entity in itself, thus not 'a complex whole' as defined in the O.E.D., but was, as Fenton (1978:126) succinctly put it, 'an integral part of the life-cycle of every farming community, a means by which the cultivation of crops was brought into balance with animal husbandry'. The definition of the word *transhumance* clearly emphasises the balance between the summer and the winter settlement, and it is thus correct to see the shieling as part of the 'wider farming 'system' or 'systems'' (Bil 1983:147). The rejection of the word *system* does, however, create a problem in that it is difficult to find another general phrase to describe the movement to, and activities that take place at, the shieling. It may be that the most sensible option is, when speaking loosely of these activities, to use the phrase shieling transhumance. There is nothing in the definitions of *shieling* to indicate that the movement was always vertical or that it involved residency at the pastures for a given length of time, thus singling it out as a specific form of transhumance.

2.2. TERMINOLOGY

'Shieling' is thus used as a general term to describe a particular type of grazing area, the structure, or structures, associated with it, and the grazing practice to which they belong. However, establishing the usage of this word is merely the tip of the ice-berg, for there are also many regional terms which are generally translated as 'the shieling'. Although not in current usage, the existence of the words is known from oral and documentary sources, and from place-names. As in the case of the word *shieling* itself, the regional terms encompass a range of meanings, and frequently there are a number of different terms to describe different types of structures.

In England (Ramm *et al* 1970:1) it appears that the word *shieling* was used for the hut or shelter and was not used for the pastures or the custom. The pastures were known as *shielding* grounds and the custom was 'summering' or 'shielding'. In the western areas of Cumberland and Westmorland the Latinised *scalinga* appears in documents. Its source, Old Norse *skáli*, appears in the place-names of Northern England, as does Old Norse *sáetr*. Other place-name elements believed to indicate shielings are the Middle English versions of *skáli*, *skáling* and *schele*, and the Old Norse loan-word *áergi*, from Common Gaelic *áirge*. Although generally translated as 'shieling', it is recognised that the different names may indicate functional differences (e.g Pearsall 1961; M. Higham 1978b,1978c; Fellows Jensen 1980; Whyte 1985).

In Wales, the summer grazing area was the *hafod*, and the house on, at, or of it, was the *hafoty* (pl. *hafotai*) (Davies 1985). There is a slight variation in mid and south Wales in that the summer dwelling was called the *hafod* (pl. *hafddydd*). In mediaeval Welsh Laws the name given to the summer dwelling was *hafty*, literally summer house. The word *lluest* has also been translated as 'shieling'.

Evidence from Cornwall, points to the use of the word 'hewas', described by Pounds (1942:34) as equivalent to Welsh *hafod*. The purpose of the *hewas* is expressed in a doggerel rhyme of the late seventeenth century, referring to Bodmin Moor:

> 'But our best neighbour, - and he's choice and good-
> Is the wild moor there's the best neighbourhood.
> It keeps vast herds of cattle, I profess,
> And flocks of sheep even almost numberless.
> Thus we our stock do summer on the Down,
> And keep our homer grass till winter come...'
>
> (Quoted in Pounds 1977:73).

Padel (1985:127), confirming Pound's conclusion, wrote that the Cornish **havos* was a compound of haf and *bod; Welsh *hafod*.

In Ireland, *booley* is generally translated as 'shieling', and is used to describe the pasture, the structure(s) on it (*booley*, *booleys*), and the practice itself (*booleying*). The Gaelic word for the process of summer grazing, or the place at which it was practised was

búailteachas. The word has its roots in *bual*, 'pertaining to the cow' (Graham 1954:6). The word *búaile* has been Anglicised into *booley*. The earliest reference to *boolies* is 1595. Edmund Spenser wrote that there 'is one use amongst them [the Irish], to keep their cattle and to live themselves for the most part of the year in boolies, pasturing upon the mountain and waste wild places' (Quoted in E.E.Evans 1957:34). Irish *búaile*, however, was originally used for any field, yard or place on the mountain used as a milking place (Graham 1954:7), and was most often used to describe one that was close to the farmstead (O'Danachair 1984:40). There are other words and phrases associated with grazing, and in particular the taking of the cattle to the mountains, for example, O'Danachair (1984:40) records that *dul o'n tsliabh* 'going to the mountain', '...to the moors', '...to the braes', was used frequently. Also, the area on which the cattle grazed was generally called *fosaiocht* 'pasture', or *búaile* with the qualification *sléibh* (hill, mountain). Other words, occurring as elements in place-names, have been noted by Aalen (1964:41). These are *áirghe* and *macha*. The house(s), or hut(s), that was erected on the pasture has been named variously, the *both*, *bothán*, *bothóg*, *bothy*, *bráca*, *bráicín*, *cró*, *scailp* or *crate*, usually qualified by *samhraidh* or *sléibhe* (O'Danachair 1984:40). In connection with *crate*, most of the documentary sources for the practice in sixteenth and seventeenth century Ulster refer to *creaghting*, from the Irish *caoraidheacht* (a foray party; cattle and their caretakers) rather than to *booleying* (Williams and Robinson 1983:34). Piggott (1954:23) also uses *tighte buaileadh* for '*booley* houses'. Some of the names would appear to indicate the type of construction of the hut, for example, *braca* means a framework.

The word *áirghe* appears in the form *áirge* (Old Irish plural *áirgi*), the Common Gaelic form, in early Irish sources with the senses: (a) place for milking cows, byre, cowshed (yard); (b) herd of cattle; (c) troop, band (of soldiers) (Meyer 1906; Dineen 1927; also Matras 1956:60; Fellows Jensen 1980:68). Fellows Jensen (1980:69) noted that there were a few instances of the element in Ireland in the place-names of Kerry.

In Scotland, there is considerable variation in the terminology. In

Perthshire, Bil (1983:4) found the word *shealling*, and in Lothian and Border, Gaffney (1959:22) noted the frequency with which *shiel* appeared in place-names. He also (1959:20) quoted Burt's use of *shealings* (Letters from the North of Scotland 1754):

> 'In summer the people remove to the hills and dwell in much worse huts than those they leave below; these are near spots of grazing and are called shealings, scattered from one another as occasion requires...here they make their butter and cheese.'

Reference to the S.N.D. (see above) shows the variety of forms of this word which can be found. In Upper Banffshire, the shieling grounds were often called *grassings* and *glennings*, and the shieling hut is called a 'scalan' (Gaelic, *sgalan*, 'shade or shelter' (Gaffney 1959:22-3). In the Gaelic areas (Scottish *Gaidhealtachd*), there is much more variety in the words used to describe the pastures and the huts placed upon them. *Áiridh* and *ruigh*, or *ruidh*, (Gaffney 1959:22; also D. Campbell 1896:64, Fenton 1976:134), are words which have been used for the pasture and for the dwellings, the former being derived from the Common Gaelic word *áirge* (see above), and the latter being in Gaelic literally 'arm', outstretched part or base of mountain. *Áiridh* tends to occur in the west of the Gaelic area and *ruigh* to the east of the main Highland watershed. The word *áirigh*, with the same root as *áiridh*, is generally used for the grazing grounds and not the structures. As far as the huts are concerned, there are various Gaelic names - *áirídh*, *bóthan*, *builteach*, *már(r)ag*, *sgitheil* and *ruigh*. As in Ireland, some of the names appear to indicate the type of construction, for example, in Lewis the stone-built corbelled hut was known as a *both* or *bóthan*, and the oval stone hut with a timber roof as an *áiridh* or *áiridhean* (e.g. Thomas 1860a:130; Forbes 1923; Kissling 1943:88). Thomas recorded that the former were considered very much superior to the latter, to such an extent in fact, that tenants still cast lots for them in Bernera during his day. Carmichael (1884:472) noted a further distinction. This was between *both cheap*, or *bóthan cheap*, and *both cloiche*, or *bóthan cloiche*, the former being of turf and the latter of stone.

In the S.N.D. (Grant 1931), under Scottish *airie*, *arrie*, the form

found in place-names of Galloway (see E.Megaw 1978:345), from Gaelic airigh, there are three interesting descriptions:

(a) Thomas Pennant 1771:

> '...ascend a steep hill, on the top of which we refreshed ourselves with some goats whey, at a Sheelin, or, as it is sometimes called, Arrie, and Bothay, a dairy-house, where the Highland shepherds, or graziers, live during the summer with their herds and flocks, and during the season make butter and cheese.'

(b) quoted from an agricultural report 1831:

> '...the shealing or Airie, which is a hut, or bothy, with one apartment, perhaps 12 feet square, for the purpose of eating and sleeping in, another of similar size for the milk vessels, and, in general, there is a small fold to keep the calves apart from the cows.'

(c) a definition given in J. Jamieson Dictionary:

> 'Arie. A shealing, hill pasture, or summer residence for herdsmen and cattle; a level green among the hills.'

There are two more Gaelic terms associated with shieling. The first is *tigh-Earraich* (Spring dwelling). As the housing of cattle became necessary in Lewis, houses were made rectangular. In time the spring dwellings began to displace the older types of shieling huts (D. Macdonald 1978:83) and often people and cattle sheltered in them in spring before going to the more distant pastures (Geddes 1955:83). The second word is used to describe the movement to the *áiridh* in Lewis. When the people left their winter-home, they spoke of the *Oidhche na h-Iomraich*, the 'Night of the Flitting' (D. Macdonald 1978:83).

The Old Norse loanword *áergi* is also to be found in the Gaelic areas, with a heavy concentration in the Uists and in parts of the western mainland (Fig.4). However, it is not confined to the Gaidhealtachd. There are place-names containing this element in Sutherland and Caithness (Matras 1956). Predominant in Orkney and Shetland, frequent in the northern half of Caithness, and also to be found in number in Lewis and Skye, is Old Norse *sáetr* (Fig.4),

generally translated as 'the shieling' (e.g. Nicolaisen 1968b:13; Fellows Jensen 1984:161; Fenton 1976:124). In Orkney, it is interesting to note that as well as the Old Norse word, Gaelic *áirigh* appears in a number of names. Although, both the Gaelic and Norse words are translated as 'shieling', it has been suggested by Fellows-Jensen (e.g. 1980:71; 1984:163) that they may be indicative of different functions during the Norse period, hence the Gaelic word *áirigh* may have denoted a home-shieling, one placed near the home farm, and the Norse word *sáetr* a far-away, or mountain shieling (see Part 3).

On Man, Old Norse *sáetr* is not to be found. The word translated as 'shieling' is Manx *eary*, *ary*, from Common Gaelic *áirge*. The word *eree* was apparently recorded in the 1770s (J. Kelly 1866:75-6) as meaning 'the mountainous parts where the cattle are sent to feed in the summer', also 'a herd'. A. Cregeen (1835:59) translates *ea'ry* or *ae'ree* as 'an open airy place'.

The above summary indicates the complex nature of the question of transhumance in Britain. Defining what is meant by shieling does not help throw any light on the practices which were carried out in different regional areas. As has been demonstrated, it is likely that words translated loosely as 'shieling', did have different functions, and in the cases of Ireland and Scotland it is clear that the terminology was quite precise, in that very specific words were used for different types of dwellings, the pastures and for the movement to them. As well as the problem of functional differences, there is also a cultural one. The words are those belonging to specific culture groups, and it cannot be assumed that they all have precisely the same meaning, or, having been adopted by other groups of people, were used in the same way. One example of this is the adoption of the Common Gaelic word *áirge* by a Norse speaking population. As the Norse already had the word *sáetr* in their lexicon, translated as 'shieling', it would appear that there must have been some characteristic of *áirge* which made it different from the *sáetr*. As mentioned above, Fellows Jensen believed that location, thus distance from the home farm, may have been responsible for the use of both words, as a means of differentiating between the two types of shieling. This use of the word as a means of

distinguishing between different pastures would theoretically, however, have applied only in the Norse context, and not in the Gaelic one.

2.3 THE LITERATURE

There is a considerable body of literature on 'the shieling', but little is written about it in the more general context of transhumance. Few of those who have published material on the shieling have given any indication of what they mean by the word and why they use it instead of transhumance. Generally the shieling is regarded as summer pasture, located at a greater height than the home farm. Few writers have recognised horizontal movements as being related to shieling (although movements to summer pastures in the Northern and Western Isles, for example, have been largely horizontal). Whitaker (1959:167) is one of the few who has defined 'the transhumance cycle known in Scots as the shieling system'. To him this was the movement of the cattle away from the infields around the settlement up into the hills, where they spent the larger part of the summer. Whitaker (1959:173-4) did not regard the pasturing of cattle and sheep on uninhabited islands as shieling, but as 'one form of modified migration'. Nor could the wintering of livestock in less inclement regions be seen as shieling. Both, however, could be considered as forms of transhumance. What distinguishes shieling from these other movements, in the literature, is that it involved a whole-scale migration of people from permanent winter dwellings to temporary summer huts in the hills, and that it was associated with dairying activities.

The shieling literature can be broken down into groups: those examining shieling generally; those looking at the practice in particular regions, and those which are more local studies. Each of these groups can be divided into sub-groups, in which shieling is studied from geographical, historical, archaeological, ethnographical, and onomastic points of view.

(a) General

The most wide-ranging work on the shieling to date has been that of Sayce (1956;1957). Although looking at the *hafod* in Wales in particular, he examined the sites in the wider context of transhumance in Europe, studying, for example, the history and reasons for

transhumance, the variety of forms, the distances travelled, the people involved, the composition of the herds and flocks, the dates for departure and return to the winter dwelling, the huts and other structures at the pastures, and the type of work carried out. Other such investigations into the history and form of the shieling are lacking. There is also a lack of literature which is regional in character. Miller (1967a) examining the shielings of Assynt and North Lochtayside, Mainland Scotland, and those of the Hebrides and Orkney, has come the nearest to providing a general survey of the sites of Scotland. Fenton (1976;1980;1987) has written overviews of the shieling and 'shieling system', in Scotland, which are particulary useful in conjunction with Miller's survey work. Graham (1954) has written the only comprehensive work on transhumance in Ireland, which is also the only comprehensive regional study that exists in Britain. In this work, she drew on all the different sources of information listed above. E. Davies has published (1985) the only regional survey for Wales and Ramm *et al* (1970) for England.

Most of the literature refers to specific areas: for example Gaffney looked at the shielings of the Drumochter (1967); John Love Rum (1981); Bil Highland and Highland Edge Perthshire (1983); Miller the Brecon Beacons (1967); Ó'Danachair the Galtee Mountains (1945b); Piggott the Achill Islands (1954), and Williams and Robinson County Antrim (1983).

(b) Nostalgic and anthropological

Much of the literature is either nostalgic, or looks at shieling in the context of the disappearance of a traditional part of the pastoral economy (e.g. Campbell 1896, 'Highland Sheilings in the Olden Time', and sections in Mr and Mrs Hall 1850; A. Nicolson 1930:313; W. Mackenzie 1930:146ff.; MacGregor 1933,1949; Evans 1939,1957; Whitaker 1959; Grant 1961; Macdonald of Gisla 1967; Fenton 1976,1987; F. Thompson 1984). There appears to have been a special atmosphere surrounding the move to the summer pastures, and this is reflected in the literature which looks at the traditions and songs associated with it (Mackellar, 1889 and 1890 'The Sheiling: its Traditions and Songs'; also Carmichael 1884 and 1941).

(c) Archaeological - survey and excavation

In the nineteenth century, Thomas (1860a,1860b:127-44;1867:153-95) was one of the first to show any specific interest in, and to plan and record details of, the structures at shieling grounds. He looked at sites largely in Lewis and Harris, and visited huts that were still being used. This meant that he was able to extract information concerning the function of the structures, and certain 'architectural' details. A. Mitchell (1880: Lecture III) visited a hut in use, with Thomas in 1866, and also provided plans and descriptions of other sites. Both were particularly interested in 'beehive huts', the *both* or *bóthan*, Mitchell (1880:72) believing them to be of great antiquity and a 'prolongation of prehistoric into historic', and Thomas (1860b:140) that they were probably introduced into the Outer Hebrides at the end of the eighth century (Thomas 1860b:140). Interest in these 'structures of archaic type' in Lewis was continued by W.M. Mackenzie (1904), who also recorded and planned huts, now abandoned, and photographed them. The photographs are of particular value now that the vast majority of huts are in a very ruinous state.

There followed a fairly long period in Scotland when there appears to have been little interest in the identification and recording of sites. The 1928 Royal Commission volume on the Outer Hebrides, Skye and the Small Isles only made passing reference to shielings as a separate category of site, noting in the General Introduction (1928:xli) that there were no beehive shielings in North Uist, South Uist or Barra, but that in Lewis, as late as 1900, a group survived in Morsgail Forest. Interest was not rekindled until the 1950s and 1960s. In 1959, Macsween published a report on the survey of shielings in Trotternish, North Skye (1959b), and with Gailey (1961) published reports on the survey and excavations of shielings in Waternish. This was followed, in 1967 (1967a), by an important paper by Miller, identifying sites in Assynt and North Lochtayside, Mainland Scotland, in the Hebrides and in Orkney. Plans of the sites were not given, but six figure grid references and details of location were. The Royal Commisission Argyll volumes of the 1970s and 1980s have recorded shieling sites in detail, and in 1981 Love published a paper on the shielings of Rum. He not only

located some 380 huts, but examined specific questions concerning their form and location. Most recently, sites have been recorded in the Braemar area of Deeside, Grampian by J.S. Smith (1986), as part of a field-survey of deserted settlement.

On Man, the shieling was not recognised as a type of archaeological site until the excavations and survey work carried out by Peter Gelling in the 1950s and 1960s (1961;1963a). Survey work since then has only been carried out by Johnson (1986) and the author.

In other areas of Britain, there also seems to have been a growing interest in sites in the 1950s and 1960s. In Ireland sites were recorded by O'Danachair in the Galtee Mountains in 1945 (1945b). This was followed, in the 1950s, by excavations by Sidebotham and Case in Goodland Townland, County Antrim (Sidebotham 1950; Graham 1953); excavations by Evans and Proudfoot in the Mourne Mountains (1958); survey by Piggott in Achill Island (1954), and survey by Aalen in Dingle (1964). There was then a gap until the 1980s, when excavations were carried out by Williams (1984), Williams and Robinson (1983) and Williams and Yates (1984) in Co. Antrim. In England, shielings were not the subject of survey and excavation until the 1970s. In 1970, Ramm *et al* published a survey of shielings and bastles in Northern England, and in 1979 G. Richardson published the excavation of a shieling at Bewcastle, Northern England. In Wales sites have been recorded by Miller (1967b), Crampton (1966;1968), and D. Allen (1979).

(d) Historical

This is an area of study which is less well represented. Whitaker (1959) used written sources to identify shieling sites in Scotland, but Gaffney (1967) was the first to realise the full potential of documentary sources, in this case the Gordon Castle papers, and used them to locate sites and link them with specific settlements in the Highlands of Banffshire. Such research 'contributed much to our understanding of the place of shielings in the system of land-tenure and in the rural economy of the central Highlands in the eighteenth century' (Miller 1967a:196). This approach has also led to a greater understanding of the use of shielings in Perthshire, Bil (1983) drawing upon unpublished and unexamined documents and cartographic material to

produce a very detailed study (see Pls.62-65 for Perthshire shielings). As far as linking sites with specific settlements is concerned, Macsween, in his study of the settlement of Totternish, Skye (1959a), also explored this area, and was able to examine the distances and directions of the movements from the permanent dwellings to the summer pastures. The historical approach has also be used successfully by E. Davies in Wales (e.g.1985).

(e) Ecological

There is only one piece of literature on this subject, an M.Phil. thesis by Livingstone (1973), which sought to demonstrate that the hill-grazings of Scotland were underutilised. Besides looking at Scotland, Livingstone studied the 'seters' of the Veigdalen district of South Norway as an example of how such land could be utilised.

(f) Onomastic

The 1970s and 1980s saw a surge in interest in the shieling as indicated by place-names. This interest lay specifically in a Norse-Gaelic context. In 1961 Pearsall had looked at the shieling in the context of settlement expansion, thus that the shieling of one generation became the homestead of the next (1961:81). From this stand-point, the origins of the various place-name elements used for the shieling was of particular significance. Pearsall looked at the distribution of names in *-ergh*, the Norse loanword, and in Old Norse *-sáetr*, and concluded that different phases of settlement could be postulated, with different ethnic groups settling on land of varying quality in north-west England. The question of the origin of the *erg* place-names was taken up in earnest by Fellows-Jensen (1978a;1978b; 1980;1983;1984), and by M. Higham (1978a;1978b; 1978c;1985), the former examining the form and distribution of the word in a much wider context, and the latter carrying out a very detailed study of specific sites in Northern England. The subject has also been tackled by Whyte (1985) who examined the distribution of names in *-áergi*, *-sáetr*, *-skáli* and *-skáling* in the Lake District.

Place-names containing the Common Gaelic *áirgi* in the Isle of Man have been examined specifically by Eleanor Megaw (1978), but also considered by Fellows Jensen (see above references, but in particular

1983) in her wider studies of the distribution of the Norse and Gaelic elements in Britain and further afield.

The above are the detailed studies of place-names and shielings. There are of course, many references to them in more general works considering place-names and settlement development, for example Ekwall (1918), Nicolaisen (1969a,1969b;1976), Oftedal (1954), Small (1976), W. Thomson (1987a), L. Macgregor (1986a;1986b) and Waugh (1985).

Problems with the literature

The greatest problem is the fundamental one of the definition of *shieling*. Interpretations vary, and this is particulary problematic in the case of the place-names studies, which suggest that different functions may be indicated by the use of various elements. The simple answer must be the use of the terms which are most frequently to be found in a particular area, for example Bil used *shealling* in his study of the practice in Perthshire (1983). The use of specific regional terms, together with more archaeological and historical research on both a local and regional level, would lead to a greater understanding of transhumance in particular areas, and there would not be the constraints which are imposed by the use of the word 'shieling'.

2.4 SUMMARY

The chapter has demonstrated the problems in determining not only what precisely the word 'shieling' means, but also the vast terminology associated with it. The dictionary definitions are rather vague and the literature is confusing, theories on the form and function varying considerably. For the purpose of this work, the spelling-form shieling is used as a general term, and local terminology is used where possible. As far as a definition is concerned, 'shieling' is a specific area of pasture to which animals, notably cattle, are driven in the summer months. The pasture would tend to be some distance from the home-farm and at higher altitude. The term also, however, is used of the huts erected at the pastures, which are occupied for a lengthy period. One of the most important features of the 'shieling' is the production of dairy products, an activity which is consistently noted in the literature but not in the definitions.

CHAPTER 3: THE NORSE KINGDOM OF MAN AND THE ISLES

INTRODUCTION

This thesis considers both the archaeological evidence of shieling sites dated to the Norse period, and the onomastic evidence. The possibility that the origins of the sites lay in the pre- and post-mediaeval periods was recognised at the outset of this research, as was the likelihood that sites saw considerable re-use over a long period of time. However, this chapter confines itself to the Norse period, a presentation of the prehistoric to modern background of the study area being impractical. The chapter begins with a review of the historical evidence not only for the creation of the Kingdom (Fig.5), but for the earlier settlement of the islands by the Norse. This is followed by an examination of the available archaeological evidence of settlement, and by a presentation of the current views concerning the linguistic and onomastic evidence.

3.1 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A. THE SOURCES

There are no contemporary or near contemporary documentary sources for Man and the Isles in the first millennium A.D., and it is thus necessary to make recourse to the Norse sagas and Irish annals for much of the information concerning the early Norse history of the islands. For the period between the mid-eleventh century and the thirteenth century, however, there is the Chronicle of the Kings of Man and the Isles, which records the dynastic history of the kings and bishops of Man, and was apparently written by the monks at Rushen Abbey on the island (Broderick 1979:i). The only known manuscript dates from the fourteenth century. Preserved with the Chronicle, at the back of British Museum MS *Cotton Julius A vii*, is the Limites Seu Divisio Nes Terrarum Monachorum, a document recording the bounds of the monks' land in three areas of Man (Broderick 1979). Reference will be made to this document in the section on place-names.

B. THE KINGDOM

'The King of the Isles holds Man and thirty-one other isles under the King of Norway on condition of the payment of ten gold marks to

every new king. No other payment is made during the life of that king, or until the appointment of a successor' (Statement made by the Bishop of the Sudreys in 1166, quoted by W. Cubbon and Megaw 1942:58; Johnsen 1969:20; Anderson 1922:245).

The Kingdom of Man and the Isles, or the Sudreys (southern as opposed to northern isles) (Fig.5) emerged during the tenth century (B. Megaw 1978:269). There is reason to believe, however, that Norse settlement in the islands had been established for some considerable time prior to this. This earlier phase has been described by Young (1981:13) as 'the period of conjecture'. The record of the burning of Inis Patriac of the shrine of Dachonna in A.D.798 in the Annals of Ulster (MacAirt and MacNiocaill 1983:253) is no longer assumed to refer to St. Patrick's Isle, Peel, but rather to Inispatrick in the Skerries off the Dublin coast (Wilson 1974:7,8; Kinvig 1975:56). However, this has not ended speculation that the first 'Norse incursions' and settlement must have taken place at this time (Wilson 1974:8). The strategic importance of Man has frequently been stressed (Kinvig 1975:56; Wilson 1974:8;1980b:103; A. Cubbon 1983:13), such an advantage, together with Man's 'safe harbours and rich agricultural land' (Cubbon 1983:13), making it appear inconceivable that the Norsemen would have failed to exploit them. That raiding and temporary settlement occurred in Man and the Isles at this time appears likely in the context of the activities of the Norsemen recorded in the literary sources (e.g. Annals of Ulster, Annals of Inisfallen - see Anderson 1922:255-65). 'Hit and run affairs' (B. Crawford 1987a:40) by Vikings eager for booty are recorded until the 830s. There is, however, as yet, no evidence to suggest that the early raids were executed by Norse 'fishing and farming communities' settled in the Isles (O'Corrain 1972:81). Smyth (1984:145-50) argued that the violent piratical phase was a prelude to a more determined and successful colonisation which started by the end of the first quarter of the ninth century. By the mid-ninth century, he believed, the Norwegian conquest and occupation of the Isles and the North West was an accomplished fact.

Crawford (1987a:48) has suggested that Man became significant in the period post-853, with the establishment of Olaf the White at Dublin

and the increasing activity across the Irish Sea in England and Scotland. The appearance in the records by the mid-ninth century of the *Gall-Gaedhil*, or 'foreign Gael' suggests that in the Isles and south-west Scotland there was a recognisable group of warriors of mixed blood, with the foreign element almost certainly being Norse (Crawford 1987a:47). The leader of this group, Ketil *Find* (White), defeated in Munster in 857 by two leaders of the Norse in Ireland (Annals of Ulster), has been identfied with Ketil *Flat-nefr* (Flat-nose) of the later sagas. The existence of this group has suggested that by 850 there was a mixed Norse-Gaelic population in the Sudreys, indicating that the islands were settled in the early part of the ninth century (Young 1981:14; Crawford 1987a:47). Young also pointed to the fact that Grim Kamban, generally believed to have settled in the Faroes in c.825, is believed to have been a Norse-Gael, *Kamban* being in Gaelic 'twisted' or 'crooked' (see also G. Jones 1984:270). The appearance of high-born leaders of the Norse, such as Olaf the White, married to Ketil's daughter Aud the Deep Minded, suggested to Crawford (1987a:49) that a 'new and significant phase of the Viking period of Ireland and Scotland had started', with permanent bases being established for the exaction of tribute on a regular basis and trading becoming an important feature. Henceforth, the Irish Sea became 'the principal sphere of Viking activity rather than the Irish coasts' (Chadwick 1962:25), and it is probably at this time that Man began to assume particular importance and south Scotland also became part of the Viking sphere of activity (Crawford 1987a:50).

Little is known about the history of the Sudreys from this period until the expedition of King Harald Finehair. Snorri Sturluson (Heimskringla - S. Laing 1961:64-7) described this expedition as being a response to the depredations along the coast of Norway by 'Vikings' settled in Shetland, Orkney and the Hebrides. These 'Vikings' had left the home-country when Harald seized on the lands of Norway after the battle of Hafrsfjord. Harald is said to have ravaged far and wide in Scotland, and on reaching Man found that it had been abandoned by the inhabitants who had heard that he was coming. Here, he destroyed all the dwellings, an action, Young (1981:17) has argued, that indicated

the importance of this island as a base, and possibly that of the leaders of the Norse community in the Sudreys. It is now generally accepted that much of the information surrounding this expedition is incorrect: some Norwegian historians have even argued that the expedition never took place (e.g. Shetelig 1940:24). There is, for example, no record of such a royal expedition in the Irish Annals. Sawyer (1982b:13) has described it as a means by which the Icelanders were able to explain how Harald could have been responsible for an emigration from the Isles, and has suggested that King Magnus probably provided the model for the achievements. Smyth (1984:152), however, has argued that the expedition can almost certainly be attributed to Olaf the White (of Vestfold), who arrived in Dublin in 853 and is decribed as the 'son of the King of Lochlann' in contemporary Irish sources. To this man, Smyth (1984:153) also attributes the creation of the Orkney Earldom, which he placed in a tributary position to the kings of Vestfold. As far as dating is concerned, it has been argued that rather than the traditional date of 870 for the battle of Hafrsfjord, one in the 880s is more likely (Sawyer 1976).

The early part of the tenth century witnessed disruption in the whole Irish Sea province and included the expulsion of Northmen and probably also Danes from Dublin and north Ireland. It is argued that this movement resulted in settlement in Cumbria, coastal Lancashire and the northern shores of the Solway Firth, and also in Man (Fellows Jensen 1983:48; Wainwright 1948). Young (1981:26-41) has dated the creation of the Kingdom to the period 914-989 A.D. and has argued that it began with a sea-battle off the island, in which Reginald, one of the sons of Ivar II Sîgtryggson, and a great-grandson of Ivar I, the brother of Olaf the White, defeated the 'navy of Ulster'. It appears that he had his base in Man at this time (G. Jones 1984:235). In 917, Dublin was captured, and by 919 Reginald had become the ruler of Northumbria. The position of Man in all this is not clear, but given Jones' view that Reginald had been there before the the battle, it seems reasonable to assume that he did not relinquish hold of it. The fact that a certain MacRagnall ('son of Reginald') appears to have been ruler of Man in c.940 gives weight to this argument. Broderick

(1980:32), however, argued that the first reference to a King of Man, appears in the Chronicle of Worcester. 'Maccus plurimarum rex insularum' was one of eight kings present at English king Eadgar's durbar on the Dee at Chester in 973. It would appear that Magnus was the son of Aralt, or Harald, son of Sitruicc, Lord of Limerick, and son of Ivar who ruled Dublin c.853-73, and who probably came from the Hebrides. His presence at the durbar has suggested (Young 1981:35) that King Edgar considered himself suzerain over the Sudreys at this time.

Magnus was succeeded as King of the Sudreys by his brother, Godred, referred to in the Irish Annals (e.g. Annals of Ulster) as King of the *Insi-Gall*, and it is argued that he not only severed connections with England, but also, after the Battle of Tara in 980, discontinued his connections with Dublin (Young 1981:36-37). His connection with Norway also appears to have lapsed at this time, an Icelandic nobleman being sent to the Sudreys by Earl Hakon to collect tribute which had not been paid for three successive years (Flóamanna Saga - see Young 1981:37). However, it was the Orkney earls who became the dominant figures in the west at the end of the tenth century. The sagas (e.g. Orkneyinga - Taylor 1927:148) claim that Earl Sigurd II, 'The Stout', was active in the Hebrides and Man, and the Irish Annals (e.g. Annals of Ulster - MacAirt and MacNiocaill 1983:421) record disturbances in 986, 987 and 989. In Njal's Saga (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960:184), it is noted that Earl Sigurd and his followers fought with Godfred, called King of Man, and defeated him. Clearly, there was a struggle for power on the western seaboard, which resulted in Man falling under Orkney control (Wilson 1974:8; Young 1981:39). According to Eyrbyggia Saga (Magnusson & Pálsson 1989:80), Earl Sigurd laid a tax on the inhabited lands of Man, which his men were to collect while he returned to Orkney. This indicates that he levied a tribute but not that Orcadian rule was permanently established (Crawford 1987a:66). In the Hebrides, Njal's Saga (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960:182) suggests that Earl Sigurd ruled through a tributary earl, Gilli, who was resident in either Coll or Colonsay. Young (1981:42) has postulated that the earl moved his seat to the principal island of the Sudreys, Man.

It would appear that Earl Gilli remained as Viceroy for Earl Sigurd

the Stout until 1014. In 1013, Njals Saga (Magnusson & Pálsson 1960:341-2) noted that a meeting took place in Orkney between Earl Sigurd, Earl Gilli and King Sigtrygg Silkbeard of Dublin, at the insistence of the latter, who wanted Earl Sigurd's support in his war against Brian Boroimhe, King of Munster. The Earl agreed. In Orkneyinga Saga, Njal's Saga and the Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill there are accounts of the famous battle of Clontarf in 1014. On the side of the foreigners were men from Orkney, Shetland, Man, Skye, Lewis, Kintyre, Argyll, and also Brittany and Cornwall. Crawford (1987a:68) has emphasised the importance of the ability of Sigurd to muster such a force from 'this scattered community of islands', and has suggested the creation of 'some sort of maritime dominion, united by the common interest of defending Norse influence in Ireland..'. The death of Sigurd and the defeat of his forces at Clontarf, however, resulted in the collapse of the Orkney earls' control in the west. There is no evidence that Sigurd's sons had any sway in Man or the Hebrides (Crawford 1987a:71). Broderick (1980:33) wrote that the loss of the battle was a disaster for the Manx, who were seriously weakened and appear to have been sucked into the orbit of Dublin. The Hebrides, free from Orkney contol for a short time, were soon to be brought back under its sway by the strong earl Thorfinn the Mighty (Orkneyinga Saga - Taylor 1927:174ff.), who did not, however, confine himself to the Hebrides, raiding in Ireland and a wide area in the west of Scotland. Man is not listed as one of Thorfinn's conquests, but is suggested by his famous raid, in 1042, on England, which is located only 'South off the Isle of Man' (Thorfinn's Ode - Taylor 1927:175).

During the period between the acquirement of the Sudreys by Thorfinn (c.1040-1042) and his death in c.1065, Young (1981:51) has argued that the Sudreys were ruled by a certain Sigtrygg Reginaldson, brother of King Eachmarcach Reginaldson, who had regained the Dublin throne in 1046. The former would appear to have replaced Harald, described in the Annals of Ulster as being King of Man, and who died c.1040. Sigtryyg is described by Young as a tributary King, or Viceroy, under Earl Thorfinn and under the overall suzerainty of Norway. He must have died between 1060 and 1066, because when Godred Crovan arrived in

Man after the Battle of Stamford Bridge, Godred Sigtrygson was ruling (Chronicle of Man and the Isles - Broderick 1979:f.32v). The death of the latter in 1075 (Annals of Ulster) created a power vacuum, and the lack of interest on the parts of both Orkney and Dublin, enabled Godred Crovan, '..by a piece of astute political manipulation..', to wrest Man and the Isles from the Dublin and Orkney axes and '..unite them as before, but this time as independent of other spheres of influence..' (Broderick 1980:33). This position was to last for almost two centuries. Broderick has described this as Godred's greatest achievement, which resulted in the founding of his dynasty and '..ushered in halcyon days which it might be argued Man has not seen since', and Young (1981:62) has described Godred's reign as the 'Kingdom of the Sudreys At Its Zenith'. The Chronicle (Broderick 1979:f.32v-33v) records the battle of Sky Hill in 1079 and its consequences, the opposing Manxmen being granted the northern portion of the island, and Godred's Hebridean supporters acquiring the south. The Manxmen were deprived of their odal rights to land on the island, and the Hebrideans were not granted any. Godred had overall ownership of the island. The presence of Hebrideans in his forces has suggested to Young (1981:62-63) that Godred had already won control of these islands, and that the reference to Manxmen throughout the passage in the Chronicle perhaps indicated that Man had been isolated from the rest of the Sudreys. The possibility that the inclusion of Hebrideans, however, merely reflects that many acted as mercenaries should not be ignored.

There is little information in the Chronicle about the Sudreys during Godred's reign, and his subjection of Dublin has been questioned (Young 1981:64):

> 'Then subjected to his rule Dublin and a great part of Leinster. Also he so tamed the Scots that no one who built a ship or boat dared use more than three iron bolts. He ruled sixteen years and died in the island which is called Islay'. (Broderick 1979:f.33r-33v).

It is possible, however, that the expedition assigned to the later Godred IV Olafsson (Broderick 1979:f.36v) could have been mis-placed by

the Chronicler (Young 1981:100-101).

The period following the death of Godred, dated c.1095, is very confused. Young (1981:67-8) has suggested the following dates for succeeding rulers: Lagman c.1095-1102; Donald MacTeige 1102-1105; Olaf the Dwarf 1105-1153, and has accepted that Magnus Barelegs exercised his prerogatives as Suzerain of the Sudreys between 1098 and 1103. His subjection of the Sudreys is described in Orkneyinga Saga (Taylor 1927:198-200). In the Chronicle (Broderick 1979:f.34v), Magnus is recorded as being pleased with the beauty of Man, chose it as his abode and erected forts. To construct these, he compelled men from Galloway to cut timber and bring it to the shore. This has been taken as indicating that either there were men from Galloway resident on Man, or that the timber was brought from Galloway, supplies on Man having been exhausted (Young 1981:71). Magnus was killed in 1103 in Ulster, whilst Donald MacTeige was Regent. Donald was soon replaced, however, by Olaf I Godredson (the Dwarf), described in the Chronicle as a man of peace, who was in such close alliance with the kings of Ireland and Scotland that no one ventured to disturb the peace of the Isles (Broderick 1979:f.35v). With reference to the first claim, it would seem likely that Olaf also had good relations with England, having been resident at the Court of Henry I before ruling in Man (Young 1981:75-6), and in the case of the latter reference to Orkneyinga Saga (Taylor 1927:265ff.) suggests that there was considerable trouble with outsiders in the early 1140s, and namely with Svein Asleifson of Orkney. Trouble occurred again in 1152 (Broderick 1979:f.36v) after Olaf's son, Godred, had departed for Norway. Three sons of Harald, the brother of Olaf, came to Man from Dublin and demanded half of the Kingdom. The outcome was the murder of Olaf and the seizure of the throne. This did not, however, last for long, Godred returning in 1154, the chiefs of the Isles electing him as their king and the three sons of Harald being seized.

Godred IV Olafson reigned for some 33 years (Broderick 1979:f.36v). During this reign it is recorded that he was requested by Dublin as ruler, and that he was accepted. Young (1981:100-101), however, has questioned this, there being no reference in the Irish annals to any

expedition, and has suggested that the events refer instead to Godred Crovan (see above). In 1156 (Broderick 1979:f.37v) a crucial naval battle was fought between Godred and Somerled, his brother-in-law, which resulted in the the division of the Kingdom, the Mull and Islay groups of the Hebrides going to Somerled's son Dugald, whilst Godred retained the Lewis and Skye groups (W. Cubbon and Megaw 1942). Somerled, however, was not satisfied with this, and in 1158 (Broderick 1979:f.37v-38r) sailed to Man with a large fleet, defeated Godred and plundered the island. Godred fled from Man, and the Sudreys now appear to have come under the control of Somerled and his sons. In 1160, however, Godred is recorded as being confirmed as King of the Sudreys by King Inge, one of the three rulers of Norway, but stayed in that country until 1164, first fighting for King Inge and then transferring his allegiance to King Hakon II. During this period, Somerled and his sons raided the Hebrides, but on Somerled's death in 1164 and Godred's return, it would appear that the latter resumed his rule over the Kingdom less the Mull and Islay groups (Broderick 1979:f.39r-39v). Johnsen (1969:32) has argued that from this period, Godred received the Kingdom as a fief with an obligation to pay every new Norwegian king 10 gold marks to re-establish his right to the fief.

The 1170s saw the death of Svein Asleifson, who had continued to raid the Isles (Taylor 1927:341ff.), and also the conquering of Dublin and a greater part of Ireland by Richard, Earl of Pembroke and the subjection of Ulster by John de Courcy (Broderick 1979:f.39v). According to the Chronicle (Broderick 1979:f.40r), Godred died in 1187 on the island of St. Patrick. The following year his body was removed to Iona. Although nominating his son Olaf as successor, it was Reginald who became King of the Sudreys in 1188. It would appear that the relatively peaceful period after Godred's return continued until the end of the century (Broderick 1979:f.40v-41r). In 1205, however, King John of England took King Reginald, his lands and people under his protection, and Man appears to have become a protectorate of England, with Reginald receiving both land and money from King John. Young (1981:112) has postulated that this may have been a response to John de Courcy and Reginald's defeat by Walter de Lacy in Ulster in that year

(Broderick 1979:f.41r). Further problems arose for Reginald three years later. His brother Olaf, deprived of the kingship, had been given the Lewis group of islands, but by 1208 was dissatisfied with the portion of the Kingdom he had been given (Broderick 1979:f.41v-42r). For his troubles, Olaf was sent to King William I of Scotland and incarcerated there for seven years. Other problems, however, arose in the Hebrides. The Annals of Ulster (MacAirt and MacNiocaill 1983) record that in 1209 the 'MacSomerleds' fought a battle with the men of Skye (this may be the same battle as that referred to in the Chronicle in 1210 - Broderick 1979:f.41r), and at about the same time, it would appear that a Norwegian force came to the Hebrides and plundered Iona (Icelandic Annals - Anderson 1922:381-2). Johnsen (1969:23) noted that Boglunga Sogur recorded that the Hebridean expedition had been occasioned by the failure of Reginald and Godred to pay any taxes to Norway. However, there were greater problems for Man in 1210, King John of England subduing Ireland and sending an earl to Man, whose force devastated nearly the whole island and took hostages (Broderick 1979:f.41r-41v). Young (1981:114) has suggested that this attack could have been caused by the breaking of the alliance by Reginald and his re-alignment with Norway. Shortly after the raid, Reginald, and his son, went to Norway to pay homage to King Inge II and presumably to make peace by paying tribute. However, in 1212 Reginald declared hiself to be a liegeman of King John (Rotuli Chartarum - Johnsen 1969:24), indicating that his loyalty to Norway was short-lived. In 1214 Olaf, Reginald's younger brother, was released from his Scottish prison, was given the Lewis group of islands again, and went to live there (Broderick 1979:f.42r).

In 1216 King John died and was succeeded by King Henry III, who granted letters of safe-conduct to the King of the Isles to pay him homage in 1218 (Foedera - Johnsen 1969:25). It is not clear whether Reginald did go to England at that point, but he was clearly in London on 22nd September 1219 (Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum - Johnsen 1969:25) when he issued letters patent to Pope Honorius III, offering the Pope the Isle of Man. This was accepted, and the island was returned to Reginald in return for a payment of an annual tribute of 12 marks sterling to be paid to the Abbey of Furness. In this way, Man became a

vassal of, and tributary to, the Church of Rome. It would appear, however, that the King of Norway still regarded the Sudreys as being part of his dominions, and in 1220 Henry III notified his Justices in Ireland that they must protect Reginald against the Norwegian King. It would appear that at this time Reginald was a tributary of some form to England, Norway and Rome (Young 1981:116).

Reginald's troubles with Olaf were also not over (Broderick 1979:f.42v-44v). In 1224, Olaf arrived in Man with a fleet of 32 ships, having taken hostages from all the chiefs of the Isles, and Reginald was forced to divide the Kingdom between them. It is not clear which part Olaf took, but Reginald retained Man. Reginald was dissatisfied with this state of affairs and in 1225 tried, with the aid of Lord Alan of Galloway, to recover the islands given to Olaf. He was unsuccessful, and after deceiving the Manxmen over a matter of 100 marks, the latter sent for Olaf and made him King of the Isle of Man and the Hebridean islands. Two years later, 1228, Reginald was killed after attacking Man in an attempt to re-possess it. Olaf visited the King of Norway, with his nephew Godred Don, after the death of Reginald. Before their arrival, the King had appointed a nobleman as King over the Sodor Isles, and he returned with the two brothers to the Isles. Olaf did not, however, have to share the Kingdom for long, the Norwegian being killed on Bute and Godred being slain on Lewis. After Olaf recognised the suzerainty of Norway he, like Reginald, entered the service of King Henry III of England. This angered the Norwegian King who ordered Olaf to Norway. Olaf never reached Norway, however, dying on St. Patrick's Isle in 1237 (Broderick 1979:f.44v).

Olaf was succeeded by his son Harald. In 1238 (Broderick 1979:f.45v), the King of Norway sent Gospatrick and Gilchrist to dethrone Harald, as he had failed to present himself at the Norwegian court, hence refusing to ackowledge the King's overlordship. They took possession of Man and collected revenues for the King of Norway. Harald made attempts to retake Man but was forced to retire to the Hebrides. In 1239 (Broderick 1979:f.46r), he went to the King of Norway and stayed in the country for two years. At the end of this period, the King appointed him king over all the islands which had been held by

Godred, Reginald and Olaf, and confirmed the grant to him and his heirs. It is recorded that, having returned to Man, Harald had a peaceful reign. He entered into alliances with the Kings of England and Scotland, although in the case of the latter it would appear that envoys were sent to the Norwegian King to try to win back the Hebridean islands which had been taken by Somerled and his sons (the Mull-Islay group) (Young 1981:131). Alexander's envoys failed, but a great-grandson of Somerled, Eugene, succeeded in acquiring the Mull group of islands as a fief from the King of Norway. Harald's death came in c.1249, on a return journey from Norway with his new wife, King Hakon's daughter. He was succeeded by King Reginald IV, whom the Chronicle records (Broderick 1979:f.47r) had a very brief reign lasting little more than three weeks. It is unclear whether it was Reginald's death which lay behind King Alexander II of Scotland's attempt to subdue the Hebrides, but in the event this was never achieved, Alexander dying of fever on the island of Kerrera. The throne of Man was now seized by a usurper, Harald, son of Godred Don, who was summoned by the King of Norway in 1250 to account for his actions (Broderick 1979:f.47v-48r). In the same year, Magnus, youngest son of Olaf the Black, appeared in Man, with 'John, son of Dugald' - Eugene of Argyll, King of of the Mull group of islands. They were unsuccessful in their attempt to secure the island, and as well as being opposed by the Manxmen, also faced 'many of the men of the Isles' (see Young 1981:134). For some two years, King Henry III appears to have protected Man against Magnus, but in 1153 Magnus returned to Man and was elected King (Broderick 1979:f.49r). In 1254 Magnus's appointment as King of the Sudreys was confirmed by the King of Norway. Young (1981:136) has suggested that Magnus was not opposed by the Manxmen or by Henry because this time Eugene was not involved in the affair.

However, in 1261, King Alexander II's plans for the subjection of the Hebrides to Scotland were revived by his son, Alexander III (Eirspennill's Hakon Hakon's Son's Saga - Anderson 1922:601-2). Envoys were sent to Norway to negotiate with King Hakon Hakonsson but were unsuccessful. Attempts to take the islands then followed, and as a result King Hakon gathered together a fleet and made preparations for

an attack on Scotland. The fleet left Bergen in 1263 and called in at the Shetlands and Orkneys before preceding to the Sudreys, and joining the main Hebridean forces at Kerrera. With the arrival of the fleet at Arran, King Alexander sent envoys to negotiate with Hakon, and the principal mediator was Eugene. The negotiations were unsuccessful, and the Norwegian fleet moved to the Cumbraes near Largs. After the ensuing battle, and the death of King Hakon, King Magnus III, realising that any further resistance against the Scots was now useless, left the Hebrides and returned to Man. The year 1264 marked the end of Norse rule in Man, and the end of the Kingdom of the Sudreys. In 1265 Magnus died (Broderick 1979:f.49v). He was the last of the Kings, being succeeded by Scottish Bailiffs (Chronicle of Lanercost - Anderson 1922:657), although an unsuccessful attempt was made to place Godred, his son, on the Manx throne in 1275.

The submission of Magnus to King Alexander III at Dumfries was not legally the end of the Norse ties with the Sudreys. This came about on the 2nd July, 1266 with the Treaty of Perth (Broderick 1979:f.49v) under which King Magnus VI of Norway ceded Man and the rest of the Sudreys to King Alexander for four thousand marks sterling, together with an annual payment of one hundred marks sterling (Icelandic Annals - Anderson 1922:655). The Treaty also provided that Sudreyans who did not wish to remain in the islands under the new regime could leave.

3.2. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

A. HOUSE SITES (a summary of the detailed discussion in Appendix 1: see Figs.6-27).

There are only two excavated house-sites which can definitely be dated to the Norse period in the Isles: the Udal in North Uist and Drimore in South Uist (the research of Lane (1983) suggests that there are many more sites in the Hebrides which may produce important settlement evidence). The dating of the sites is based on structural and artefactual evidence. On Man, the artefacts are absent and dating has consequently rested entirely on the former. In spite of this, Wilson (1974:12) described the Manx house sites as 'the most important and most continuous body of evidence concerning the Norse period' and considered it before the other 'much more fragmentary evidence'. Such

statements suggest a densely settled island with a rich body of conclusive evidence of specifically Norse settlement. In reality, the evidence is anything but continuous and in many cases is more aptly described as spurious.

The problems in using the structural evidence for dating purposes are emphasised by Gelling's attempts to create a chronology for the coastal sites. It is also clear, for example, from the discussion on the Doarlish Cashen building (Appendix 1) that such small sod structures continued to be built long after the Norse period, and the existence of a rectangular structure at Kiondroghad suggests that this form may also pre-date the Norse period on Man. The Braaid site has been decribed as the 'most important settlement of the Norse period so far identified in the Isle of Man (Wilson 1974:12) and as a 'fine house' belonging to 'some notability' (Gelling 1964:204). The problems surrounding the interpretation of the structures at this site are, however, numerous and the such statements cannot be upheld on the basis of the available evidence. There are serious doubts concerning the interpretation of all the inland sites: the Braaid, Doarlish Cashen and Ballagawne. The structural evidence from the coastal sites, with the exception of Close ny Chollagh, is more convincing, but there is the question of whether these sites were permanent settlement sites or temporary, defence-related structures. The lack of occupation material, together with the size and location of the structures would appear to favour the latter, but it has been argued by both Gelling (1955:56) and Wilson (1974:16) that they were occupied on a permanent basis.

The most important aspect of the house-site evidence, in the context of this research, concerns the site of Doarlish Cashen, lying at a height of 213m (700') a.s.l.. If it is indeed Norse, and Cubbon (1983:13) is correct in stating that 'the late-comers could do little more than establish small landholdings in the marginal uplands', then there are important implications for the use of the upland pastures in Man. Ignoring this site, the evidence would tend to support the view of settlement at the upper end of the social scale - the castles, the quarterland farms, the Braaid site (if it can be included) and the coastal sites, if they are regarded as defence-related structures. The

evidence of the graves, hoards and sculpture (see below) might also be used to support this view.

B. PAGAN GRAVES (see Appendix 2 for detailed discussion of form and contents: Fig.27).

The excavated Norse burial mounds on Man have traditionally been dated to the period c.A.D.850-950 on the basis of artefact typology (Bersu and Wilson 1966:87), with emphasis being placed on the ninth century. In the Isles, burials have been generally assigned a ninth/early tenth century date (Crawford 1987a:118-121). The dating of the pagan graves of Peel Castle, however, to the early-mid tenth century (Graham-Campbell forthcoming), on the basis of coin and artefactual evidence, suggests that the Manx accompanied graves may also belong to a later period. This has serious implications for the Norse settlement history of Man, suggesting that permanent settlement may not have taken place until the end of the ninth, or early tenth century, thus aligning it with the beginnings of Scandinavian settlement in North-West England rather than with the Norse bases in Ireland (Graham-Campbell forthcoming).

Crawford (1975:16;1987a:116) noted that the grave distribution 'conforms in general to the distribution of Scandinavian place-names, which define the limit of settlement far more exactly'. Reference to Figures 31, 32 and 33 (Nicolaisen 1976b:84-96), shows that at least in the southern part of the Hebrides, the grave distribution conforms more with that for the element *bólstaðr* than with *staðr* and *setr*, thus with Norse '..settlement..at its most extensive and Norse power at its height', rather than with the initial stages. If, however, the chronological theory is rejected in favour of a model which sees the names as indicating development and different types of settlement, with *bólstaðr* representing a higher status farm and the others representing secondary establishments, then the similar distributions are explained. This does not, however, apply to Man, which has a profusion of graves, but lacks names containing these elements. This can be explained by the fact that many of the primary farms are likely to have received topographical names (L. Macgregor 1986b:86), a situation also likely in the Isles.

Crawford (1987a:118) also suggested that the graves were indicative of settlement at least when found in sufficient number. She correctly stressed the chance nature of the survival and discovery of graves and that there are problems in distinguishing, in some cases, between graves and sites of stray finds. The conclusion that graves in 'sufficient number' indicate settlement is problematic, it being extremely difficult, if not impossible, to decide what this constitutes, particularly when the number of graves in respective areas is so small. If, for example, the number ten is selected, then only Man would appear to have been permanently settled, unless Colonsay and Oronsay are regarded as a single unit. If, instead, six graves are required, then Man, Colonsay/ Oronsay and Islay could be described as settled. Lowering the requirement to three, Man, Islay, Colonsay, Oronsay, Eigg and Barra would fulfil the criteria. The indications here concerning permanence do not support Eldjarn's conclusion (1984:8) that the graves on Colonsay and Oronsay, for example, cannot be 'attributed to people who intended to stay in these small unassuming islands.' Such islands are not worthless agriculturally, could be acquired and defended with greater ease than larger islands, and would perhaps have been the domain of just one or two family units.

There are two possible ways forward. First, to determine the number of graves which appear to be associated with settlement remains of the Norse period, and second to determine the number of graves which are those of women, it being argued that their presence is indicative of more permanent settlement (Crawford 1987a:121-122). Only six of the grave finds would appear to be associated with possible settlement sites. None of those on Man, nor those at the Udal and Drimore, have produced grave evidence. The association of a grave with settlement remains at Machrins, Colonsay, appears significant, but although the long bones of the skeleton have been dated by carbon fourteen dating to a.d. 780+/-70 and the grave was Norse in character, the nature of the excavated structure would appear to argue against an association, the plan and building technique suggesting native traditions (J. Ritchie 1981:269). Excavated Norse grave and structural evidence has been found on St. Patrick's Isle, Peel, on Man, but it is not clear whether there

is structural evidence earlier than the twelfth century (Freke 1983:7). Survey work at Kneep, Lewis; Cornaig, Tiree, and on Ensay, Sound of Harris has also produced potentially significant evidence (Lane 1983:341 and Appendix 1). Two female burials have been discovered in the Valtos area of Lewis (Macleod 1916:181-9; Welander *et al* 1987:149-174), as well as bone and copper-alloy pins and probable Norse pottery from sites on or near Kneep Headland, suggesting Viking activity (Lane 1983:324). Amongst material from Cornaig, Tiree, gathered in surface collections, Lane (1983:306) identified Norse period pottery, and an eroding sand hill beneath the present wall of the graveyard on Ensay has also produced diagnostic pottery (Lane 1983:313-4). Excavations on St Kilda in 1988 produced steatite fragments, including a small spindle-whorl, suggesting the presence of a possible settlement site there also (Emery 1989:16-7).

Turning to female graves, these have been found in Man (Fig.28), Islay, Colonsay, Oronsay, Mull (?), Tiree (?), Barra, St. Kilda, Lewis and the Sound of Harris: on ten of the eighteen islands possessing pagan graves. A concentration again south of Ardnamurchan should be noted, namely on Colonsay, Oronsay and Islay, and brings into question the validity of Eldjarn's conclusions concerning these islands (see Appendix 2; Eldjarn 1984:8). The fairly equal numbers of male and female graves in the Isles is not mirrored on Man. If the presence of female graves is taken as an indication of settlement of a more permanent nature, then the situation on Man would appear to have been rather different from that on the other islands in the period represented by the graves. The remains of two females, other than the one discovered at St. Patrick's Isle, have been found at Ballateare and Balladoole (Bersu and Wilson 1966:90-1), but it is clear that their presence is indicative of secondary status and it would appear that they fulfilled a distinctive role in the burial ritual. Clearly, these should not be placed in the same context as the other female graves.

C. SCULPTURE (a summary of the detailed discussion in Appendix 3).

Although crosses of the Norse period are found are found in both the Hebrides and Man, the majority are found on the latter. These have been dated to the period 930-1010/1020, and have been found in each

parish except Arbory. The erection and carving of memorial stones was a monastic tradition adopted and embellished by the Norsemen. Traditionally, Gautr has been regarded as the first sculptor on Man. He had possible connections with the Hebrides. The main ornament on the crosses assigned to Gautr's workshop is the Borre ring-chain, and the presence of such a design on the Kilbar stone on Barra, suggests a link with the Outer Hebrides. Besides the Borre style, elements of the Mammen, Jelling and Ringerike styles have been identified in the ornamental decoration of the crosses. The iconography on many of the memorial crosses suggests that pagan mythology and Christian doctrine were given equal prominence, and that, in some cases, they were variations on the same theme. Other scenes on the crosses may represent activities in which those being commemorated took part, rather than mythological stories. Links with Norway, Cumbria, York and Ireland have been noted, in particular for the decoration and iconography of the crosses, but, on the whole, the development of Manx sculpture seems to have been an insular one.

Many of the crosses bear runic inscriptions as well as ornamentation. These cover the period from the tenth century to the twelfth. A general memorial formula has been recognised, similar to that used in Norway. A significant difference, however, is the use of the word 'cross' in preference to 'stone' on the Manx and Hebridean stones. The use of certain punctuation marks and the cutting of the runes, generally, from the base upwards, on the thin edge of the crosses, can also be paralleled in Scandinavia. People with both Norse and Celtic names are commemorated in the crosses, demonstrating that the stones were being erected by a mixed Norse-Gaelic population. The grammatical imprecision on even the early crosses suggests that it was possibly Norse-Gaelic speakers who were using Old Norse on the crosses. This might be used as an argument to indicate that contact between the two cultures had existed for some time.

The pagan graves have been traditionally been assigned a date early in the range 850-950, and the sculpture has been regarded as belonging to the period of the Christianising of the Norsemen. The re-dating of the graves, however, suggests that some of the sculpture may have been

contemporary, and it can be postulated that it represents different taste, status or background. The popularity of the sculptured and inscribed memorials was a short-lived one, and the author has postulated that wealthy land-owners may perhaps have decided to invest their wealth in other, more prestigious and lasting monuments, for example, Christian chapels.

D. HOARDS (a summary of the detailed discussion in Appendix 3: Figs. 29,30).

Silver hoards of the Norse period have been found in Ireland, Scotland and Man, and contain not only coins but also ring-money, ingots and ornaments. The ring-money has been described as a 'Scoto-Viking' Viking phenomemon of the period c.925-975, and its presence in Scotland has suggested the operation of a coinless economy in this area. Its presence on Man points to its probable acceptability here for trading purposes. The deposition charts for the three areas are very similar, but there are important differences. The absence of hoards on Man pre-960 has been explained in terms of a policy of the low-profile, or non-interference, by the first settlers, who were more concerned with their land-holdings. It is suggested by the author that the hoard evidence, or lack of it, may point to the arrival of the Norse settlers in Man in the first half of the tenth century, rather than in the ninth, and the grave evidence would appear to support this conclusion. In the 970s, the number of hoards in Ireland, Scotland and Man reaches its peak. It has been suggested that this is not only a reflection of the increased wealth being generated in Dublin, but is linked with the events leading up to the battle of Tara in 980, and the activities of Sigurd the Stout in Hebridean waters. The problems associated with linking hoards and specific events, however, should be borne in mind, particularly in the light of the lack of hoards in the decade before the battle of Clontarf. It appears significant that the deposition of Hebridean hoards with coins appears to end at this time. The next phase in the hoard distribution begins, and ends, in the 1020s in Scotland, and begins in the 1030s in Man and Ireland. This decade in Man witnesses the minting of the Hiberno-Manx coinage, probably in the north of the island. Its appearance has been explained in terms of a

dynastic take-over from Dublin, and Man is seen as an off-shoot of Ireland, rather than the southernmost island of the Hebrides. The absence of Hiberno-Norse and Hiberno-Manx coins from Scottish hoards suggests that the area in which they were acceptable had diminished, that the Isles were now regarded as peripheral, and that they were largely self-sufficient. With the take-over of Man by Godred Crovan in 1079, it would seem that Man also followed this path, whilst Dublin continued to flourish.

3.3 THE LINGUISTIC AND ONOMASTIC EVIDENCE

A. THE LANGUAGES

MANX GAELIC - the vernacular of Man in the later middle ages and down to modern times. There are no mediaeval documents in this language. The record of it can be traced back as far as the sixteenth century, to 'The Manx Traditionary Ballad', probably composed at that time, but more definitely to the early seventeenth century translation of the Book of Common Prayer. It is more closely related to Scottish Gaelic, than to Irish.

SCOTTISH GAELIC - the oldest documents in the Gaelic of Scotland are the notitiae in the Book of Deer, written in the language of the upper classes. The literary language of both Scotland and Ireland was, until the seventeenth century, an archaic form of Common Gaelic, referred to as Classical Common Gaelic by Jackson (1951:75-6). There is nothing written in what is denoted by 'Scottish Gaelic' surviving from a time earlier than the beginning of the sixteenth century. In both this case, and that of Manx Gaelic, theories on the development of the languages in the mediaeval period are based upon inference.

COMMON GAELIC (Jackson 1951:71-97) - the name given to the immediate Celtic ancestor of modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic. Jackson accepted the theory that Common Gaelic and the Gaelic culture were introduced into Scotland by the Dalriadic colony from Ireland, but felt that the divergence into Scottish and Irish Gaelic did not take place at this time. He argued, rather, that the two remained a single language until at least the tenth century, and in most respects until the thirteenth. The reason for this persistence, he argued, was the fact that Ireland and the Highlands formed 'a single cultural

province', the 'sea-divided Gael' being linked closely by language, traditions, customs, inter-marriage, and their aristocratic social system, which was responsible for the survival of Classical Common Gaelic. He suggested that it was not until the end of this old order, in the seventeenth century, that the two areas began to follow separate paths, producing literature in the now divergent dialects. He thought it likely that the Manx language was brought to Man in or about the fourth century, by settlers from Ireland, who were also moving into Scotland and parts of Wales and Cornwall at this time. Rather than being an independent Goidelic language, Manx was very close to mediaeval Irish and to Scottish Gaelic. Jackson, however, did distinguish between a Western and Eastern Gaelic, namely Irish and Scottish-Manx. He explained this distinction in terms of the historical connections between Man and the Hebrides during the mediaeval period, and suggested that there was not a severance of the two until the thirteenth century, thus in the post-Norse period. The period of the tenth to the thirteenth century was the crucial one in the creation of Eastern Gaelic, and there were new phonetic developments in one part of the cultural area, which did not fully penetrate the other. After the thirteenth century, a large number of changes can be identified in Western Gaelic which do not appear in Eastern, and subsequently neither of the languages shared innovations unless by coincidence. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, possibly later, Scottish Gaelic and Manx continued to develop as one language, but it is likely that by the fifteenth century they had become separated. There is evidence in the sixteenth century that this division had occurred.

NORSE - it is generally assumed that the majority of settlers in the Kingdom were Norwegians. Marstrander (1932:340) concluded that the Manx place-names indicated close links with the Northern and Western Isles, the Faroe Islands and with the south-west Norwegian dialects of Agder and Jaren. Nicolaisen (1980a:108) has indicated that the place-names of the Northern and Western Isles point in particular to the coastal districts north of Bergen (Sogn and Fjørdane) and south of Trondheim (Møre and South Trøndelag.) There is only one feature of the place-names, occurring in Man, which suggests Danish influence, and

that is the existence of the group of names in *-by* (see below).

Surviving Norse names on Man are numerous, and their distribution is widespread throughout the island. There is no evidence suggesting limited distributions, for example along the coast or around important administrative centres. Norse names are found in all of the Hebridean islands, although the density of names varies from one island to another. The overall distribution points to a high density of names in the north of the island group, gradually falling off to the south, for example, the incidence of place-names decreases from a 'very large percentage in Skye to a rather low one in Arran' (Oftedal 1953:107). It has often been stated that 4 out of 5 place-names in Lewis are of Norse origin, whilst the ratio of Norse to non-Norse names on Islay and Arran are 1:3 and 1:8 respectively (see Oftedal 1962:117). Although these are only rough estimates, Oftedal (1954) demonstrated that in the case of Lewis, 99 out of 126 village names are of purely Norse origin. Variations in the density of surviving Norse names have been explained in terms of the cultural spheres in which the islands existed (Crawford 1987a:97). Thus, the greater density of Norse names in the island of Skye, within reach of Lewis, and the paucity of names in Arran, lying close to well-populated areas of Gaelic-speaking Scotland. However, Fraser (1984:40) is correct in emphasising that the inherent conservative nature of a community as regards customs, life-style and language would mean that they would be more resistant to change. Bearing this in mind, the persistence of Norse names on Lewis is to be expected, the island maintaining its links with Man post-1156 but losing touch with the southern Hebrides, and becoming increasingly isolated after 1266 when the Kingdom was ceded to Scotland.

However, a study of the situation on Man suggests that the question may not be so easily solved. Megaw (1978:290) pointed out that there was conclusive evidence on Man for the use of four languages - British, Irish, English, and the churchman's Latin - between the fifth and the eighth centuries. He suggested that Norse would also have been assimilated without any problems. This apparent openess of Man argues against deep-rooted conservatism, and this, together with the proximity of the island to well-populated Gaelic-speaking areas, would suggest

that Man, as the most southerly island of the Isles, ought to fit in with the Norse place-name distribution pattern for the southern islands. This is not the case. Two-thirds of the names of important farms, for example, were still Norse in the sixteenth century (Marstrander 1934:287), and even a quick glance at the names of the administrative divisions, points to the survival of Norse, and a conservatism similar to that in the northern Hebrides. The isolation of Lewis post 1266 was mentioned above. Although the situation in Man was different because of its location in the Irish Sea rather than on the Atlantic fringe of Britain, the end of the period of Norse domination and the role of Man in this, must have created a feeling of isolation and independence. Given this scenario, the conservatism as far as names and administration are concerned is to be expected. It is difficult to imagine the survival of the Norse language, however, in the face of the termination of political control, the severance of Man from other strong Norse-speaking areas, and its increasing subjection to the influence of both Gaelic and English. The survival of a considerable Gaelic population and widespread bilingualism, would have aided the demise of Norse, and the language of contact outside Man at a level lower than administrative, would now have been Gaelic. In the context of continuing contact with Gaelic-speaking areas, strong links between Man and the south-west of Scotland can be understood (see M. Gelling below). Such an explanation would account for the difference between Man and Lewis, where Gaelic survival during the Norse period, on any great scale, was much less likely, and which did not come under the strong influence of Gaelic immediately after 1266 because of its geographical position.

B. NORSE ASCENDANCY?: THE MANX DEBATE

M. Gelling (1970:134) argued that the shortage of documentary sources on Man has been over-emphasised and that existing material has been neglected. She noted that 23 names were recorded before 1300, and some 50 between 1300 and 1400. Potential early sources of place-name spelling for the first period are: the Charter of Olaf II to Whithorn Priory; the Papal Bull of 1231; the Coucher Book of Furness Abbey; the Register of the Priory of St.Bees; the Chronicle of Man and the Isles

(1970:134-7). Gelling questioned the use of the first two documents as twelfth and thirteenth century sources, suggesting that the recorded names were of sixteenth century date. Of the remaining 23 names, she (1970:137) identified only Douglas (Dufglas) and Rushen (Russin) as being Celtic, or pre-Norse, thus dispelling the theory that Manx Gaelic place-names were of 'immemorial antiquity' (1978b:251). Clearly, on the basis of these documents, there was a dominance of Old Norse names in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and this suggested the virtual disappearance of Gaelic during the period of Norse rule. Gelling felt that this dominance was such that it indicated Norse influence at all levels of society, rather than demonstrating the use of Norse as the language of politics and administration. She argued (1970:137-8) that had there been names of varying linguistic origin on Man, this would have been apparent in the documents. She also rejected the possibility that Norse names had Gaelic equivalents, on the grounds that there was no evidence in the records, and that Norse names did survive and were still in use. This survival could only have been ensured by current usage. Megaw (1978:274), considering this point, indicated a number of Norse names for which vernacular equivalents existed. However, it cannot be proved that these date back to the Norse period.

Gelling (1971) considered the evidence of the Limites separately, working on the assumption that the subsequently re-dated document had a date of c.1370. There are three sets of boundaries: between the land of the king and the monks of Rushen; between the land of kyrkecrist and the monks of Myrosco, and one in around modern Skinscoe, north of Laxey. Gelling (1971:172) concluded that Old Norse was a living language in Man in the third quarter of the fourteenth century, and that Norse place-names, except in the north, were still in a majority. This suggested that even after the cession of Man in 1266, the social structure remained, on the whole, stable, with the Norse ruling class continuing to dominate politically and linguistically. The displacement of Old Norse by Gaelic must, thus, have taken place in the period between the date of the Limites and the translation of the Book of Common Prayer, c.1625 (1971:174). Having argued that Old Norse was responsible for the virtual extinction of Gaelic on Man, Gelling had to

explain the appearance of Gaelic names in terms of immigration by Gaelic speakers from south-west Scotland. The re-dating of the Limites by Megaw (1978:271) to c.1280, meant that Gelling's conclusions now applied to the end of the thirteenth century, thus at the 'close of the Norse regime' (Megaw 1978:271), and this meant that the 46/48 names (Appendix 4) mentioned in it, could be added to the above 23.

Most of the names fall into the categories of Norse or Gaelic. The precise nature of the Norse names, that is the lack of changes that might have been expected had Old Norse ceased to be spoken, suggested to Marstrander (1932:338) that Old Norse was still in current use when the boundaries were written down. Gelling (1971:172) considered the Gaelic names to be recent formations rather than being pre-Norse. In the first set of bounds (Appendix 4) Norse names predominate. This is also the case in the third set, but the second set, in the north of the island, provides a contrast. Myrosco, the Norse name for the Curraghs, was gifted for the foundation of a monastery in 1176 (Broderick 1979:f.40r). In this set, Gaelic names are predominant. Gelling suggested that this indicated that the Gaelic resurgence possibly gathered most pace in the north of Man. Megaw (1978:272-3) explained it, however, in terms of the way in which the boundaries were recorded. He contrasted the number of names which seemed to be principal settlement names with that for the other bounds: 2 out of 14 in the case of Myrosco and 15 out of 21 in the others. For Myrosco, it appeared that the boundary was being defined by topographical features. Using Megaw's name lists, it can be observed (Appendix 4) that this is a valid conclusion. An absence of estates might be expected in this less favourable area of the north, and the recorder of the boundary would be forced into using topographical names, many of these minor ones. Examples include the glen, lake and rock, which have Gaelic names. It should be noted, however, that the larger features, such as the wood at Myrosco, and the rivers Bryseth and Sulaby have Norse names. Thus, naming in the north, as recorded in the Limites, was clearly different from that in the south. Possible reasons for this were either the resurgence of Gaelic in the north, or that the scribe was recording 'local names used by the country-folk' in the absence of

estate names (Megaw 1978:272). The latter points to a linguistic stratification, favoured both by Megaw (1978:273) and R. Thomson (1983).

Thomson approached the question of Gaelic survival by examining the morphology, vocabulary and syntax of Manx for indications that it was rooted in Common Gaelic rather than being an offshoot of Scottish Gaelic. He (1983:171-3) felt that there was a little evidence of some Old or Middle Irish features in the morphology and vocabulary not surviving in Scottish Gaelic. A study of surnames prefixed O- or Mac-, common to Man and Ireland, accorded with this, and pointed to links particularly with Ulster. Thomson believed that there seemed little to suggest that Manx could not be the direct descendant of a Gaelic brought to the island from Ireland during the sixth to eighth centuries, and adopted by the indigenous Brythonic-speaking population (a series of ogam-inscribed stones testifying to their presence). A connection with Ireland and Scotland was probably maintained during this period, and is quite likely to have continued after the settlement on the island of a Norse population. The Norse speakers probably became bilingual in the tenth to thirteenth centuries, and the decline of Norse was irrevocably brought about in 1266. The language of government and administration after this was first Latin and then English. He felt (1984:145) that it was now reasonably clear that there was neither a large-scale emigration of Norse-speakers, nor immigration of a Gaelic-spaeking population, in the second half of the thirteenth century. The existence of institutions such as Tynwald and the sheadings (see Chapter 4), together with their administrators, and the survival of names in the fifteenth century, when the Stanleys took possession of Man, suggested an underlying continuity. Thomson (1983:173) suggested that the impoverishment of the Manx language, and the continuation of a large number of anglicised Norse place-names, indicated a division of the population into an upper and lower class. The former were likely to have been of Norse origin, but married to Gaels, and consequently bilingual. It seems, however, that Norse was preferred as far as name-giving was concerned, and for external contact. The latter comprised people who spoke a purer Gaelic, and were

of tenant or peasant status. It is likely that although the very upper echelons of society experienced removal and change during the century and a half after 1266, the lower sections remained stable. Thus, Manx was retained as a peasant language.

Also of importance in the consideration of the Norse-Gaelic relationship are the inversion compounds, Norse names using Gaelic word-order. Gelling (1971:172-3) noted that, apart from certain parish names, for example Kirk Michael, Old Norse inversion compounds were rare. Examples do, however, occur in the Limites: Crosyuor, 'Ifar's cross'; Kyrkemychel; Kyrkecrist (modern Kirk Christ Lezayre); and Tofthar Asmund. This last name appears in a number of other charters:

Asmundertoftes - 1154-61, 1188-1226

Asmundertoft(es) - 1302

Hasmundertoft - c.1321

Gelling suggested that the series of spellings indicated that the name was originally a normal Old Norse compound with the meaning 'Asmundr's tofts', and that the order of the elements was not affected until the fourteenth century. However, the re-dating of the Limites to c.1280 suggests that there was a deviation, with the original word order being resumed in the fourteenth century. Megaw (1978:273) has explained this by assuming that the fourteenth century instances represent copying of the names recorded in the original twelfth century grants. Gelling (1971:173) concluded that inversion compounds did not occur on Man until after the period of Norse rule, and suggested that the names of religious significance perhaps reflected contact with south-west Scotland post-1266. Megaw (1978:274) has pointed out, in connection with these names, that the parish churches all had vernacular Gaelic forms. He suggested that the *Kirk* names might perhaps represent anglicised Gaelic names in which the Norse loanword *kirk-*, borrowed into Middle English, replaced Gaelic *cill-*.

Also on this question of the re-introduction of Gaelic from south-west Scotland, Megaw (1978:272) referred to the evidence of the sheading court roll of 1417-18 and the lord's rent-books of 1511-1515. In both sources, the proportions of Gaelic and Norse place-names are roughly the same as those in the thirteenth century, suggesting that

the names recorded had been long-established. He (1978:276) also pointed to the negative evidence of the absence of names especially in *achadh-* 'field', and also terms such as *blar* and *clachan*, all in use in south west Scotland at this time. The latter suggested that a resurgence of Gaelic in Man from this area was unlikely, and the former questioned whether a re-colonisation ever occurred.

Evidence of potential pre-Norse Gaelic names in Man and the Isles

The twelfth and thirteenth documentary sources on Man contained only two possible pre-Norse, Gaelic, names: Douglas and Rushen (Gelling 1970:137). In his studies of Scottish names, Nicolaisen (1965; 1986:39-46,122) isolated the Gaelic word *sliabh*, 'hill, mountain', as an early element on the basis of its geographical distribution, not only in areas of Dalriadic settlement, but also in Galloway, with a particularly dense cluster in the Rinns. The presence of the names in this area suggested another early Irish colony besides Scottish Dalriada and the Isle of Man. Another Gaelic generic with a similar distribution, and perhaps also of the same antiquity, was *carraig*, 'rock, cliff'. Names in *Kil-* could also be added to this list (Nicolaisen 1976b:130). In Man, there are names containing all three of these elements. Gelling (1978:255), however, has argued that the names containing *sliabh* and *carrick* could have come to Man at a much later date from the south-west of Scotland, thus in the post-Norse period. She suggested that these Western Gaelic elements may have been more suitable for the description of the Manx hills than the usual Eastern Gaelic term *beinn*. Megaw (1978:275) accepted that the above elements were pre-Viking.

The other names which require consideration in this context are those in Gaelic *baile-*. The element, as a generic, is common throughout the areas where Gaelic has been spoken, therefore in Ireland, Scotland, Man and possibly parts of north-west England (Andersen 1983:149), and is indicative of permanent Gaelic settlement. On Man, names containing this element, in the form *balla-*, dominate the modern settlement nomenclature. As far as dating is concerned, Nicolaisen (1976b:135) concluded that *baile*-names could be seen in the context of increasing Gaelic-speaking settlement in certain areas of Scotland from the tenth

to the twelfth centuries. The paucity of names in areas with settlement nomenclatures betraying Norse domination, such as Lewis, indicated that the element 'flourished in a linguistic environment in which Gaelic was preceded by Pictish and succeeded by Lowland Scots' (Nicolaisen 1976b:138). This could indicate that many of the *baile*-names in the Isles and Man were post-Norse formations: only a few names incorporate Norse words, most being entirely Gaelic. Nicolaisen (1976b:139) believed that it was impossible to determine the chronological relationship of these names to the Norse period. In Ireland, Price (1963:119) found no evidence to suggest that *baile*-names were older than the mid-twelfth century. However, Gelling (1978:254) indicated that there were scholars who did not accept Price's late dating. Price (1963:120) concluded that the early meaning of the word was 'piece of land', and referred to the territory of a small tribal or family group (1963:122). It appears that this was the usual sense up to the end of the twelfth century, after which it was combined with the name of a person and denoted the manor of a feudal tenant, or an individual farmstead. By the fourteenth century, it had also come to mean 'town'.

The presence of *balla*-names in the Manx Manorial Roll of 1511 would suggest that many are to be dated to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Gelling 1970:132). A study of surnames associated with the element indicates that some were English or Anglo-Norman, and would not have been current in Man before the fourteenth century. Although assigning a late date to most of the *balla*-names, Gelling indicated that those names particularly with a topographical settlement element, rather than a surname, may have been coined during the Norse period. Two names occur in the Limites: Balesalazc, 'willow farm', and Baligil, 'Gille's farm'; and Balicurry, 'marsh farm', appears in the Patent Roll of 1315. Andersen (1983:154) argued that a large number of the *balla*-names replaced Norse settlement names, and that in some case these units represented by the replacements may have been primary Norse settlements. This process would have occurred possibly post-1150 (1983:167).

C. NORSE SETTLEMENT TOPONOMY (Figs.31-34)

It would appear that the first settlements to be established in the

Isles were given topographical names, which would originally have described their sites, rather than primary habitative names (Fellows Jensen 1983:40; 1984; see also Macgegor. 1986 and Gelling 1978:118,123,126). However, as far as settlement history is concerned, these names are impossible to date, it being possible that they were coined at any time during which Norse was spoken in the islands. Examining the dating question in Orkney, Hugh Marwick (1952) identified a number of key words: *kví*, *setr*, *land*, *gárðr*, *bólstaðr*, *staðir*, *skáli*, *bú* and *býr*. He concluded that: the *býr* names were the earliest and probably represented the original settlements; the *land-*, *gárðr-* and *bólstaðr-* names probably arose before the ninth century and some possibly dated to the first settlement phase; the *setr*-names were slightly later, although some were probably given pre-900, and the *kví*-names were relatively late, and were not likely to have been given before 900. In his study of the distribution of Scandinavian settlement names generally in Scotland, Nicolaisen (1969b; 1976b; 1980a) rejected most of these elements, leaving *staðir*, *setr* and *bólstaðr*. Plotting the names, he saw a pattern emerging (1980a; 1976b). He concluded that: the *staðir* distribution represented 'the extent of Scandinavian settlement within the first generation or two of settlers from Norway'; the *setr* names indicated consolidation and greater population density in the areas settled in the *staðir* period, and represented further expansion in the northernmost part of the Scottish mainland, and the *bólstaðr* distribution was the 'map of Norse settlement in the Northern and Western Isles and on the adjacent mainland, when such settlement was at its most extensive and Norse power at its height'.

Staðir (see Fig.31) is the nominative plural of Norse *staðr*, generally translated as 'dwelling-place, farm' (Nicolaisen 1976b:87). Fenton (1978b:28) suggested that the use of the plural could indicate nucleated farm settlements. Fellows Jensen (1983:40; 1984:157), however, quoted Lars Hellberg's conclusion that the generic originally had a topographical significance and denoted 'fields in meadowland'. This interpretation fits well with the location evidence in both the north of Man and the West Mainland of Orkney. Fellows Jensen (1983:42; 1984:158) felt that this explanation was too restrictive, and suggested

that Olsen's (1928:83-94) interpretation of Norwegian *staðir* farms, as small settlement units detached from an old estate centre, may be a more appropriate description of those in the Northern and Western Isles. She postulated also that the *staðir* farms may have been similar to those in Iceland, but here there were no pre-existing estates from which small units could have been detached: it is likely that they represent secondary settlements originally dependent upon an old farm with a topographical name (1984:158). Examining the Orkney evidence, she (1984:158-9) found that in the area of Mainland where *staðirs* are most frequent, they have an inland rather than coastal distribution. This is not the case with the Hebridean examples, which have coastal positions similar to those of other settlements. The use of personal names as the specifics in many of the farm names does, however, suggest secondary status. L. Macgregor's (1986b:92-4) examination of farms with *staðir* names in Shetland demonstrated that they were clearly secondary in character: they were located on good land and attained high status, but were secondary when compared with the farms with topographical names. She suggested that they were used of a particular type of secondary settlement, one which was colonised after the most favourable coastal sites had already been settled and before it was necessary to establish farms on marginal land. Clearly, from this discussion, it cannot be argued that the *staðir* distribution represents the primary settlement phase, but it is likely to have been the first phase of settlement expansion. Fellows Jensen (1983:42) concluded that the element served the same function in Man and the Isles as *-bý* did in the Scandinavian colonies in England, and postulated that they date to a period soon after the primary farms were established, or the settlers took over existing estates.

There are two possible origins for *setr* (see Fig.32) - *setr* meaning 'dwelling' and *sæ̂tr* 'shieling' (Nicolaisen 1976b:91). In Norway it has been argued that both originally denoted shielings or outfields, the farms lying on the outskirts of areas of cultivation and appearing as fairly young secondary settlements, representing a stage in the development of the exploitation of mountain areas (see Fellows Jensen 1984:161). It is possible that in certain areas of Norway, the word was

used so frequently that the term came to denote a particular type of settlement and was, hence, unsuitable for use in shieling names. It is suggested that the word *sǽtr* may have taken over the function of the word *setr*. In the Isles, lacking early documentary sources, it is virtually impossible to distinguish between the two words. Macgregor (1986:97-8) has found, however, that all but one of the documented *setter* names in Shetland have their origins in *sǽtr*, and their location bears out an origin as shielings. The number of names suggested that the element remained productive for a long period of time, and that they represented a significant phase of expansion. This indicates that the appearance of the element in the Isles cannnot be used to determine the date at which particular settlements were established, but that its presence and absence on certain islands reflects the existence of certain types of settlement, possibly related to a particular activity (see Part 3). In Skye, for example, the names can be explained in terms of internal expansion rather than an extension of Norse settlement southwards (Small 1976:33-4). Their distribution suggests that the farms were secondary to those with topographical names, those in *-staðir* and in *-bólstaðr*.

In Norway *bólstaðr* (see Fig.33) would appear to have been used of a farm with a special significance related to the location of its lands or its tax potential (Olsen 1928:47-8). The first element is from Old Norse *ból*, a 'lot, portion', and it has been suggested that it was probably a divsion of the homefield (Olsen 1926:56). Fellows Jensen (1984:160) described it as 'a small farm, possibly a division of a larger unit'. Nicolaisen (1976b:92-3) questioned, however, whether it indicated division in the new colonies, and suggested that it merely meant 'farm'. Examination of the Orkney and Shetland evidence suggests that the farms should be seen in terms of the division of older, bigger units. In Orkney, the location and valuation of the farms indicates that they were large and well-established at an early period (Marwick 1952:233). In Shetland, they tend to have a particular location relative to an earlier primary farm, and this together with the naming pattern (the range of specifics is very limited) suggested to Macgregor (1986:95) that the element referred to farms established on cultivated

fields. In the Hebrides there are more *bólstaðr* names that there are in the whole of Norway: the greatest densities are in Skye and The Oa, Islay, where they are often found in groups of two or three. The majority of specifics are topographical appellatives. In Skye, rather than seeing the appearance of the names as the third stage of Norse settlement expansion (Small 1976:35), they are evidence of consolidation largely in the favourable northern areas. A similar development can be suggested for Islay (c.f conclusions drawn by Nieke 1983). On Man, there is a single doubtful example, Bravost. Fellows Jensen (1983:38) suggested that the lack of such names may reflect the fact that the element normally denoted a small farm or the division of a larger unit, in which case the chance of survival of the name may not have been too high. Alternatively, she suggested that the element was not suitable for the kind of settlement that was established on the island, which is a more likely explanation given the numbers of names to be found in the Isles.

The *baer* and *býr* names (Fig.34).

Nicolaisen omitted these names from his distribution studies despite the fact that the element was important and long-lived outside the Northern and Western Isles. The element occurs frequently in all of the Scandinavian countries, but its use varied. By the Viking period in Denmark, it had come to be used of a village as well as an isolated farmhouse, but the Norwegians appear to have used it mainly to denote a single farm or an area of cultivated land (Fellows Jensen 1983:46). The element is rare in the Northern and Western Isles: exceptions are the secondary names, simplex *baer* and the compound name *husa-baer*. In the Danelaw, however, names in *-býr* are very common and Fellows Jensen (1983:46-7) suggested that they may indicate immigration ultimately from the Danelaw. Examination of the rentals showed that the *býs* were amongst the larger holdings, and the sub-divisions and expansions suggested they were unlikely to have been established on virgin land at the time of Godred Crovan's take-over as suggested by Marstrander (1932:327). Fellows Jensen also argued that it was unlikely that such estates would have received new names c.1079. Most significant was the fact that the names seemed to 'fill out gaps left in the distribution

of the Scandinavian topographical names': this suggested an earlier date for them, and that they were given to secondary dependent holdings, possibly units detached from old estates in some cases. Possible origins of the names were: Dublin Vikings expelled from Ireland in 902; settlers from Ireland between 1025 and 1075 (suggested by the hoards), and immigrants from northern England in the tenth century. Of these, Fellows Jensen argued that the third was most likely.

3.4 SUMMARY

The aim of this chapter has been to provide an historical, archaeological, linguistic and onomastic framework within which to examine the theories and conclusions concerning the nature and dating of the sites classed as shielings. Each section of evidence indicates significant Norse presence and influence within the study area and suggests that sites, although not necessarily the shieling practice itself, may have come into existence or been used during the Norse period.

CHAPTER 4: THE GEOGRAPHICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is devoted to the geography of Man and the Hebrides. In Chapter 2, the relationship between the shieling and the geography of an area was emphasised. The practice was found to occur in those areas where climate or topography cause a seasonal variation in the value, or availability, of pasture. It was stressed that shieling was part of a system of agriculture whereby cultivation was brought into balance with animal husbandry. This chapter is divided into two halves: the first concentrating on Man, and the second on the Hebridean islands selected for field-work. Within each half, there are two parts: one concentrating on the physical environment, thus, relief, soils and climate, and one on present and past forms of land-use and settlement location.

4.1 MAN

A. THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

(a) Geology and Relief (Fig.35).

The only published geological survey is that of Lamplugh (1903), who produced a survey map also showing the drift geology. This was published in 1898 but was reprinted at a scale of 1:50,000 in 1975 by the Institute of Geological Sciences. Other detailed works are those of Pye (1941) and Freeman *et al* (1966). The most useful summaries are those of E. Davies (1956), Kinvig (1975) and B. Taylor *et al* (1971).

Man, lying centrally in the Irish Sea, is some 50 km (31 miles) north-south and 22km (14 miles) east-west at its widest point. It has an area of some 580 sq.kms (363 sq. miles). In shape, it has been described by Moore (1900:8) as an 'heraldic lozenge'. Three quarters of the area consist of hard grits and slates, forming the central mountain mass (Upper Cambrian Slates, Flags and Drifts) and most of the coastal plateaux. Exceptions are the lowland of Castletown and the Peel district, both small areas of younger rocks. The former consists of a small basin of Carboniferous rocks extending over an area of 11.2/12.8 sq.kms (7/8 sq.miles), covered with glacial sand and gravel, and has produced a low-lying gently undulating landscape. The area is known as

the Plain of Malew, as in contrast to the other areas around the Manx uplands, it lies generally below 159m (522') a.s.l., even at a distance of some 6.4km (4 miles) from the coast. In the case of Peel, the local rock is a red sandstone, and it forms a triangle of lowland roughly 4.8 sq.kms (3 sq.miles) in area. Rocks similar to the above are known to have existed in the north of the island but they were subsequently covered by deposits of up to 50m (164') or more of glacial drift, consisting of soft clays, sands and gravels. There are also small areas of igneous rock (largely granite), which include Granite or Stoney Mountain near Foxdale, and the quarries at the Dhoon and Oatland.

Much of the mountainous interior is high plateau or moorland over 240m (787'), above which a number of peaks, most over 470m (1542'), rise. The most significant line of peaks (Kinvig 1958:4) runs north-east-south-west, beginning with North Barrule, through Snaefell (the highest peak on the island at 620m/2,034'), Beinn y Phott, Carraghan, Colden and Greeba. The line is continued on the south side of the central valley, which effectively divides the island into two distinct portions, by South Barrule, Cronk ny Arrey Laa and Bradda Hill. These hills form the major watershed. To the east and west, the mountain mass is flanked by plateau ledges, ranging in height from 95m to 191m (312-627') and with an average height of 127m (417'). The most extensive is that running from Maughold, on the east, south through the parishes of Lonan and Onchan and into Santan. On the west side there is a similar but smaller belt running through the parishes of Michael, German and Patrick, with a width of some 2.4km (1.5 miles). The slopes are gentle, rarely rising above 200m (656'), and fall to the sea from a height of 80m to 96m (262-315'). To the north, the upland belt is truncated sharply, dropping from a height of some 223m-255m (731-836') to an extensive lowland plain, stretching from Ballaugh in the west to the town of Ramsey on the east coast, and extends to the northernmost tip of the island, the Point of Ayre. It consists of a glacial drift cover. Across this lowland stretch the Bride Hills, a belt of morrainic deposits rising to a height of 105m (344'). They appear as 'sharply rounded hummocks threaded with dry valleys' (Davies 1956:99). In the southern section, where it borders the hills of the central upland, is

a large depression into which the drainage of the hills empties. This area, consisting of marsh and peat-bog, is known as the Curraghs, and once contained lakes and shallow meres. It was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that this area was partially drained: this was effected largely by means of the Sulby and Killane Rivers, and by the Lhen Trench. However, it appears that even after such measures, it was still subject to flooding (Moore 1900:24). This is still possible in winter today. Dry areas have been created where streams have piled up spurs and islands of gravel.

The valleys, or glens, are an important feature of the topography. On the west side they are steep and narrow but do not break the continuity of the coastal plateau. Behind Peel, however, there is a major break in relief, where headstreams have cut back to join those of an eastern glen, resulting in the formation of the central valley between Peel and Douglas. On the east coast the plateau is, in its northern section, of similar size to that on the west coast, but it broadens to almost double the width southwards. The slopes to the upland are longer, the streams are larger and the surface of the plateau is more dissected. Most of the valleys are deep and steep, as on the west coast, but behind Douglas and Laxey, there are well-marked valleys.

(b) Soils and Vegetation (Figs.36,37).

There is no detailed soil survey, and only a limited number of papers have been published on the subject. The most useful are those of B. Davies and Kear (1974) and Kear (1976), on which the following summary is based. The Manx hill peats have been examined in detail by Russell (1978). The most important influence on the soils of the island, as on the relief, has been the Manx slate and the glacial drift derived from it. However, despite the fact that their influence can be detected over as much as three-quarters of Man, almost all the main soil groups common to Britain are represented. The reason for this diversity is the altitudinal range, together with local variations in both topography and drainage. Kear (1976.38) paralleled the soil patterns of Man with those of upland Wales, the Lake District, and the Southern Uplands of Scotland. The mountainous relief and oceanic

character have been responsible for such parallels.

Soil types over 300m (984')

In the mountain zone the prevalence of cool, wet conditions have given rise to fairly extensive tracts of thin surface peat accumulations, and the associated soil profiles have thin iron pans in the subsoil. This reflects intensive leaching under acid conditions. Where gradients are gentle, the slate and its associated drift, has a blanket covering of hill peat, which varies in thickness. Peat soils are recognised where this exceeds a depth of 40cm and they reach their greatest thickness above 355m (1164'), although they do occur at lower altitudes on the more exposed west slopes. Kear (1976:40) recorded that they are at their most extensive in the headwaters of Glen Crammag; on the northern slopes of Snaefell and Colden, and on the west slopes of South Barrule. The dominant peat soils are the raw oligo-fibrous ones, and the vegetation associated with them is cotton grass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), deer grass (*Trichophorum caespitosum*), purple moor grass (*Molinia caerulea*) and (*Spaghnum*) Spp.. In shallow valleys, or at the foot of slopes, 'Flush peats' are colonised by soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). The thickness and extent of the peat has been reduced by cutting for fuel, and in some places erosion has led to the exposure of the underlying slaty drift or the mineral soil.

The peat soils which reach depths of between 7.5cm and 40cm have mineral soils with profiles which are generally waterlogged, producing humic gley soils. Where the gleying is more intense in the surface horizons, in cases where thin saturated peat rests on the mineral soil, the classification of the soils is as humic stagnogleys. These are dominated by tufted hair grass, Yorkshire fog, purple moor grass and rushes. A soil is classified as an iron pan stagnopodzol where there is up to 7.5cms of peat over a gleyed pale grey sub-surface horizon and a thin iron pan horizon below. Where the peat cover is thin and discontinous on heather covered slopes, peat is frequently replaced by an acid raw humus forming a mat on the mineral soil surface. During the summer months, this dries out and becomes powdery. The soils are stony, are freely drained, and have distinct iron and humus pans in their

subsoils. Profiles may have only a Ferris Podzol or a Humus Podzol, or have both (Humo-ferric podzol). A characteristic of humo-ferric podzols is a black horizon, of variable thickness, created by the translocation of humic material above the iron pan. Free draining podzols are confined to shedding sites on hill slopes, and it is the coarser textured stony materials, such as those which are derived from the Agneash grits and the Foxdale granites, that encourage their development. An absence of peat, or a very thin covering, is to be found on steep and very steep slopes. In such areas, there are rocky outcrops, together with weakly developed shallow and stony profiles. Iron pan development occurs at variable depths. The peat, where it occurs, is found on small bench like terracettes, and forms humic ranker soils where it either rests on bare rock or upon undifferentiated stony material. Plants colonising such soils include ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), bell heather (*Erica cinerea*), bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and a large number of grassland species, such as mat grass (*Nardus stricta*), brown bent grass (*Argostis canina*), sheep's fescue (*Festuca ovina*) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

Soil types between 150m and 300m (492' and 984')

This land forms the transitional zone between the upland and lowland in Man. The peat is restricted to hollows and human activities have been responsible for the disappearance of the podzol profiles. It is on these slopes that forest plantations have been raised. Conifer plantations cover the more sheltered slopes, such as that at Tholt-y-Will. Older plantations, for example Eairystane, had young trees planted on stagnopodzols. The result was that maturing trees are very shallow rooting, and are subject to windthrow in severe storms. To combat this, the practice today is to plough the soil deeper, and to throw up the peaty topsoil into ridges, to improve both the rooting depth and the drainage. On the gentler slopes and flat land to a height of 250m (820'), there are 'disturbed soils', formed where the cultivation and drainage of stagnopodzols, to improve pastures and to grow root crops, has mixed the thin peaty surface layers with the mineral soils below. The typical horizons of the stagnopodzols can no longer be recognised, and the thin iron pans have disappeared or

persist in a fragmentary state only. This is true of parts of Druidale Farm (Kear 1976:43). The soils beneath bracken-covered slopes lack a thin iron pan, and these free draining soils are classified as brown podzolic soils. It is argued that such soils originally developed beneath a cover of deciduous woodland and that they were unaffected by a surface peat cover. Now the slopes are colonised by fern, scrub and rough pasture, little of the original woodland surviving. The slopes are too steep, too inaccessible, or both, to allow improvement. On the gentler slopes, there are certain particularly fertile patches. These occur where imperfectly draining brown podzolic soils have been the subject of more extensive modification by man. Localised enrichment of the soils occurs where the lateral movement of water in the upper part of the soil profile is more intense. Gleying is less intense with depth and stagnogleys are recognised. The above patterns, together with that of brown podzolic profiles under fern alongside humo-ferric podzols under ling on hill-slopes, can be seen on the slopes of Upper Sartfell (Kear 1976:43).

Below 180m (590'), the brown podzolic soils grade into brown earths on free draining sites. The free draining brown earths, the imperfectly draining brown earths with gleying, the poorly drained stagnogleys and cambic gleys have all been subject to intensive use, and have been modified by liming, the application of fertiliser, cultivation and drainage.

Soils of the Lowland Zone

These are not only less acid but are not so strongly leached, and, on the whole, lack a surface peat cover. The soil pattern is influenced by differences in the parent material. The soils can be grouped into the following: limestone around Castletown; sandstone of the Peel area; boulder clay drift, most common in the south of the island; alluvial deposits along valley floors and at the Curraghs; fluvio-glacial sand and gravel plains, the best examples of which are in the parishes of Jurby and Andreas; the glacial sand and gravel mounds of the Bride and Orrisdale hills, and a small area between Peel and St. John's, and the raised beach, the main example of which is at the Point of Ayre. The most fertile are the base rich soils of the limestone area, but the

alluvial soils produce good root crops and green vegetables. These do, however, have to be used with care.

(c) Climate

Publications dealing with the climate alone are few in number. Information can be derived from the works cited above, also Moore (1889), and a useful summary is that of Birch (1958.97-121). Rainfall, specifically, is examined by Reynolds (1954).

Man's location on the west side of the British Isles means that its climate is characteristically equable, cloudy, windy and humid. summers are cool, winters are mild and windless days are uncommon. Rainfall is heavy for most of the year. The configuration and alignment are responsible for this, and also for variations in weather and climate on the eastern and western flanks. Its position within the Irish Sea means that there are marked differences in the length of sea-track for air masses approaching from different directions, and this together with the distribution of lowland and upland on the mainland and in Ireland, affects the type of weather that is received.

Being a small island, the temperatures are naturally affected by the sea. Consequently, variations in temperature on land are reduced, and the island possesses equable daily and seasonal distributions of temperature. There is a annual mean of 48-46 degees F., and a mean annual range of only 16.9 degrees F. (Pye 1941:9). July and August are the hottest months: the coldest are January, February and March. The rainfall regime is most similar to those of North Wales and Galloway (Reynolds 1954). However, unlike the temperatures, the average annual rainfall varies considerably according to location. The northern plain, the southern lowlands, and the west coast are the driest areas with an annual mean precipitation of 75-100cm (30-40"), because of the position of the mountain axis in relation to the prevalent moist winds. The highlands south of the central valley, the lower slopes of the northern mountains, and the adjacent districts on the east coast from Ramsey to Douglas receive a heavier mean annual precipitation of 100-125cm (40-50"). As much as 125-150+cm (50-60+"), however, is received on the highest parts of the mountain belt, around Snaefell and its neighbouring peaks. The period from October to January is that of

consistently high rainfall and rainfall intensity. Hill-fog is very common also in this period but there is a low incidence of coastal fog. Prolonged and heavy snowfalls are uncommon and snow does not persist on the lowlands and the lower central plateaux. Its incidence varies from one year to the next. As far as sunshine is concerned, Birch (1958:109) wrote that the Irish Sea enjoyed a more favourable sunshine record than most other parts of the British Isles at similar latitudes. The highest sunshine values are recorded in the months of May and June.

During the winter and summer months the most prevalent winds are those from the west, or ones which have a strong west component. In spring the most common are those within an arc north-east to south-east: at this time the island's weather is less dominated by the effects of Atlantic cyclonic activity. An important feature of the climate are the east winds, usually associated with periods of cold and dry weather. These are a hazard to farmers, in that they can retard the growth of grass at the critical lambing time. The high profile of the winds has had an effect on the settlement pattern, many farmsteads being located in shelter-seeking locations. More exposed farms frequently have wind-breaks in the form of clumps of trees, planted on the windward sides, and these generally have a wind-shorn appearance. High banks and hedges afford some protection for crops and livestock.

B. LAND USE (Fig.38).

The two most useful sources of information for the twentieth century are Pye (1941), with contributions made by Elwyn Davies, and the slightly later paper by Davies (1956) examining the land system of the island. Moore (1900) provides contemporary information on the state of agriculture at the end of the nineteenth century, and is the best source of references to earlier sources. For the state of agriculture in the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries, reference must be made to the contemporary surveys of Basil Quayle (1794) and Thomas Quayle (1812). For the earlier part of the eighteenth century information is to be derived from T. Wilson (1871) and Waldron (1865). For the seventeenth century, Sacheverell's account (1694; 1859), written at the end of the period, is useful, and there is W. Blundell's account, written between 1648 and 1656 (1875-77). There is

no precise information concerning details of land utilisation prior to this period, but interesting information is to be extracted from the Statutes of the Isle of Man (M. Mills 1821; J. Gill 1883). The section on the state of agriculture before the twentieth century is followed by a short summary of the question of the enclosure of the commons, and the loss of ancient rights. There is also a short section on woodland.

The extent of land in Man is only small and almost the whole of it is included in the following three categories: arable; permanent pasture, and rough hill pasture.

(a) Twentieth Century Land Use (Fig.38).

> 'The general aspect of the island is that of a skirt of cultivated fields, extending from the coast on to the coastal plateaux, along the glens and the central valley and up the lower hill slopes of the mountains to an average elevation of 650 feet [198m] above sea level. Somewhere about this height in all parts of the island there is a sharp limit to cultivation and an abrupt change from arable to rough mountain pastures.' (Pye 1941:13)

The arable area on the north-east coast is restricted by the narrowness of the coastal plateau and the poor quality of the slaty drift which covers it. A much more extensive development has been possible on the lowland of the central valley behind Douglas and on the lower parts of the adjacent slopes. Although restricted in the west, the arable area continues in the eastern half to the south, over the shoulders of Slieau Chiarn, the Mount and the higher land forming the southern rim of the valley, and widens out into the extensive arable area on the plain of Malew. The southern arable land is not confined to the limestone plain but extends on to the hill-slopes of the southern mountains to a height of 198m (650'), and extends westward to Port Erin. On the west coast the arable area again flanks the mountain mass, extending inland for an average of some 3.2km (2 miles). It begins at Dalby and widens northwards: at Peel it reaches a width of 4.8km (3 miles) and continues in a narrow extension between the slopes of the Beary Mountain and Slieau Whallian into the central arable region. This occupies the slopes leading to Foxdale and the central valley from

Slieau Whallian, South Barrule, Granite Mountain Archallagan, Beary and Greeba. To the north of Peel the arable belt becomes patchier, Manx slates forming the solid geology, but beyond Kirk Michael the glacial sands and gravels favour a solidly arable tract through Ballaugh and onto the northern plain.

Pye (1941:14) noted that for an island which is not notably fertile and with mountains occupying some two-thirds of the surface area, the small amount of land under permanent grass was surprising. Permanent pasture occupied an area of only two-fifths that of the area under arable crops: the most extensive area was in the north, in the Curraghs. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the extensive marshy areas were drained to damp meadow-land and are now used for pasture land, but are not heavily stocked. The Lhen trench, the drainage channel, carries a ribbon of pasture land from the Curraghs to the coast. There are no other large areas of permanent grass on the northern plain but there are small patches on the boulder drift of the Andreas platform, and on a stretch from Ballalheaney to Ballavir in Bride. On the western flank of the mountains, where cultivation extends to an average height of 198m (650'), there is an abrupt change beyond the limit to rough mountain pasture, and there is no intermediate zone of permanent pasture. A patch, however, occurs where the Manx slate and glacial boulder drift form the surface rock on the platform between Knochsharry and to the north of Glen Mooar. This is in contrast to the east edge of the mountains, where the intermediate belt not only exists, but in areas replaces the arable land. This is due to the steep nature of the slopes and the thin stony soil cover. Within the northern mountains there is only one significant occurrence of permanent grass on the gentler slopes at the head of the Sulby Glen. This was once an arable area but the abandonment of the farms has led to its conversion to permanent grassland. In the south there are scattered patches of permanent grass, usually in the upper marginal regions. There is a noticeable concentration extending inland from the coast for about 2.4km (1.5 miles) from Port Soderick through Santon to Cass ny Hawin. Here stony glacial boulder drift only partially covers the Lonan flag outcrops and the local granite outcrop. Hence, a combination of a

naturally poor soil and uneven topography does not favour the use of the area for arable purposes.

There are two extensive areas of heathland and moorland: these occupy almost one-third of the total area and are located on the mountains to the north and south of the central valley. They lie not only on the oldest geological formations but also in the areas of greatest rainfall. The mountains are steep but not craggy and moorland grasses, sedges, heather and mosses extend to their summits. Some hills are mostly heather covered, such as South Barrule and Cronk ny Arrey Laa, but there is an abundance of grasses. On the higher ground of the central upland there is a more or less blanket covering of peat of various depth. Its growth has been checked by the climate and by the draining of the hill-side for rough sheep pasture. The mountain pastures, although largely unenclosed do form parts of various estates and are rented. In the middle of the nineteenth century the ancient rights of sheep pasturage in the Lord's Forest, or mountain waste, were withdrawn, and rights of common pasture have not survived (see 'The Question of the Commons'). These tracts are used for the rough pasturage of wool sheep. The lower limit of the rough pastures is the upland limit of the arable land, 198m (650'), except where there is an intermediate zone of permanent grass pasture. In the belt between 198m and 229m (650-750'), enclosed rough pastures are to be found, indicating the existence of land formerly under the plough which has reverted to rough heath conditions. Such parcels of land are known as *intacks* (intakes). The uplands however, did not in the long term repay cultivation and were gradually abandoned. The loss of the commons encouraged this movement as the upland belt now became worthless to those whose mainstay was the keeping of sheep on the mountain pastures. Besides the large tracts of high pasture, there are small areas of rough grazing on both the east and west coasts: these occur where the Manx Slate series forms a cliffed coastline, for example the steep slopes of Cronk ny Arrey Laa on the west coast. Other patches are found in areas of arable land on local elevations or slopes which are too steep or stony for the plough, also along the steep-sided glens and parts of the central valley (the valleys of the Dhoo and the Neb).

There is also the raised beach at the northern end of the island, but this provides poor pasture land.

(b) Earlier Land Use

Little is known of land use before the seventeenth century. Moore (1900:51-3) suggested that cultivation took the form of run-rig, and postulated that the narrowness of the land-divisions suggested an original division into strips: he pointed to a record of 1589 which held that when several tenants who held land jointly could not agree upon a division, the land was actually divided into strips. These strips were called in Manx *immyr*, or *butts*, one tenant occupying 'the one butt, and the other the other butt throughout the whole ground'. A statute of 1422 (Statutes vol.1, p.20) points to the use of the lands in common during the winter, probably for the pasturing of animals, the fences only being required to be kept up from the 25th March to Michaelmas. This suggests that the lands were allotted on an annual basis, but the recurrence of the same names associated with the same holdings in the manorial records, shows that they would have been distributed between very much the same tenants (Davies 1941b:33). The use of precise farm-names to describe holdings does not feature in the manorial records until 1643, and it was suggested by Davies that the consolidation of holdings into farms of fixed extent was not fully carried out until the seventeenth century. However, these did not necessarily have to be enclosed. The Statute of 1422 gave land-owners the option of erecting fences, in 1582 the length of time that the lands could be kept enclosed was extended and the height of the fences was fixed, but it was not until 1665 (Statutes Vol.1, p.126) that fences were ordered to be kept in both winter and summer. Even as late as 1770, the parish of Jurby was recorded as being '...an open common in the winter season' (Moore 1900:40-4).

The first contemporary description of the state of agriculture, besides the remark by John Merrick, Bishop of Sodor, in a letter of 1577, that '..the island...is rich in flocks, fish and corn...; it not only produces sufficient for its own consumption but annually exports a great deal..' (Oliver 1860:87-99), is from the middle of the seventeenth century. Blundell, described Man as having an abundance of

cattle, fish and corn, and noted that each part 'yieldeth store of all sorts of grain, both barley, wheat, rye and oats (yet of ye last the most)' (1875:39). This abundance not only met the needs of the islanders, but ensured a surplus for export. Besides these products, Man also 'yieldeth good store of flax and hemp...; both honey and wax', also in sufficient quantity to be exported (1875:40). The extent of good pasture on the island seems to have been limited: Blundell noted the '..northern part to be far the most healthy and gravelly ground, much resembling the mountainous parts of Wales; the southern is acknowledged to have good meadow and pasture ground...the most and best is in the Earl Darby's possession, lying in the south part of the island, near unto his castle of Rushin and in the castle of Man, etc.' (1875:39-40). The cattle were described as small and poor, and were fed '..for the most part in healthy ground lying continually in the open fields both winter and summer, never housed; neither is any hay or fodder given them, but they are enforced to feed on what they find..' (1876:41). It appears that sheep thrived best, and produced very good wool. As far as manuring was concerned, Blundell (1875:39-40) noted that the usual method was the folding of the cattle in small sod enclosures on the land (see also Statutes vol.1:14). Concerning enclosure, he remarked (1875:46-7): '..I do not remember to have seen any one hedge yt parted either field or pastures, but all were either of turfs or of earth stones or of both..'. He noted also that there had been no woods on Man for the past 140 years.

Accounts written towards the end of the seventeenth century and during the eighteenth century present a very similar picture. It appears that by the end of the former the farmers had begun to use seaweed manure, but that although marl was available they had not the money nor the skill to make use of it (Sacheverell 1859:12-3). There were also plenty of pigs, including 'a small mountain kind called Purrs', goats, geese, hens and ducks. Other accounts of the period follow Blundell and Sacheverell, but Waldron in 1731 (1865:2) gave a less favourable account of the wheat and barley. Potatoes, however, were plentiful, and the chief crop was oats. Of the stock, the black cattle and sheep were small but good, and hogs and goats were numerous.

Waldron, like the other writers, provided little information about pasture land. Moore (1900:923-4) writing of the depression in agriculture between 1660-1704, concluded that the most general cause of this slump was the insecurity of tenure, and found it hardly surprising that the Manxmen concentrated more upon fishing than their land. Post 1704, the year of the Act of Settlement, he believed that agriculture slowly improved. Farmers were encouraged to grow flax and crops were generally improved by the extirpation of the wild swine, purrs. The latter must have had an important effect on the uplands, and Wilson (1871:91) noted that 'the vallies betwixt them [the mountains] afford as good pasture, hay, and corn, as in most other places.' However, despite improvements, it was recorded in 1739 that Man had not, for many years, produced sufficient corn to support the inhabitants (Moore 1900:925).

During the latter part of the eighteenth century Man took part in the general improvement in agriculture and as part of this the Curraghs were drained (see earlier section; Moore 1900:922). In 1770 clover was introduced and ten years later turnips were cultivated for the first time (Moore 1900:926). Other improvements followed: the marling of land; replacement of oats by barley as the main crop, although oats were still important on upland farms; the increasing importance of wheat especially in the north of the island; the breeding of a better class of sheep, and improvement in livestock generally (Moore 1900:926-8). During the period from 1808 to 1816 Manx farmers were very prosperous. Agricultural implements were being improved, new enclosures were being made in the uplands, and with the improvement of tracks and transport the liming and manuring on upland farms was facilitated.

The practice of folding sheep and cattle became less common as lands were dressed with seaweed, lime, marl and dung. Five hundred acres of the Curraghs were laid down with hay. Potatoes were general, and were cultivated in lazybeds on upland farms and on coarse soil. Good crops of turnips were also grown, as were different varieties of winter cabbage for feeding the milch cows. Hemp and flax were grown in small quantities (see Quayle 1794 and Quayle 1812).

Basil Quayle recorded that there were still problems, however. One

was that regular rotation was little understood, and little practised: another was that little attention was paid to the rearing of livestock, for which the pastures on the island were better suited than for fattening. Cattle were not bred but reared indiscriminately. Of dairy produce, butter was more important than fresh milk, and farms which had between twelve and twenty cows made cheese. Most farms kept at least six cows, some had twelve, but very few had herds of more than twenty. Much land was given to them. The growing of turnips meant that the cattle could be stall-fed, but the months of October and November were still known as the chief slaughtering periods. The numbers of sheep were reduced by a third, because the enclosed land brought better returns from crops, and few farmers, except in the uplands, had flocks of more than a hundred. The usual number of horses on the lowland farms is recorded as being a team of two to three horse to thirty tilled acres. There was twice this number on the upland farms, where the animals were smaller and the land was more difficult to plough. Also, the men were very involved in the fisheries: in the summer some 5000 were employed in this activity. This meant that the care of the farm was left with the families, in particular the harvest, and the lack of hands at this crucial time meant that much grain was lost.

Thomas Quayle's survey (1812) confirmed many of Basil's statements. He provided more information on rotations of crops and recorded that meadows had been much improved. The old Manx breeds of livestock were being replaced by imported breeds from Ireland and England, but there was still a lack of care in their rearing. Winter-feeding had become general, with the extension in the cultivation of root-crops, and the cattle were now brought in on November 12th and turned out on May 12th, dates which reflect the use of the Old Calendar. The upland pastures were without stint, but much of the land, although not enclosed, had become private property. The lack of regulations meant that the pastures were overstocked. The sheep were kept on the open upland pastures during the summer, and were brought down to lower land during the winter months. A few colts and young cattle were also grazed on the unenclosed pastures during the summer. One result of the growing prosperity of the farmers, and in particular the high price of corn,

was the cultivation of land high up in the mountains, and it was said that tillage had passed beyond the limits of economic profit (see Moore 1900:929). It was not only prices which had risen, rents had nearly doubled by 1812. The end of war in 1815, and a number of bad seasons led to a decline in Manx agriculture. The situation was further aggravated by the lack still of decent fencing, the bad state of the highroads, the continued interest in the herring fisheries to the detriment of agriculture, the method of collecting tithe, and the attempt to take the tithe of potatoes and other green crops which had not been demanded for years. The result was that many farmers, especially the smaller ones, were ruined, and emigration to the U.S.A. became particularly common between 1825 and 1837 (Moore 1900:930-1). There then followed a period of consolidation, with small units being absorbed into the larger estates, grain cultivation declined, and more land was used for the growing of fodder crops. Recovery came about in 1840. Drainage was carried out on a large scale, subsoil ploughing was introduced as were artificial manures. There was, as a result, a great increase in the exports of agricultural produce, especially wheat, potatoes, turnips, hay and fat cattle. Also, live-stock numbers were generally increased. Prosperity had returned (Moore 1900:932-3).

This state of affairs continued until c.1874, after which the growing of wheat became unprofitable, owing to an increase in exportation from other countries, and the local economy could no longer meet the increasing demand for milk, butter and meat. Hence, the yearly increase in the import of livestock, poultry, flour, fruit, vegetables, butter and eggs (Moore 1900:934). However, Moore (1900:935) concluded that, at the time of writing, the 'average condition of agriculture on the Isle of Man is not much inferior to what it is in England and Scotland, and that the position of the Manx farmers, though they generally pay higher rents than their compeers in those countries do, is, except perhaps in the more remote parts of the island, a more favourable one than that of the English and Scottish farmers.'

(c) The Question of the Commons (Moore 1900:893-4,896-901)

These lands belonged to the Lord of Man, and until 1710 they had been open to the landed proprietors (his tenants) for grazing,

quarrying, and the cutting of peat at a nominal charge (Statutes vol.1:49-50). In this year, Lord Derby had an assessment of the commons made, so that he could enforce a rent for their use. The making of this assessment was prevented by a number of people, largely small proprietors or crofters. In the face of opposition, Lord Derby abandoned the idea of rent and began to have some of the commons enclosed and sold. The landowners, having come to regard their use of the mountain lands as a natural right, opposed this action: the opposition culminated in a riot in 1724. The ringleaders were punished, and after this there was no more trouble concerning the commons until 1774. The question was re-opened when the fourth Duke of Atholl granted licenses to enclose portions of the commons which were called 'Intacks'. Some of these were disputed but the enclosures continued to be made until 1855, when a particularly large portion was intacked. The right to enclose the land was denied by the Great Enquest, which believed that 'it would be prejudicial to and an infringement upon the rights of the public' (see Moore 1900:897). The landowners claimed that they had enjoyed immemorial rights of common, quarrying stone and of digging sand and gravel over and from such lands, and that grants could only be made with the sanction of the Great Enquest. The Crown, replying to the landowners, argued that: it had exclusive right of property in the minerals; it was entitled to certain forestal rights for the preservation of game; it had the right to grant licenses to enclose (the rôle of the Great Enquest was to enquire as to whether the enclosures would be prejudicial to any public way, watercourse or turbary), and that it was entitled to pasturage of the unappropriated lands and the enjoyment of such rights as the landowners might be able to establish. The question, after considerable debate and the involvement of commissioners from England, was settled when the 'Woods and Forests' Department representing the Crown, offered to divide the commons equally between the Crown and the landowners. Acts of Tynwald were proposed in 1860 and 1864 to allow the proposed changes to take place. However, much dissatisfaction remained amongst those whose lands adjoined the mountains, for they were now deprived of what had been a virtual monopoly of free grazing on the mountains for a very inadequate

compensation. Those owners and tenants who had land distant from the mountains and had not lost any right of practical value, did not find the loss unfavourable.

G. Quayle (1973:80) wrote that the enclosure of the Commonlands was the 'death-knell' of upland farming. When the farmers were deprived of the right to put their stock on the uplands, the numbers of livestock were reduced, sometimes by as much as three quarters. Such a situation was disastrous for many.

(d) Woodland

One of the aspects which is commented upon by both seventeenth and eighteenth century writers is the treeless nature of Man. Evidence of its once wooded nature has been obtained from pollen and from the peat bogs, and traces of forest have been found on the shore at several places (Garrad 1972:666-7). Pollen is the chief source of information and indicates that the tree cover developed as elsewhere in the British Isles. Oak, elm, alder and lime were dominant in the damper areas and there were also willows, birch and hazel. Garrad wrote that the final pattern of high forest was likely to have been similar to that suggested for Scotland, with oakwood on more favourable sites up to 305m (1000') and pine above. Birches would have taken advantage of any clearance, only to be replaced by other species, as closed birch wood does not normally regenerate on the same ground. Willow and alder would have been found on streamsides and in areas with impeded drainage, such as the Curraghs.

Garrad has pointed to the fact that the treen and quarterland boundary evidence indicates that the better arable land may already have been cleared and divided into farms before 1100 A.D. There is also the evidence of mediaeval pottery from sites high above the Sulby river, in Druidale, and the site of the Braaid at *Marown*, *dated to the* Norse period on the basis of its form, demonstrating that farms may have extended higher up the hills than has been usual in the last three hundred years. Garrad (1972:668-669) has suggested that the Druidale farms could have been established during a temporary improvement in the climate c.1050-1250, and this would indicate a date within the Norse period for the clearing of the area. It is likely that after the

climate began to deteriorate, the regeneration of the woodland was prohibited by peat growth.

C. THE LAND SYSTEM

The best summary of the land system is that of Reilly (1988:11) in Fig.39. This land system, or territorial structure, of the island has both developed out of the exploitation of the environment, and has moulded patterns of exploitation within it. The standard work concerning the form of the land-divisions, particularly the treens and the quarterlands, is E. Davies (1956). He summarized the main characteristics of the individual units and examined their relation to the local geography. He believed that the 'treatment of origins and affinities are secondary questions which depend upon an adequate description on the ground'. The most well-known discussions of the origins of the land system, centring on a Celtic versus Norse argument, are those of Marstrander (1932;1937;1938), Marwick (1935), and Megaw (1976;1978), but more recently, the question has been explored by Lowe (1987) and Reilly (1988).

Davies (1956:102) wrote that the '..territorial structure of the Isle of Man is..a telescopic one which rests eventually on the quarterland.' The following is a summary of the characteristics of the divisions, beginning with this fundamental unit. A discussion of the origins and development of the land system can be found in Appendix 5.

(a) The Quarterlands

The quarterland estates (*kerrows*) occupy the better agricultural land on the island, thus the main areas of arable farming. They lie on the coastal plateaux fringing the central mountainous belt and extend inland along the central valley. They rarely exceed a height above 183m (600'), although some reach 229m (750') on gentler slopes. Where the land is steep or exposed there is a limit of 152m (500') (Davies 1956:103). As far as size is concerned, there is no regular area, and Davies (1956:109) has shown that there is also no variation in relation to the position of the land, its quality, or the slope. The majority are between 20 and 73 Ha.(50-180 acres), and there is a fairly regular distribution around a mode of 36.4 Ha.(90 acres). Davies (1956:109-10) did note that there was a tendency towards the equal division of land

between quarterlands within individual treens, and that this was particularly marked in terms of the quality of land. For example, where land lies between valley and hill, or between coast and upland, the treens have a vertical division along the slope, thus ensuring that each unit has a share of each land type. Where the treen occupies a ridge between two streams, the quarterlands are found to lie around the snout of the ridge. In contrast, he found that the lowland quarterlands, and treens, had no particular orientation.

Each of the quarterlands once represented the holding of a Manx family, and were thus family estates. The unit was the characteristic holding of the freeholder, and was the primary and indivisable unit of inheritance (Farrant 1937:10,12,17; Megaw and Megaw 1950:153). Reilly (1988:12) pointed to the likelihood that the comparatively large quarterlands would have supported an extended family, rather than a single nuclear one, and argued that this would agree with what is known about kinship organisation in Celtic areas in the mediaeval period. There are frequently four quarterlands to a treen (nearly half of the number of treens have this number of quarterlands), and this fact has generally been regarded as the explanation for the use of the term (Davies 1956:107). However, there are cases where treens contain as little as half a quarterland, and as many as six or seven (Davies 1956:109). Today, the units may consist of two, three or four farms, but are still used for the location and identification of land.

Concerning naming patterns, family names are most frequent, and this is consistent with their role as family units. There are few generic terms associated with them: notable ones are *Balla* (farm), *Kerroo* (quarterland) and *Eary*, generally translated as 'shieling'. Davies (1956:111) noted that there are 12 quarterlands, (E. Megaw 1978:331 noted 15 names which are parts of treens), which have *eary*-names, and these are generally found to lie on the borders of intack land or adjacent to the commons (Davies 1956:111). One interesting feature, is that although they form parts of treens, they are sometimes, as in the cases of Eary Cushlin in the treen of Alia Dalby and Eary-ny-Kione in the treen of Ballaskyr, isolated from both the quarterland and treen, of which they form a part, by an area of

intack. In the case of Neary, which is part of the treen of Grest on the coast north of Ramsey, the holding is separated from the treen by two other treens. Where the *eary* unit is not separated from the other holdings, it is always located furthest upslope. Davies (1956:111) discovered that, with the exception of two farmsteads, holdings bearing names in *eary* lie at a general height of 198+/-15m (650+/-50'). The exceptions are located at 122m (400') and 152m (500') repectively. Davies concluded that these upland units 'once formed the shielings or summer pastures of particular treens.' The evidence suggested that the holdings were older than the intacks, of which only two of the large ones in the mountains have names in *-eary*.

Documentary evidence of the quarterlands points to the existence of the system by the fifteenth century. Many of the names of holdings are to be found in the sheading Court Roll of 1417-18 (B. Megaw 1976:12-3;1978:272), and an inventory of estate names is given in the Manorial Rolls, dated to the beginning of the sixteenth century (Talbot 1924). The first occurrence of the word *quarterland* is in 1593, in the Manx Statutes (J. Gill 1883:64).

(b) The Treens

The treen has been described by B. Megaw (1978:280) as 'a notional grouping for tax and other purposes of a number of - normally four - quarterland farms.' These groupings represent the smallest administrative units. In area, the treens are largely between 81 and 202 Ha.(200-500 acres), although they can be as large as 392 Ha.(970 acres) and as small as 19.4 Ha.(48 acres). As with the quarterlands, it cannot be demonstrated that the size of the treens varies according to the quality of the soil, the relief, or the size of the parish, but Davies (1956:105) did notice those at higher altitudes and in the narrow glens have a tendency to be somewhat smaller than those on the lowlands. The units are, however, arranged in such a way as to take advantage of different land types in areas where the quality of the soil, slope and aspect are very variable. Davies (1956:105) divided such treens into (*a*) plateau treens, (*b*) valley treens, and (*c*) treens on the plains.

The plateau treens are to be found on the fringe of the mountainous

belt, where the land slopes down from moorland to coast, and take the form of long strips from shore to hill. The best examples are on the west coast, on the slopes between Douglas and Laxey, and to the north and north-east of Port St. Mary. This pattern is also found on the northern plain, where the treens extend from the edges of the raised beach to the crest of the morainic hills. This is not reflected on the south side of the hills, where the land is much more level. In areas where the coastal plateau is dissected into valleys, for example the northern section of the east coast, the treens are found to lie on the valley slopes rather than on the valley floors. Effectively, the latter form 'a base-line along which the ends of the treens lie and from which they extend upslope...' (Davies 1956:105). Often, it is strips of intack land which occupy the valley bottom. Further characteristics identified by Davies were that the units generally occupy land between a main stream and a tributary, or between the forks of two tributaries, and that, in some cases, two treens occupy a flank of a ridge separating two valleys. The boundary between such treens runs along the nose of the spur.

The treens, like the quarterlands, have distinctive names, but topographical names tend to be more common than family names. The generic *Balla* is also common, and *eary* appears in Aresteyn, (Eairystane) and Aryrody. It also occurs in Arishonock (Ronague), Ardary, and Arernan, which are recorded in the Manorial Rolls as though they were treens (E. Megaw 1978:331). The treen-name is usually borne by one of its quarterlands, and frequently by more than one. When this is the case, the quarterlands are differentiated by the addition of the suffixes *-moar* and *beg* (big and little), or by a personal name.

A full list of the treens first appears in the sixteenth century in the Manorial Rolls (Talbot 1924). Circa 1500, 179 treens of lord's land are recorded, consisting of some 594 quarterlands. There are in addition some 147 quarterlands of monks and bishops' land where no treen organisation had survived (Megaw 1978:296). The discovery by Crellin (1969) of a fragment of an earlier roll of the late fifteenth century, confirmed that earlier rent-books had existed, arranged in a similar fashion under treen-names. The total number of treens is,

however, unknown before the sixteenth century. A series of names of treens of lord's-land are to be found in the *Limites* (Broderick 1979), a number of which have been matched with some confidence with modern equivalents, thus enabling identification of the treens (see Megaw 1978:307-9). Two examples are in the parish of Malew. The first is an estate called 'Villa Mac Akeon' and is equated with the treen of Ballakeighan, and the second Bylozen, is equated with the modern Billown (M. Gelling 1971:169). Aryeuzryn, appearing as Arernan in the Mannorial Roll of 1511 (see above), is also found in this document, but is now known as Moaney-moar. The word *treen* first appears in the Manx Traditionary Ballad, which was written in the vernacular and first published in the middle of the nineteenth century (Train 1845). There is evidence to suggest that it dates from the beginning of the sixteenth century (R. Thomson 1958), and it has been suggested by B. Megaw (1963:189) that it may be based on a ballad dating from the twelfth century.

(c) The Parishes (Fig.40).

The seventeen parishes, made up of a number of treens, are ecclesiastical and administrative units, and according to Davies (1956:100) are 'very noticeably units of the countryside', forming distinct geographical areas. They range in size from 1720 Ha.(4250 acres) for the parish of Santon to 6587 Ha.(16277 acres) for the parish of Lezayre. They all run from the coast into the central mountainous belt, with the exception of Marown which is a land-locked parish towards the eastern end of the central valley, Santon which is cut off from the mountain lands by Marown, and the northern parishes of Jurby, Andreas and Bride which are isolated from the uplands by the extensive parish of Lezayre.

Davies (1956:100-2) gave a detailed description of the distinct geographical areas of the parishes, and the main feature(s) of each is summarised below. In the north, Bride is located astride the main mass of morainic hills, Andreas lies on the major series of gravel terraces between the Bride hills and the Lhen, and Jurby is on the gravel platform delimited by the trough of the Lhen. Lezayre is the basin of the Sulby River, Ballaugh is that of Glen Dhoo and on its eastern edge

it encloses part of the Curragh. Further along the west coast, Michael consists of fairly narrow coastal plateau and includes the valleys of Glen Wyllin and Glen Mooar, and German is the basin of the River Neb. Patrick consists of two physiographic units, the western section centred on the Glen Rushen River and the narrow coastal ledge south of the valley and around Dalby, and the other section is that of Foxdale. The two are separated by Slieu Whallian and the northern slopes of South Barrule. To the south, Rushen consists of the south-western peninsula, Arbory is not distinctive, and Malew is the basin of the Siver Burn. On the east coast, the parish of Santon lies astride the small Glen Grenaugh basin, but this parish and that of Marown do not appear to form convincing land units. Braddan is largely the land on the western slopes of the River Glass and the Baldwin, its main tributary, Onchan is the basin of the Groudle River, Lonan is the basin of the Laxey River, and Maughold occupies a triangular plateau area at the north-east corner of the upland and includes the Cornaa stream.

Davies (1956:101) believed that it was possible that the parishes of Santon and Braddan once formed a single unit, and pointed to the fact that the southernmost treen in Braddan has the same name as the northernmost in Santon (Sanbrick). The land-locked nature of Marown, unique amongst the parishes, also suggested that the two were once joined. Until 1796, the parishes formed the Sheading of Middle in the Southside of the island, together with the parish of Braddan, but it now forms part of the Northside. Davies also noted that the number of representatives sent to the gathering of the Manx parliament, Tynwald, has traditionally been sixteen.

Besides forming distinct geographical units, the parishes are found to incorporate a share of arable land, grass pasture, and rough grazing. The resources have been shared out evenly amongst the parishes, so that each has land on which to pursue a mixed-farming economy (Birch 1954).

The parishes, as they are today, are believed to have been created around the time of Olaf 1 (c.1103-54), and c.1135 the new Romanised diocese of Sodor and Man was confirmed by him (B. Megaw 1964:188). The twelfth century was a period when the Celtic churches were undergoing

change generally, so that they could be brought into line with the Roman church of Anglo-Norman Britain and the Continent. Changes, for example, were occurring in the Northern and Western Isles (Cant 1972;1984). The diocesan cathedral was located on St. Patrick's Isle, Peel, and excavations by Radford (1977:3) demonstrated that the earliest recognisable cathedral could be dated to the twelfth century.

The importance of the parishes as ecclesiastical units is reflected in their names. Both the parish and the parish-church were known by the name of the patron to whom they had been dedicated, for example, Maughold, German, Michael etc. This was prefixed by the word *Kirk*, which stems from the Old Norse word *kirkja*. The names are thus inversion compounds and are thought to be a reflection of the contact between Norse and Gaelic peoples (M.Gelling 1971:172-3). However, as the names only appear in late sources, the date of the introduction of the word is unknown. Two Manx words represent the English word *parish*: *kyll* and *skeerey*. Kneen (1925:xv) saw the former as being derived from Gaelic *cill* and Manx *keeill*, and the latter from the Old English *scire* or *shire*. This may, however, have entered into Manx via its Norse cognate *skiri* or Scots-Gaelic *sgire*.

(d) The Sheadings

There are six Manx sheadings: Rushen, Middle, Garff, Ayre, Michael and Glenfaba. The Deemster Divisions, Northside and Southside, each contain three sheadings, and form a court district. Today the sheadings are electoral districts for the return of members to the Manx parliament, but originally each sheading had its own law court and may also have been a tax district (Davies 1956:100). Davies pointed out that the sheadings are not physical units because the parishes that are within them are frequently diverse in character. Reilly (1988:15-6), however, felt that the sheadings provide the clearest evidence of the equitable division of the natural resources. He noted that each of the units is roughly the same size in area, and that the boundaries appeared to be distorted in such a way as to ensure that each sheading had a fair share of the mountain or common land (this is not equally shared). The best example is the sheading of Middle. Another feature is equal access to the sea, although it should be noted that the coastline

of Middle is significantly shorter than those of the other sheadings.

The word *sheading* is thought to be derived from the Middle English *scheding*, a division (O.E.D.). However, some have argued for a pre-Norse origin of the word (e.g. Kneen 1925:xv), and others a Norse (e.g. Moore 1900:153-4; Marstrander 1932:350; Kinvig 1975:12). The names of the units appear in the Court Rolls of the fifteenth century, and are referred to in the statute of 1422 (Gill 1883). Before this, Glenfaba and Lezayre are to be found in a papal edict of Pope Gregory IX, dated to 1231 (Kneen 1927:319;1929:499), and Rushen appears in an entry for 1134 in the Chronicle. It is not clear, however, whether these three names in the mediaeval documents are referring to the sheadings.

(e) The Deemster Divisions

The primary division of the island is into the *Northside*, consisting of the sheadings of Glenfaba, Michael and Ayre, and *Southside*, comprising Garff, Middle and Rushen. The boundary between them follows the water-parting across the main mountain axis (Davies 1956:100). The two areas are roughly equal in size and share the island's resources fairly evenly (Reilly 1988:16).

The Deemster was a judge, and each unit had its own chief man-of-law. The word is a northern English one, believed to have been introduced by the Stanleys in the early fifteenth century. Earlier than this, the office has been equated with the Norse *lagman* and the Celtic *Briw* (Kinvig 1975:11). The division of the island into Northside and Southside, is apparent in the Manorial Roll of the sixteenth century, but its origins are obscure. Before 1690, the laws were not written down, but held in the memories of men appointed for that purpose (Kinvig 1975:73-4). Since 1918 the two officials have been known as the First Deemster and Second Deemster.

(f) Other Land Units

The Intacks - these lie outside the treens and quarterlands, generally forming a fringe above the latter and extend to a height of 229m to 305m (750-1000'). Exeptions are to be found in the Curragh and the marshy bottom of glens (Davies 1956:111). These units are parcels of marginal land which have been enclosed from the commonland. It

appears that by the sixteenth century (the Manorial Rolls) the process of 'intacking' was well-established, and after that period they increased in number and size as enclosure could be carried out with license form the lord (see earlier section). One form of intack was called an 'Intack of Ease', and was land enclosed as an easement to the quarterland which it adjoined, or near which it lay. Such intacks were always regarded as an integral part of the quarterlands with which they were associated. Hence, intacks became inheritable land, descending in ownership with particular quarterlands through several generations (Davies 1956:111; Farrant 1937:58). In the Curragh, a different type of intack is to be found, where the dry sandy farms on the gravels in the northern parishes have long used the meadow of the Curragh. Two of the large intacks in the mountains have *eary*-names: Airey Kelly (Aryhorkell, Druidale) and Aryrody.

The Commonland - this consists of the extensive open moorland, some 10927 Ha.(27000 acres) of unappropriated and unenclosed land before the Deforesting Act of 1860 (see earlier section). Estate-owners traditionally had rights to use the commonland for rough grazing purposes and for the digging of fuel (Farrant 1937:59). The majority of the recorded 'shieling sites' lie on this type of land.

4.2 SKYE AND THE OUTER HEBRIDES

A. THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (Figs.41,42).

There is a large body of literature available, including general Scottish and general west coast volumes, more detailed surveys of groups of islands such as the Inner and Outer Hebrides, and also in-depth studies of specific islands. Useful general works include Harker (1941), Vince (1944), O'Dell and Walton (1962), Caird (1964), W. Murray (1966), F. Thompson (1974), Millman (1975) and the Macaulay Institute Soil Research surveys (Bibby *et al* 1982; Hudson *et al* 1982).

INNER HEBRIDES - SKYE

This section begins with a discussion of the main characteristics of Skye, and is followed by a description of Trotternish, the north-eastern wing of the island, where field-work was largely carried out. There is a brief mention of settlement development and land-use patterns in this area: both are considered in more detail along with

the Outer Hebridean material. Reference is made to the general works cited above, but also to Hossack (1930), W. Mackenzie (1930), A. Nicolson (1930), Learmonth (1950) and Macsween (1959a).

Skye is the largest of the Inner Hebrides, dominating the west coast of Scotland and lying athwart the Minch. In size, it is some 174,019 Ha. (430,000 acres) and contains several small parishes. It is cut by long sea-lochs and nowhere is more than 8km (5 miles) from the sea. There is considerable variation in the geology: the Sleat district in the south-east is composed of some of the oldest rocks; the neighbouring district of Strath is largely of Torridonian and Cambrian rocks, and the central part of the island is built essentially of Tertiary plutonic rocks. Here are the Cuillin and Blaven ranges, composed mainly of gabbro, which contrast well with the smoother outline of the granite 'Red Hills'. To the north-west is the largest continuous extent of basalt-plateau country.

Over 305m (1000') there is generally ice-scoured rock, screes on steep slopes or poor skeletal soils. Below, the soils vary broadly with the underlying rocks. The arable soils are generally light but tend to be acid, and at low altitudes there is a tendency towards waterlogging and the formation of hard pan in level areas. At higher altitudes peat tends to form, even on slopes. In the northern part of Skye soils from the basalt bedrock or moraine are better and rich in potash although still leached and acid. The lowlands of the 'waist' between Broadford and Lochs Slapin and Eishort, are very peaty. In Sleat, settlement is dependent upon raised beaches.

There is a small extent of woodland on Skye. Birch-hazel association appears to have been the climax vegetation of much of the island, except for surfaces over 305m (1000') or 610m (2000') in a few favourable areas. On the basalt lavas there are residual patches of pure hazel. On the Torridonian area of Sleat, there are some residual oak woods. Apart from the plantations on the big estates the rest of Skye is grassland. In the wetter and higher regions there are coarse grasses and sedges; on the lower and drier surfaces there are better grasses and a little heather.

The crofting system (Appendix 6) prevails, although there are

several estates and farms. Inbye land on the island consists of some 8,094 Ha. (20,000 acres) and of this only about one fifth is ploughed. Improved land has a coastal distribution and occurs in patches on the lower and less rugged lands where, sometimes, the presence of raised beaches or blown sand encourages cultivation. In some areas, the improved land extends for a kilometre or so inland along the sheltered valleys. This small amount of land compared with the total area, reflects the different types of land which are to be found in Skye. The northern two-thirds of Skye, the basalt-plateau country, has the smooth western glens of Trotternish, Haultin, Romesdal, Hinnisdal and Uig, which are good feeding grounds for cattle and sheep. Here, crofting lands are on raised beaches and extend along the valleys. In contrast, the south-eastern peninsula of Sleat is poor, peat covering the flatter parts and bogland being common. Here, the crofts are small. However, in the south-eastern part of Sleat, there is a coastal strip of some 4.8km (3 miles) in width with little peat, and consequently more prosperous farms. The Cuillins are of no use for pastoral purposes and the red granite area to the east is of little use, although sheep graze successfully on the northerly hill of Glamaig. Settlement and cultivation are not found above a height of 122m (400'), and archaeological evidence suggests that this tendency has long existed (Learmonth 1950:79).

Land use today involves the rearing of livestock, farming and crofting, but the greatest potential lies in the former. In the past some 40,000 head of cattle were exported to the Lowlands from the island per annum. Cattle are largely kept for beef but there are a few dairy farms. Now about 4,500 animals are exported each year. The average livestock holding on a croft is some four cows and fifty ewes. The sheep bred on Skye are almost all either Blackface or Cheviot breed, and about 12,000 are exported each year (F. Thompson 1974:233). A greater part of the arable land is devoted to oats, potatoes and bare fallow. Fishing also plays an important part in the economy.

Trotternish

This is the eastern 'wing' of Skye (Gaelic *An t'-Eilean Sgiathanach*, 'The Winged Isle'), the north-eastern peninsula of the

island, north of the corridor of lowland between Portree and Skeabost. It includes the parish of Kilmuir, part of the parish of Snizort, and the Scorrybreck district of the parish of Portree. These are only part of the historic province of Iochdar Trotternish ('Nether Trotternish'), as contrasted with the Braes of Trotternish to the south of Portree (Macsween 1959a:1). The dominant feature of the geology is the plateau of tertiary basalt. The major topographic feature is the central escarpment, but of importance are the major glens of Uig, Hinnisdale, Romesdal and Haultin.

Settlement is largely peripheral but on the west side there are ribbons extending into the centre along the valleys. Most of the crofting townships on the east side are situated on volcanic rocks. Portree and Stenscholl, a township in Staffin, are located on raised beaches, as is the settlement fringing Uig Bay on the west coast. On the Plain of Kilmuir, the main settled area is on basalts, or at least, on the talus slopes of lava escarpments. The basalts weather relatively easily and produce a distinctive loamy soil, iron rich, and reddish in colour. This light loam is free-draining and easily worked, and very fertile by Hebridean standards. The high precipitation, however, especially at high altitudes, means that the soil is rather acid in character. There is also a mantle of drift and boulder clay in the Plain, producing clay soil, which is heavy, sticky and stony. This type of soil is found in East Trotternish, especially at Rigg and Tote, and on this side of the island peat and peaty soil forms an element in nearly all agricultural land. *Lazy-bed* cultivation (see section on land-use) is very well adapted to both clay and peaty soils.

THE OUTER HEBRIDES (Ross and Cromarty and Inverness-shire)

Apart from the general works cited above, reference has been made to the following: Carmichael (1884); J. Macdonald (1811); J. Walker (1904); Stevens (1925); Geddes (1955); G. Davies (1956); Jaatinen (1957); Moisley (1960;1966); W. Ritchie (1967); Dodgshon (1973); J. Macleod (1974); Fenton (1976, 1987); D. Macdonald (1978); F. Shaw (1980); Ennew (1980) and F. Thompson (1984).

The islands forming the Outer Hebrides, the Western Isles, or 'The Long Island', extend northward from Barra Head to the Butt of Lewis,

cover some 2 degrees 17' of latitude, and are like an '...arcuate barrier or breakwater beyond the west coast of Scotland ...' (Jaatinen 1957:6). The maximum length of the group is 218 km (136 miles), and the greatest breadth, in south Lewis, is 48 km (30 miles). The total land area is 177.226 Ha. There are about ten islands of some size, the most important of these being Lewis-Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, and Barra, and some fifteen of the total number of islands were inhabited in 1957. Appendix 7 lists the islands which form the Outer Hebrides, and for information on the deserted islands, reference should be made to Moisley (1966). Lewis is part of Ross and Cromarty, and the rest of the islands are part of Inverness-shire.

(a) Geology and relief

The islands are composed primarily of Achaean rocks. Gneisses form the greater part but are broken down in many places by intrusions of igneous rock, particularly granites. These are to be found in parts of Barra and in the hills in the middle of Lewis (Ben Barvas, Ben Bragar). Basaltic intrusions also occur (St. Kilda). The gneiss weathers to a thin and acid soil which supports a blanket of thick peat. The only exception is the area of Torridonian sandstones north-east of Stornoway, where there is a deeper layer of primary soil. A major problem is the impervious nature of the rock foundation which means that surface run-off predominates and drainage is very difficult. The relief of the island is marked by an ancient peneplane surface, and there are two types of landscape associated with it, the type depending upon the level of this surface. The first is characterised by lakes and penetrating sea inlets and the second is a landscape of marshes, lakes and slow-running waters, formed where the peneplane has only relatively recently been uplifted. The rugged region of Harris and south Lewis have been formed where there has been considerable uplift by tectonic action and deep-cut erosion features, modified by ice, have occurred. Land of this type can also be found along the eastern side of the Uists and Benbecula, and in most of Barra. Along the western shores, sandbars and dunes have been created by submergence and strong winds. Well-developed dune areas occur in Barvas (Lewis), on some parts of the west coast of Harris, are almost uninterrupted on the west coast of

North Uist, Benbecula and South Uist, and are occasional features on the west coast of Barra. Raised beaches are poorly developed. It is possible to draw a distinction between the west side of the Outer Hebrides, with its flat or gently rolling topography, and the east which is characterised by a broken terrain, with a mass of islands, winding fiords, lakes, hillocks and valleys.

(b) Soils and vegetation

The soils are largely formed on three main parent materials: peat, windblown shelly sand and drifts derived from Lewis gneisses. Apart from the peat, the most important soils are the moraines and boulder clays. These form a thin layer, which is rarely more than one metre in depth, over the bedrock. Drainage of these soils is very difficult as a result of the irregularities in the terrain, but even more of a problem is the fact that the soil cover is too thin and is often covered with a layer of peat. Peat blankets most of the surface of the Outer Hebrides, with the exception of the steepest slopes, and often reaches great thicknesses (2-4m). The peat has been formed under favourable climatic conditions. Human activities have been responsible for a change in conditions in many areas, for example the removal of birch forests, over-grazing, attempts at cultivation, and peat-cutting. The latter results in the existence of 'skinned land', which is sometimes of extremely barren character and is difficult to improve. In areas where peat cutting has covered an entire area and the subsoil has been exposed, a terrain is produced in which the peat trenches alternate with patches of bare earth or rock: such tracts are classified as 'badlands' (Jaatinen 1957:16). The other soils are the drier *machair* soils (Appendix 8), lime-rich and having good potential for arable and grazing practices. The machairs are among the main areas of agricultural activity.

The most notable feature of the vegetation is the complete absence of trees. Many parts were formerly wooded, at least by low birchscrub and by occasional pine trees, as can be seen from the remnants of both in the peat. Grazing, as well as being responsible for the end of what little tree cover there was, has also made an impact on every other form of vegetation. The only areas where there are exceptions are small

islands in the lakes, steep slopes, and to some extent the boggy moors. The sandy parts of the coastal fringe support dune-vegetaion which is dominated by Marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*). Behind this, the *machair* vegetation is to be found. This consists of a number of annual or biennial grasses, many *papilionaceae* (*leguminosae*) and daisies (*Bellis perennis*). This zone develops only where the shore is sandy and level. Elsewhere a tall meadow vegetation is to be found above the virtually bare, rocky shore. The vegetation is protected from grazing during the first part of the summer and is allowed to mature for hay. Grass-like plants include: *Molinia caerulea*; *Juncus*-; *Scirpus*-, and *Carex*- species. Further inland, the vegetation becomes boggy-moorland where the land is low and flat, and the tussocky moors provide the best grazing for cattle of breeds other than the Highland. The dominant vegetation is different species of *Carex* (sedges). On the poorer ground, especially where there is a thick layer of peat, the vegetation is dominated by *Eriophorum vaginatum* (Harestail/Cotton grass), mixed with poor heather and low grasses or sedges. The steepest slopes and areas which are almost completely denuded of a soil cover, are occupied by a vegetation of low grasses and moss.

(c) Climate

Stevens (1925:86) concluded, in a study of Lewis, that the land was rendered a desert of water by the climate. Humidity and precipitation play a dominant role in the maritime climate of the islands, as does the wind. There is a small annual range in temperatures, which are relatively high. There is a long frost-free period, but of the possible hours of sunshine only a third are obtained. The precipitation usually comes in the form of drizzling rain, and rainy days are numerous, averaging at Stornoway more than two out of three. However, further south, in South Uist for example, there are fewer rainy days and more hours of sunshine. Rainfall is strongly influenced by the relief of the area and increases rapidly with altitude. The lowest average annual rainfall is on the east and west coasts of Lewis (1000-2000mm), because of the rain-shadow effect and low altitudes. The rest of the islands experience an average of 1200-1400mm annually. The average windspeed and storm frequency reach extremely high figures for the Butt of Lewis,

but this northernmost part of Lewis is somewhat more windy than the rest of the area of the Outer Hebrides. The predominant winds are south-westerly to westerly, but during late winter or early spring intrusions of cold polar air sometimes occur, bringing with them easterly or north-easterly winds. These retard the spring growth of vegetation and can injure it. The islands can essentially be divided into two areas on the basis of the climate: a colder, damper and less sunny northern part, and a more favoured southern part. Barra and South Uist have a climate which is noticeably better than that of the rest of the island group. It is also possible to draw a distinction between a drier western and more rainy eastern zone. As far as agriculture is concerned, the long frost-free period allows different tasks to be distributed over a great part of the year, the period of vegetative growth is unusually long, which is useful in the cultivation of vegetables. However, the mean temperature and the 'heat total' are comparatively low and when combined with the plentiful and evenly distributed rainfall produce a climate which is humid and does not favour grain cultivation. This factor also demands special techniques of cultivation, such as *lazy-bed* cultivation. Wind is also a problem in that it can cause damage to leaf and stem, and can wither vegetation. To combat this, in areas where there is a plentiful supply of suitable materials, dry-stone walls have been erected around the in-bye land and around the most valuable areas of cultivation.

B. LAND USE

(a) THE EMERGENCE OF THE SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Settlements in the Outer Hebrides, with the exception of Achmore in Lewis, are all close to the sea. In Trotternish, although settlement tends to be peripheral, it extends along the major valleys: there are none which are more than 5km from the sea. This pattern has emerged either because of the restrictive nature of the land making settlement elsewhere impossible, the creation of crofting townships, or as a result of clearances during the nineteenth century for sheep, and then deer in many areas (Millman 1975:90).

Before crofting appeared, a *run-rig*, open-field system, associated with clustered settlement and transhumance prevailed. The heart of each

farming community was the *infield*, also called the croft-land or the mucked land. This was the most productive land, nearest to the houses, manured with some regularity, and planted with cereal crops, mainly oats and bere (Fenton 1987:16-7). There was also a considerable extent of grazing held in common. The nearer portions of the grazing were frequently exploited and were known as *outfield*. The function of this more extensive area was to provide general resources such as turf, close-at-hand grazing, and a crop of oats. It was divided into a greater number of units than the infield, and every year a fold for stock was created for the purpose of manuring the land. Other parts were left fallow after cropping for as long as it took for the grass to regenerate. In some parts of Lewis and Harris holdings were run completely on an outfield system. The rest of the grazing area was the rough grazing or moorland. This provided both near grazing and the remoter shieling or hill pasture areas, and peat and turf. The system of *run-rig* (Gaelic *Mor Earann*, 'Great Division'; *Mor Fhearann*, 'Great Land', Carmichael 1884:451) involved the subdivision, or fragmentation, of land by a community of landowners. Individual holdings consisted of fragmented strips or parcels of land, intermixed one with another. Run-rig has survived in some cases on the sandy machair land: it existed still, in a modified form, in Hougharry, North Uist in the 1970s (Millman 1975:97). Carmichael noted in 1884 (1884:463) that the farms of Hosta, Caolas Paipil and Heisgeir were still worked entirely on the 'Run-Rig System'. The major effect of this rather complex system on the settlement pattern was that there was a tendency towards the agglomeration of dwellings.

This system became inefficient through time: population pressure on land grew, there were agricultural problems, and people became involved in 'industrial pursuits' such as fishing. With the destruction of the run-rig, crofting townships developed, with their ranks of individual held allotments and grazings held in common. The term applied to the creation of the townships out of the older joint farms was 'enclosure', although in reality there were rarely any physical boundaries between crofts. The main aims of the policy of township creation were: a desire to encourage fishing and kelping by placing larger populations on

minute holdings in favourable coastal locations; a desire to improve and reclaim portions of estates by means of lotting the least desirable parts of it, and the creation of larger crofts on some of the more fertile farms, with the ultimate desire to place these townships under single tenants (Macsween 1959a:119). Clachans of the older system were abandoned and each tenant built his home on his own croft, leading to the emergence of a largely linear form of settlement along the access tracks to townships (Gaelic *baile*). In Skye, examples are Stenscoll, Garrafad, Grealine and Breckry in Trotternish. In North Uist, in 1814, the proprietor lotted individual compact holdings for such small tenants as held land from him direct, thus crofts were formed at Knockline, Balemore and Knockintorran (Moisley 1960:24).

The formation of the townships was followed by another period of reorganisation involving not only the clearance of townships but also the emigration of large numbers of crofters. Wholescale clearance was carried out in order to form consolidated sheep farms. In Trotternish, small tenants were cleared from all the small townships of Borve and were added to the tack of Skerrinish. A similar process took place in Kilmuir. A movement of crofters had occurred in South Uist by the end of the nineteenth century. Carmichael (1884:458-9) recorded that the greater and best part of the machair had been cleared of crofters by the time of his survey and that the townlands were converted into large farms. Some of the evicted crofters were forced to emigrate, and those who remained had to share the lands of those crofters 'huddled together, generally among rocks and bogs'. Evictions began in earnest in Lewis, in the parish of Uig, about 1823 (Macdonald 1978:161-4). Kirkibost and Little Bernera were cleared to become part of Linshader Farm: this was part of a plan to make this parish and that of Lochs into large grazing farms. Further evictions continued, for example the townships behind Mealista and Mangersta, and from 1825-28 the tenants of Uig were deprived of their wintering islands and much of their moorland pasture. The first sheep farm was established in the Park area of Lochs early in the nineteenth century. The parishes of Barvas and Stornoway had fewer evictions because more arable land was available but many townships such as Upper Barvas (Barvas) and Gress (Stornoway)

were cleared. In Harris also, land was leased to sheep farmers, and the nineteenth century witnessed the clearing of the arable and pasture land of the Atlantic coast and the re-settlement of those who did not emigrate among the barren rocks of the eastern sea-board (Grimble 1985:125-6). Congestion became a problem in many areas, rents were raised and impoverishment was rife.

Along with the loss of the townships was a loss of large areas of hill-grazing to the expanding farms. Heribusta in Trotternish, for example, lost its entire hill pasture to Duntulm (Macsween 1959a:160), and in Lewis the hill grazing of the crofters at Bernera, stretching from the Uig Road to Loch Bruiche Breiavat, Loch Langabhat and Loch Coiregerod, was lost after the creation of the sporting estates of Morsgail and Scaliscro in 1872, and the crofters were offered the moorland between the land and the sea formerly belonging to the tack of Earshader.

The situation of the crofter improved considerably after the Crofters' Act of 1886 (Appendix 6). Now the townships were recognised as important social entities, the crofters were given fixity of tenure and the right to bequeath their holdings to a relative, a 'Fair Rents' tribunal was appointed, and an attempt was made to relieve congestion. There was, however, no provision made for the administration of the common pasture. The livestock regulation, or *souming*, was neglected, and the pastures became over-stocked, and became infertile.

The passing of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act of 1897 led to the Appointment of Congested District Boards (Macsween 1959a:171-2; Macdonald 1978:48-9). A congested district constituted a parish in which the valuation of the population in 1891 was less than 35 shillings. Efforts in such districts were made to improve agriculture, fishing and in the case of Lewis to encourage the tweed industry. The improvement of animal stock was given much attention, Highland and Ayrshire bulls were introduced, and seeds and implements were provided. In Lewis, the introduction of the bulls resulted in the production of a larger type of cow, too heavy for the boggy moors. The enlargement of holdings, however, was very slow, but in areas such as Trotternish, the resettlement programme was very successful (Macsween 1959a:172-6).

Seven new townships with large crofts and ample grazing were established by 1910: Conon, Linicro, Duans, Sartle, Cuidreach, North Duntulm and South Duntulm. Also other crofts were added to the 35 pre-existing townships. The farm of Skerinish, in the parish of Snizort, was acquired by the Congested District Board and 30 holdings were formed on the cleared townships at Borve and Annishadder. The final phase in the resettlement took place after the First World War, when the farms of Scorrybreck and Kingsburgh were broken up into the townships of Torvaig, Achachork, Tote and Kingsburgh, all primarily sheep-rearing townships.

In summary, the evolution of the present-day settlement pattern has been the result of the superimposition of several types, each associated with a specific phase of the rural economy (Macsween 1959a:177).

(b) LAND-USE

The following four zones can be identified in the Outer Hebrides: the *Machair*; the *Black-land*; the *Gëarraidh*, and the *Monadh* (Jaatinen 1957:19). The Machair (Appendix 8), or the dune zone, has a comparatively dry sandy soil, shallow sea-bays, lagoons or lakes, and is used for both arable and grazing purposes. The Blackland is the main area of settlement, consists of numerous lakes, rocks which are partly covered with a thin morainic layer or peat, the larger part of which has already been used. The Gëarraidh, or foothills, have better, and often the best, pasture. This is the *skinned* ground, boulder clay exposed through peat-digging forming the basis of a reasonable soil when worked with shell-sand and seaweed (Ennew (1980:9). Although the land can be used for arable purposes it is used predominantly for cattle grazing. The Monadh, the highest mountainous parts, provide rough pasture and are largely used for sheep. The division of the land in permanent use and the moorland has traditionally been marked by the head-dyke.

The inhabitants do not generally own the land that they work, but hold it under crofting tenure (Appendix 6). The patch of land rented by the crofter is in size about 0.4-2.1 Ha. (1-5 acres). On this, the occupier has the right to build a house. Besides this land, the crofter

also has rights in common grazings and in peat banks (Ennew 1980:13). It was not until the 1820s-1840s that the crofts became marked out in anything like their present form. In Uist, the crofts are larger than those in Lewis and Harris, the land being more fertile, and there are possibilities of crofting becoming a more full-time occupation. Here cattle-rearing has developed to a considerable extent (Jaatinen 1957:12). Traditionally, crofting has had to be supplemented by income from other activities such as fishing and weaving. In Lewis, in general, crofts are becoming less important for their agricultural value and more important as sites for homes (Ennew 1980:50-1; Thompson 1984:37-47). On the west coast the holdings are particularly small, whilst on the north-east side crofts are somewhat bigger, and land utilization is more intense. In earlier days, there were a number of larger agricultural units but few are left. Examples include the farms around Stornoway which specialise in dairying, and in South Harris and North Uist there are a few sheep farms.

Oats occupy the greatest amount of the tilled area, replacing barley as the most important cereal of the region. The most rapid change occurred during the 1930s, and has been explained by Jaatinen (1957:48) as a response to the requirement of the cereals for fodder, for which purpose oats are more suitable. Barley is mostly cultivated in the Uists, and is to some extent in north-western Lewis, but its area has been rapidly decreasing. Oats were formerly grown mostly on *lazy-beds*, but now are replacing barley on the machair.

The *lazy-beds* (Gaelic *feannagan*) are one of the most conspicuous features of the agrarian landscape of the Outer Hebrides, although the cultivation of them has decreased markedly. Fields are usually on the infield land, but formerly extensive areas of the outfield with peaty soil were cultivated in this way. The beds are small, rectangular ridge-like formations, c.3m (10') long and 1.2m (4') wide, which combine the functions of drainage and fertilisation. They are formed by the spreading of shell-sand on the required area, digging a drainage ditch around it, the laying of some seaweed over the sand, and then the piling up of the peat or soil on top. In some parts of Lewis, large lazy-beds can be seen on slopes, built up to a considerable height at

their down-slope ends and held by a retaining wall. These are permanent beds, but there are also narrower ones, of which the positions of the beds and ditches could be alternated from time to time (Jaatinen 1957:46; Ennew 1980:9; Fenton 1976:7; Fenton 1987:105).

The cultivation of potatoes uses a significant part of the arable land, and from the mid-eighteenth century became the main lazy-bed crop (Fenton 1976:7), but root crops are grown on a very small scale. Hay also occupies a small proportion of the total tilled area. It might have been expected that cultivation of hay would have been of major importance in such a maritime area, but much of the tilled grassland used to be grazed during the first part of the summer, which caused the hay crop to be both late and inferior in quality. Winter feeding of cattle and sheep has always been a problem, and even until recently has been responsible for losses.

The cattle are of the Highland, Shorthorn or Aberdeen Angus type, and all are usually kept as beef cattle. The sheep are predominantly Black-face. Prior to the introduction of intensive sheep-farming in the Hebrides, the pastoral economy was based on the use of shieling areas. Until the First World War in Lewis (Macdonald 1978:83), the annual movement of stock and people to the summer grazings was still an integral part of the life-cycle of the farming community, 'a means by which the cultivation of crops was brought into balance with animal husbandry' (Fenton 1976:126), and the practice continued in some parts until 1950 (Whitaker 1959:172). Its survival in Lewis is likely to have been related to the fact that there were fewer evictions in the island than in other Highland counties, that the island proved difficult to exploit for sheep-farming, and the fact that a higher percentage of small units survives here (Fenton 1976:133-134). Its disappearance here has been through neglect. The shieling as part of the agricultural system of the islands is studied in depth in the following chapter.

4.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has created a geographical framework for the study of the shieling practice and its remains in Man, Skye and the Outer Hebrides. It has provided information not only on the geology, relief, soils, vegetation and climate, but also on past and present land use

and, in the case of Man, the traditional land system with which the shieling practice and associated place-names are intimately bound.

CHAPTER 5: SHIELING AS PART OF THE TRADITIONAL PASTORAL ECONOMY OF THE ISLES

INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 2, the definitions of the word 'shieling' were examined, as was the terminology and the literature. This examination did not confine itself to the study area, but considered the evidence from the whole of Britain. Chapter 4 concentrated on the geography of Man and the Hebrides, looking in particular at past and present land-use, land-divisions and settlement patterns. As was clear from the discussion of the history of land-use in Man, there is no documentary record of transhumance having been practised. There is, however, such evidence from the Isles. In this chapter, the part of the traditional pastoral economy of the Isles which is described as shieling in the literature, will be explored. The study is based as far as possible on contemporary descriptions, rather than archaeological survey material, and folk-memory material is also drawn upon. Where there is a lack of detail in this material, evidence is drawn from elsewhere in the British Isles, not to complete the picture, the practice varying from one area to another, but to present the possibilities.

5.1 THE PASTORAL ECONOMY

The earliest contemporary description of a shieling in the Isles is that of Thomas Pennant (1809b:280), although there is a reference to Ascrib, Lingay and Iuvard being used for *scheling* in R.W. Munro (1961). On July 1st 1772, Pennant saw on Jura 'some sheelins or summer huts for goatherds, who keep here a flock of eighty for the sake of milk and cheeses.' He landed on the island, where there was a bank covered with *sheelins*, occupied by peasants attending a herd of milch-cows.

In the account of his voyage to the Hebrides, Pennant noted the importance of cattle in the economy of the islands. For example, he wrote that Islay (1809b:287) was over-stocked, and that large numbers of cattle were dying in March for want of fodder. Only the milk cows were housed. This was also true amongst the poorer tenants in Skye (1809b:324ff.), who often could only keep the animals alive during the winter months by giving them their own food. This situation contrasted

sharply with that of the greater tenants on the island, who kept their stock during the winter in 'winter-parks', the driest and best ground that the tenants possessed. Here, the animals were kept until April, when they were turned on to the moor-grass which springs first, and at night were driven back to the dry ground again. On Rum (1809b:313), Pennant noted that there was no winter hay available, and that the animals had to support themselves on spots of grass reserved for that purpose. On Iona (1809b:294) the pasturage was held in common, and had to support all the stock, there being no heath in the island. The best island for pasturage, according to Pennant, was Colonsay (1809b:292), with its rocky hills, and a 'variety of pretty meandering vales full of grass'.

Pennant, however, was not the first traveller to note the pastoral nature of the islands and the virtues of some as breeding grounds for cattle. Early writers such as John of Fordun (1380), John Major (1521) and Hector Boece (1527), writing of the Highlands and Western Isles commented on this (Fenton 1980:94). Descriptions by Munro (R.W. Munro 1961) and Martin (1809a;1981), the former of the sixteenth century and the latter of the seventeenth, show that the islands existed on a mixture of small-scale arable and stock farming. Pennant's eighteenth century account and Carmichael's nineteenth century survey (1884) point to the continuation of this pattern. As Fenton (1980:94) emphasised, however, the value of many areas for grazing was not only recognised by the travellers and by Carmichael, it was also recognised by the lairds, who extracted rent from them through their factors or tacksmen.

As in Scandinavia, the grass was utilised in more than one stage. Around Whitsun, the cattle and the sheep were put on the land lying immediately behind the arable - in Gaelic the *géarraidh*, *cúl-cinn*, *sliabh* or *beinn* (Fenton 1980:99). In some areas, such as North Tolsta in Lewis, these spring grazings had a 'spring dwelling', *tigh earraich* (Macdonald 1978:83). This was built like one of the blackhouses and could shelter the milch cows and calves on cold nights. This 'spring dwelling' made it possible for the stock to be sent earlier to the moors, particularly when fodder was scarce after a bad winter.

5.2 MOVEMENT TO THE SUMMER PASTURES AND THE COMPOSITION OF HERDS AND FLOCKS

The most detailed description is that of Carmichael (1884). His survey of 1884 (1884:451-482), points to the fact that, by this time, shielings had disappeared from South Uist but not from North Uist. In the case of the former, he wrote that when the '...crofters had the hills, they migrated to them every summer season with their flocks.' (1884:459). It appears that the cattle and the other stock were now grazed on the machairs during the summer and the autumn, and that they were herded by one or two herdsman (1884:462). In North Uist, Carmichael (1884:469-73) found that the people, having finished their tillage, went '...early in June to the hill-grazing with their flocks'. Thomas (1867:177) noted that the people went to the pastures soon after mid-June, and John Matheson (Appendix 11) claimed that it was at the beginning of June. June appears to have been the month during which people departed for the summer pastures in Scotland generally (Gaffney 1959:30), and in northern Europe, Sandvig (1942:10), for example, noted that the movement to the high fells in Norway took place on St. John's Day (24th June). D. Macdonald (1978:80), however, wrote that in Lewis, it was on the 13th May (on *Bealltuinn*, or *La Buidhe Bealltuinn*) that all animals, except those tethered, had to be removed from the arable land and sent to their summer pastures beyond the *Gãradh Dubh*, 'Black Dyke'. In 'Tolastadh Bho Tuath' (Stornoway Gazette 1951:3), this is also the date given.

Further south in Britain, it appears that the migration to the shielings was in May. Joliffe (1926:12) noted in pre-thirteenth century charters in Northumbria that by May the cattle were being removed to the hill pastures, where the herds of many vills had their shielings. This is also true of Ireland and Wales (Graham 1953:75; O'Danachair 1945b:250; Sayce 1956:135; O'Dubhthaigh (1984:47). There are two very important days in the Old Celtic year, May 1st, the first day of summer, and November 1st, the first day of winter. Graham (1953:75) and O'Dubhthaigh (1984:48-9) wrote that, in Ireland, the return from the shielings was at the end of October. By about November Day the potatoes had been dug and the work finished by the people on the land by the

seashore. The harvest was ready to be gathered in. After this was done, there was much grass left along the furrows, and the cattle and sheep were allowed to wander over the townland. In his account of South Uist, Carmichael (1884:459) recorded that the people and their animals had returned to the townlands when 'their corn was ripe for shearing'. The animals then grazed on the harvested land. D. Macdonald (1978:80) wrote that *Lunasdal*, the 1st of August, was the day that the animals returned from the distant summer pastures to the village *cúl*, hinterland, between the *Gáradh Dubh* and the dykes protecting the arable land. After the harvest was gathered in the animals could roam at will over the crofts. The return date in 'Tolastadh Bho Tuath' (1951:3) was the last Friday in July. John Matheson's record that six weeks were spent at the summer pastures would suggest a return date in the middle of July. The night of the movement back to the homesteads was called *Oidhche na h-Iomraich*, 'Night of the Flitting'.

Carmichael (1884:469-70) produced a very detailed account of the actual movement to the pastures. The sheep were taken first, the cattle next, and the horses last. The men carried:

> '..burdens of sticks, heather-ropes, spades, and other things needed to repair their summer huts (Sgitheil, Bothain). The women carry bedding, meal, dairy and cooking utensils...When the grazing-ground has been reached and the burdens are laid down, the huts are repaired outwardly and inwardly, the fires are rekindled, and food is prepared.'

In the Highlands, D. Campbell (1896:68-9) recorded that there was a 'small flitting' and a 'big flitting' to the shielings. The first movement involved the young and yeld animals and the horses which were not needed for farm work: they were taken to those places on the hill-grazings where the spring grass began to sprout freely. The boys herded the animals, but were accompanied by the men who went up to repair and thatch the huts and to see that the store of the previous year's peat would last until the new peats came into use. O'Dubhthaigh (1984:42-54) recorded similar activities in North-West Donegal, the men going to the summer shielings first to cut the turf and build the huts. When everything was ready the main movement occurred, in the case of

the Highlands the 'big flitting': the lads drove the animals to the pastures, and the men carried up such things as meal and potatoes. O'Dubhthaigh wrote that the women carried their spinning wheels, whilst Campbell (1896:69) listed: milk vessels; churns; cheese presses; pots; pans; meal bags; salt arks; rennet apparatus; blankets; clothing; shoes and stockings; spinning wheels; spindles and distaffs; and flax and wool, which were all packed into light peat carts hauled by the horses. Once the huts had been prepared for occupation, the

> '...people bring forward their stock (*Leibhidh*), every man's stock separately, and, as they are being driven into the enclosure, the constable and another man at either side of the gateway see that only the proper souming has been brought to the grazing. This precaution over, the cattle are turned out to graze.' (Carmichael 1884:470).

The common pastures were usually counted in *soums*, the term applying to the number of animals that could be maintained on a certain area of grazing, thus the carrying capacity of the land. The basic control was the amount of winter fodder that could be produced from the arable areas in the form of straw, and from the meadow patches in the form of hay (Fenton 1980:96). Carmichael (1884:468-9) recorded that in the Outer Hebrides the crofters kept stock according to recognised, long-established, regulations amongst themselves. These varied from one place to another. In Lewis and Harris the crofters kept stock according to every pound of rent they paid, and this was called the *Coir-Sgoraidh*, grazing right. Every cow was entitled to her progeny. However, the number of progeny to which she was entitled varied from one place to another: she could have her calf only; her calf and stirk; her calf, stirk and two year old quey, or her calf, stirk, quey and a three year old heifer. This is the *soum*, and a man was entitled to send so many to the grazings, hence his *souming*. Where a tenant had an overstock of one type of animal and an understock of another, a system of equivalents could be used, called *Coilpeachadh*, 'equalizing'. Appendix 9 contains the equivalents quoted by Carmichael (1884:469) as being fairly representative of the Outer Hebrides at the end of the nineteenth century.

The *souming* regulations applied not only to the numbers of animals which were taken to the shielings but also to the general stock of cattle grazed on sections of the outfield, to which they were confined by dykes in order to fertilise the ground for a crop of oats. However, other than this, the animals ran on the common grazings outside the head-dyke. The *souming* was a means of controlling the grazing on these areas, and various ways were used, for example crofters in a township may have had equal shares, the general common may have been shared between a number of townships, or the grazings could have been split into two parts - the machair and the hill. The *souming* could be worked out on the basis of each £1 of rent or upon the acreage of the croft (Fenton 1980:97-8). The regulation of the common grazings was the responsibility of township constables, who kept watch over the livestock and ensured that they were kept clear of the arable land. The old regulations and the practice of going to the hills in spring and summer, thus meant that the in-bye land was relieved of grazing and given a chance to recover.

5.3 THE SHIELING PERSONNEL AND ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT AT THE PASTURES

Carmichael's account (1884:469-70) indicates that the whole community was involved in the movement to the shielings, as do the records of shieling elsewhere. However, once the huts had been repaired, the *souming* had been checked by the constable, the 'removing feast' (*Feisd na h-imrig*), or 'shieling feast' (*Feisd na h-áiridh*), had been eaten and a prayer said or hymn sung (Appendix 10), the men returned to the wintertown. They were responsible for the farm-work, repairing the winter dwellings and were often involved in fishing activities. It is interesting to note, however, that MacCulloch (1936:213) recorded that in Skye the whole township migrated to the hill pasture with their sheep and cattle. It is still clear though, that the shieling was largely the preserve of women, generally young women. Hugh Miller, in the nineteenth century (quoted by Miller 1967a:196) remarked on the youth and good-looks of the girl that greeted him at the shieling on Eigg; A. Mitchell (1880:58), visiting beehive houses at Larach Tigh Dubhstail, found one that was occupied by

three young women; Carmichael (1884:472) recorded that 'invariably two or three strong healthy girls share the same shealing', and Campbell (1944:49) noted that there were usually two girls in charge of the Lewis shielings. He also wrote, however, that if the girls were required for some reason at the main farm, their place was taken by old people and young lads. Thomas (1860b:137) wrote that he met a young boy at the shieling at Fidigidh Iochdrach in Lewis, and from the descriptions of D. Campbell (1896:69-70) it would appear that it was the boys who were often responsible for the herding of the animals. Campbell remarked that there were few of the shieling boys who could not milk cows, goats and sheep, but they believed these to be the work of the women. The milkmaids were known in Gaelic as *banachagan*.

Thus, while the boys, or one of the young women, was away with the animals during the day, the women at the shieling were involved in dairying activities (butter and cheese-making), spinning, and the gathering of root and herbs for such things as dyeing and for medicinal purposes (Campbell 1896:70). There is no single detailed description of the activities at the shielings in the Isles, but in his account of the shielings on Jura, Pennant (1809:280) recorded the presence of dairy vessels in the huts and certain shelves to hold the cheese (see below), and Hugh Miller (quoted in Miller 1967:196) also noted in Eigg, both the utensils and the produce of the dairy:

> 'flat wooden vessels of milk, a butter-churn, and a tub half-filled with curd; while a few cheeses, soft from the press, lay on a shelf above.'

He wrote that the two other female occupants of the shieling were 'out at the milking' and that all of them were 'employed in making butter and cheese for their master'. In the descriptions of the boths by Thomas (1860a; 1860b; 1867), important architectural features are the shelves in the walls used for the storage of milking utensils and the milk products themselves, and Carmichael (1884:472) wrote that the girls '..remain making butter and cheese till the corn is ripe for shearing..'.

A. Campbell (1944:246-7), from his observations of shieling in Lewis, wrote that the cattle went to graze at about six o'clock in the

morning. They usually recognised one cow as their leader and followed wherever she led. Often the animals chose the pastures themselves, but sometimes they were led to some ungrazed part by the head girl. By nine o'clock they were back at the huts to be milked, and they then stayed near to the dwellings until three o'clock in the afternoon, when they moved off to graze again, this time further afield. The evening milking took place between nine and ten o'clock. The milk was kept in dishes placed in the niches in the walls, and it was skimmed every morning and evening. The girls churned once a week, usually on Fridays, and they also made cheeses. Thomas (1860b:137-138), with reference to the shieling at Fidigidh Iochdrach, Lewis, remarked that the important thing was that the cattle had to be kept well fed, and although there was a plentiful supply of excellent grass on the hills, the attendants had to bring from the farm, creels of grass and weeds, and possibly the backbones of fish for the cow if she refused to give her milk. It is interesting to note that John Matheson (Appendix 11) stated, in answer to the question 'Is the milk sent home or do they [the women] make butter and cheese?', that the milk was brought home every day. It was brought by the 'milkman' every morning.

The gathering of fodder for the cattle, to keep them alive during the winter months, does not appear to have been an important feature of the shielings in the Hebrides: this appears to be true of Britain generally. Even as late as 1955, Geddes (1955:73) wrote that '...the hay harvest is insignificant and until this century it hardly existed except for a little put by in a tiny barn.' There is, though, one interesting reference to cropping in Lewis. This is by A.A. Macgregor (1933:213), and is in connection with a tragedy that occurred at Dune Tower in the north of Lewis, some fifty years before the book was written. The story goes that a group of young women went from their Bilascleiter shielings to Dune Tower at Cellar Head. The purpose of this was to 'reap with sickles the luscious grass' which grew on the treacherous ledges to which the cattle could not gain access. One of the women, attempting to do this, fell to her death on the rocky shore below. Although this account points to the cutting of grass to feed the cattle at the pastures, rather than the cropping of it for winter use,

it is worth noting. The raising of crops also appears to have been unimportant, although there are references to the raising of crops at summer dwellings in some parts of mainland Scotland. In Assynt, the shielings were marked by the more or less regular cropping that went on around them. When they were surveyed by John Home in the 1760s, he noted that the Inver shielings were better adapted for tillage than the infields of the villages, and that they gave better yields. In Clashnessie, he wrote that one-half to one-third of the shielings were 'in corn' (Miller 1967:200; Fenton 1976:130).

5.4 THE SUMMER HUTS

The first contemporary description of the shieling huts is that of Pennant in 1772 (1809b:280). These formed:

> 'a grotesque group; some were oblong, many conic, and so low that entrance is forbidden, without creeping through the little opening, which has no other door than a faggot of birch twigs, placed there occasionally: they are constructed of branches of trees, covered with sods; the furniture a bed of heath, placed on a bank of sod; two blankets and a rug; some dairy vessels, and above, certain pendant shelves made of basket work, to hold the cheese, the produce of the summer.'

There is a celebrated illustration of the huts that Pennant saw, some of which look very much like Indian tepees, and others which are smaller and more rounded in appearance.

Hugh Miller (quoted by Miller 1967a:196), writing of the 'shieling' he visited in Eigg, described it as a '...rude, low-roofed erection of turf and stone, with a door in the centre some five feet in height or so [1.5m], but with no window..'. The turf fire occupied one end of the interior, and the other end was occupied by '..a bed of dry straw, spread on the floor from wall to wall, and fenced off at the foot by a line of stones'.The middle space was occupied by the dairy utensils.

Carmichael (1884:472) and Thomas (1860a:135-7) described the dwellings still in use at the summer pastures in the Outer Hebrides. Carmichael, describing those of the people of North Uist, wrote that the:

> '..walls of the shealings in which the people live are of turf,

the roof of sticks covered with divots. There are usually two shealings together; the larger the dwelling, the smaller the dairy. This type of hut (Sgithiol) is called 'Airidh' or shealing, and 'Both cheap', or 'Bothan cheap', turf bothy; to distinguish it from the 'Both cloiche' or 'Bothan cloiche', stone bothy.'

The latter was constructed entirely of stone, '..the roof tapering to a cone more or less pointed.' Carmichael believed that the apex of the roof was probably finished off with a flag, through the centre of which was a hole to allow light in and smoke to escape. There was '..a low doorway with a removable door, seldom used, made of wicker work, wattles, heather or bent' (see Pennant above), and in the walls there were '...two, three, or four feet from the floor...recesses - Gaelic, Buthailt, Scottish 'bole' - for the various utensils in use by the people'. Low down near the ground, in the thickness of the wall were:

> '...the dormitories wherein the people sleep. The entrance to these dormitories, slightly raised above the floor, is a small hole, barely capable of admitting a person to creep through. This sleeping place is called 'Crupa', from 'Crupadh,' to crouch.'

Carmichael recorded that the above types of huts, beehives, were to be found in Lewis, and that some were to be seen in the forest of Harris. There were none, however, in either of the Uists or in Barra.

Thomas (1860a; 1860b; 1867) made a special study of the beehives of Lewis and Harris, and by the 1860s found that only in the parish of Uig were they still being used as summer dwellings. Even here, he believed that there were not more than twenty inhabited (1860b:135). The normal, and he presumed the most modern form, was the irregular circle, some 1.8-2.1m (6-7') in diameter, with walls rising perpendicular for 90cm (3'). The hole at the top, noted by Carmichael, was known as the *farlos* (Gaelic *farleus*, a 'skylight'). There were two doors in the hut, and from door to door was a row of stones, a few cms in height. This formed the *being*, 'bench, seat'. The area behind this was filled up with hay or rushes for a bed: the area was calculated to hold three people (Thomas 1860b:136). In the walls were two to four recesses, and above

the fire there was a longish stone which could be drawn in and out of the wall for the purpose of hanging the pot on. The walls on the outside of the huts had every chink filled with grass and moss, and over all of this was a thick layer of turf that grew into a single mass, which was both wind- and water-tight and gave stability to the roof. The hut which Mitchell (1880:58-59) visited at Larach Tigh Dubhstail in Lewis, consisted of two small beehives joined together and opening into each other. There was a single doorway, 0.9m (3') high and 0.6m (2') wide. The larger room was an irregular circle, and the smaller an irregular square. The former was the dwelling room and the smaller the store for the dairy products and the food. In no part of the dairy was it possible to stand erect and in the dwelling the greatest height was scarcely 1.8m (6'). The communication door between the two rooms was so small, that entrance to the dairy could only be achieved by crawling. The floor of the dwelling was divided into two spaces by a row of curb stones, which acted as seats. One part contained the fire and the other the bed.

The beehive hut in Lewis was regarded as being a structure of considerable antiquity by Thomas (1860b:140). The more modern hut built at the summer pastures was the *áiridhean*, timber-roofed and oblong in plan (Thomas 1860b:138). D. Macdonald (1978:83) described the oval hut, about 3m in length (10'), with two low gables, as an adaptation of the beehive type. The interior was similar to the beehive and the doors, almost wall high, were fairly wide. Between the gables a ridge pole was stretched, and pieces of wood, reaching from the wall-tops, formed the foundation for the turf-slabbed roof. Curwen (1938:278) also noted that the oval hut had developed out of the beehive, the interior chamber being expanded to about 3.7m (12'), and a corbelled roof consequently being impossible.

In 'Tolastadh Bho Tuath' (Stornoway Gazette 1951:3), 'sheilings' were divided into two types: the *áiridh* or 'ordinary sheiling', and the *tigh earraich* or 'spring dwelling'. The former, the most common, had an interior 3.7m by 2.1m (12' by 7') divided into two sections, one containing the fire and the other the sleeping area. The bed was built on a foundation of stones, or sometimes built into the wall. Turf was

laid on top of the stone shelf, and on this was a layer of coarse heather roots, which, in turn, was covered with a thick layer of fine heather tips or rushes. Above the fireplace in the structure were two holes, one on each side of the ridge pole, to let out the smoke. They also served as windows. The hole to windward was kept closed, usually with a slab of turf, except in dry weather. The windward of the two opposing doors was also closed with turf. W. Mackenzie (1904:184), described the *áirigh*, as a black-house in miniature. However, the type of hut which D. Macdonald (1978:83) likened to the black-house was the *tigh earraich*. This spring dwelling was large enough to house both stock and attendants, and was more comfortable than the huts described above. It had a single wooden door and there were windows on the wall-tops. Beds were sometimes built partly into the end walls, which were thickened to admit them. The stone bed was raised about three feet above the clay floor, and had a stone coping in front of it to keep the bedding from falling out. In 'Tolastadh Bho Tuath' (Stornoway Gazette 1951:3), it is recorded that the houses had low roofs, and that the outer walls were of turf and the inner of stone. Rectangular slabs of turf covered the wooden framework of the roof, with the heather side uppermost. These houses were much more habitable than the smaller ones, and through time some of the interiors took on the appearance of cottages, the walls plastered and white-washed, and the ceilings papered. It appears that there were often *bothies* or *cotain* near these huts, where young calves were kept separate from their mothers.

Curwen (1938:278-9) recorded that the most modern hut was rectangular, 4.6m-6.1m by 2.7m (15'-20' by 9') internally, about 1.2m high, and the walls were 0.8m thick. There were two doors, and the hut had a chimney. The roof was made up of planks, boards and corrugated iron, covered with a tarpaulin, and the hut was of large blocks of peat.

Carmichael (1884:472) recorded that there were, besides the sleeping quarters, smaller structures serving as dairies. Thomas (1860a:130) noted that, in Lewis, there was generally another hut, beside the *both*, which served as a storage place for such things as the milk utensils, milk, butter, etc. This feature was also noted by

Mitchell (1880:59-60). There also appears, at some pastures, to have been a place for sheltering the lambs and the calves (Thomas 1860a:130).

5.5 SITE LOCATION

Pennant's decription suggests that at least one group was placed near the coast, Pennant espying them from the boat. Once on land, he looked at a group situated on a bank. In the drawing of the site, there is a group of some five huts, located some distance from each other, and lying on level ground at the foot of a range of hills. The hut visited by Miller in the mid-nineteenth century (quoted in Miller 1967a:196) on Eigg, was located on a grassy slope, and appears to have been the only habitation in the area. Thomas (1860b:135,137-8) noted that the beehive huts (both inhabited and abandoned), were found commonly beside a stream, often at the foot of a land-cliff where huge blocks of rock were used to form one side of the huts. Occasionally, he found them at the mouth of a glen by the sea-shore. At Fidigidh Iochdrach, there were some twenty huts scattered along the burn of Fidigidh over an area of about 0.8km (0.5 miles). Mitchell (1880:58-9), also writing of Lewis, noted that one of the occupied huts he visited, a summer pasture at Larach Tigh Dubhstail, was located on the side of a small burn, flowing through a grassy glen, and was '..a sort of oasis in the midst of a great waste of bog and rock'. Kissling (1943:88) found that the 'shielings' stood close together, in the most sheltered spots. Unfortunately, Carmichael (1884: 459,469) recorded nothing about the location of the huts in the Uists, except that they were in the hills.

Few of the writers record the distance between winter dwelling and summer pasture. Thomas (1860b:137) noted that creels of grass and weeds for the cows had frequently to be brought some 13km or so (8 miles) from the farms to the shielings, and Mitchell (1880:58), that the summer pasturage of the tenants of Crolista, Larach Tigh Dubhstail, was some 19km (12 miles) from Loch Roag. Kissling (1943:88) also mentions a distance of 19km (12 miles) between farm and shieling generally in Lewis. John Matheson (Appendix 11), however, spoke of nearer 'sheilings', 6.4km to 9.6km (4-6 miles) from the village, and that milk

was brought home from them every day. In 'Tolastadh Bho Tuath' (Stornoway Gazette 1951:3), the writer recorded that 'sheilings' belonging to the village of Tolsta could be either far away or near the village. Those at, for example, Muirneag or Airidh Fad As ('Far Away Shieling') were so far from the settlement that the occupants only visited the village once a week for supplies. Others, however, were only some 4.8-6.4km (3-4 miles) from the homesteads, and the women were able to carry the butter and sour milk home every morning. They returned to the huts in the evening, having spent the day either on the croft or at the peats. Grass was carried on the return journey, as the cows were never milked except when they were eating something. It was this 'toing and froing' which the writer believed to be responsible for the decline of the movement to the 'sheilings'. Reference is made in the article to summer pastures at: Loch Sgarasdail (4km (2.5 miles)); Loch Sgeireach (4-4.5km (2.5-2.8 miles)); Loch Dubh Nan Each (3.5km (2.2 miles)); Loch a' Ghaineamhaich (2.5km (1.6 miles)), and Gleann Mor (4.5km (2.8 miles)).

A.A. Macgregor (1933:28-29, 249-254,) provided information about the summer pastures of the inhabitants of Great Bernera. The pastures on the island were limited in extent, so that the cattle had to swim across the *sruth* from Barraglom to Earshader, on the mainland, from where they were taken to the *áiridhs* around Beinn Drobhinish. This hill is some 2.5km (1.6 miles) from Earshader. Individual townships on Great Bernera could send their cattle to specific areas on the mainland, for example, the township of Tobson was allocated pasture on the west side of Beinn Drodhinish, 14km (8.75 miles) from the township. The Breacleit shielings were around Bèinn Bhocaladh (position unclear), and the Kirkibost shielings were around Teahaval, 5.5km (3.4 miles) from the township. Some of those belonging to the township of Hacleit were to be found in the vicinity of Loch Ahaltair, 5km (3.1 miles) away. However, it is clear from Dr. Macdonald (1967:147) that before 1872, when the sporting estates of Morsgail and Scaliscro were created, crofters of Bernera once had much more distant summer pastures on the moors called *Mointeach Beannaibh a' Chuailein*, stretching from the Uig road to Loch Bruiche Breiavat, Loch Langabhat and Loch Coirgerod. The summer

pastures would have been between 10km (6.3 miles) and 33km (20.6 miles) from the almost centrally placed township of Breaclete on Great Bernera. When the cattle returned from the mainland, the inhabitants of Hacleit and Kirkibost put their quota for four weeks on to the pastures, also called shielings by Macgregor, located on Great Bernera. They were able to do this because the grazings in the south were the best on the island. The sheep were sent to several islands in the summer to graze, and could be grazed on the Uig moors lying between Grimersta and Kinloch Roag.

5.6 SUMMARY

The information in this chapter has been derived almost entirely from the Outer Hebrides, where the shieling tradition lasted, in many areas, until relatively recently, and for which there is a considerable amount of documentary and survey material available. The aim of the chapter has been to provide a detailed picture of what exactly shieling was in these areas and how the practice operated: which animals ~~animals~~ were involved; who carried out the activities at the sites; where these sites were located and what types of structures were erected upon them, for example. Armed with such information, an analysis of the supposed Manx shieling sites, and those sites in the Isles indicated by place-names, becomes possible.

PART 2: THE SITES

PART TWO: THE SITES

INTRODUCTION

In Part One, the framework for the study of the archaeological remains and onomastic traces of the shieling was set up. What is meant by shieling was examined, particularly for the Outer Hebrides and Skye. A similar examination for Man was not possible, there being little evidence that shieling was ever practised on the island. The physical environments, agriculture and territorial divisions were examined to provide a context for the shieling practice. Also, evidence for the settlement of the Norse kingdom of Man and the Isles was studied to provide a background for the theories that are associated with the origin and development of shieling within the study areas.

Part Two concentrates solely upon identified and recorded sites believed to be those of shielings. It is concerned with the physical aspects of the sites, the dating being explored in Part 3. It begins (Chapter 6) with a presentation of the work of Peter Gelling on Manx sites, identified and examined in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Problems associated with the excavation and survey of the sites are highlighted and a number of the conclusions drawn by Gelling questioned. On the basis of this analysis a methodology was developed to examine these areas in more detail and help to solve some of the problems associated with the sites. The main approach was to place the sites in the wider context of the Isles, and to carry out survey work not only in Man, but also in the islands of Skye, Lewis, Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist and Barra. These islands were selected on the basis of a number of criteria, outlined in Chapter 1, Part 1. Chapter 7 outlines previous survey work carried out in the Isles, and identifies areas which have not been fully explored.

These areas, and others, are explored in detail in the following two chapters. Chapter 8 is concerned with site morphology: in it the Manx sites are essentially dissected and the various elements considered in some detail, and compared with the evidence from the Hebrides. Chapter 9 looks at the sites in a wider context, examining

their general distribution, their relationship with known settlement sites, their relationship with boundaries of specific units, and changes from seasonal to permanent use.

CHAPTER 6: BACKGROUND TO THE SURVEY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a presentation of the work carried out by Peter Gelling on sites which he subsequently identified as shielings (Fig.40). The work took two forms, excavation and survey. This section is followed by one in which the main problems concerning this work are outlined and discussed. The third section outlines the methodology employed by the author to investigate and solve some of these problems.

6.1 IDENTIFICATION AND EXCAVATION

The results of Peter Gelling's work appear in two papers: 'Shielings in the Isle of Man' (1961:123-5), and 'Medieval Shielings in the Isle of Man' (1963a:156-72). His research into this type of site began unintentionally when excavations were carried out, in 1958, at a site at the head of the valley above the Block Eary reservoir (Figs.43,44). It lay beyond the deserted Block Eary farm, on the north side of Snaefell. The existence of this site, consisting of a group of some 37 mounds, had been known for some time, and it had been assumed that it was a barrow-cemetery. It had attracted little attention. Interest in the site first developed when Mr. B.R.S. Megaw, then Director of the Manx Museum, examined the mounds and detected certain features which, he believed, distinguished them from burial mounds. He noted that a number had concave depressions on their surfaces which resembled small hut-circles, suggesting that, if the mounds were barrows, then they had also been used for a rather different purpose, namely occupation, at a later period. It was also observed that the mounds varied considerably in both size and shape. The existence of potential hut-circles pointed to an Iron-Age occupation of the site, and as research at this time, on Man, was being concentrated on this period, excavation at the site was undertaken in August of 1958, and was followed up by smaller excavations in March and April of 1959 and 1960. The excavations were directed by Peter Gelling of Birmingham University.

THE BLOCK EARY EXCAVATIONS

The excavation programme involved the investigation of five of the

37 mounds (A-E), on the north side of the river, and downstream of the tributaries feeding it. They were all located on the east side of the stone wall, within relatively short distances of each other, and appeared to form part of one grouping of mounds. In 1958 partial excavations of mounds A-E were carried out, and in 1959 work was completed on Mound A. The excavation of B, D and E remained incomplete.

Mound A (1963a:161-2) (Fig.45:1)

Gelling recorded that this mound was 'low and insignificant'. Excavation revealed evidence of at least three periods of building. The upper layers, consisting of turf, were difficult to excavate because of the problems in identifying structural traces. However, the remains of small turf huts were identified, with evidence of hearths and trodden surfaces. Beneath these was a thick layer of stones, of varying sizes, in 'indescribable order'. From this, Gelling postulated two main phases of building (Periods 2 and 3), the structures probably undergoing a number of alterations and reconstructions, however. Period 2 consisted of a roughly-built stone platform, the only section visible being a lower edge, 50-55cm high. Gelling believed that it was possible that the structure that had originally been erected on this platform had disappeared, or was now impossible to distinguish. The remains of an oval structure on the platform belonged to period 3, rather than 2, the edge of the platform having been obscured by the time that this structure appeared. Despite the apparent clarity of the plan, this structure was difficult to follow on the ground in the general mass of stones. Gelling pointed out that it was an irregular feature, and only those parts of it which could be identified with certainty were drawn on the plan. He located a paved doorway, facing up the hill in a ENE direction, with evidence of a door-post on either side.

Below the platform of Period 2 was another, larger, and this time circular, structure represented by stone-footings (Period 1). Gelling postulated that the circle of stones, of which only the western half was visible in the excavated area, represented the original outer edge of the structure, the walls of which would have been of turf. This would have meant that the building had an internal diameter of about 6m. The paved entrance to this structure faced SSW, downhill. Gelling

explained the line of stones, running in a westerly direction from the edge of the north-west section of the structure, as a barrier to prevent water, running off the hillside, from reaching the entrance. However, the stones outside the outer edge of the circle suggested a foundation for a turf wall, rather than further protection against surface water. Gelling felt that it was unlikely that this belonged to the original structure, and that it probably represented a stage of reconstruction. It was concluded that all the identified post-holes belonged to this first structure. Most of them were located in the central part, a diffuse hearth area, and were of varying size. Only one post-hole, located outside this area, had packing stones, and none of them were more than a few 'inches' deep. Gelling suggested that the smaller post-holes in the centre, may have represented supports for the fire, and that the one with packing-stones may have been associated with the doorway.

Finds - a large and coarse loom-weight. A familiar artefact on the Isle of Man.

(N.B. In future, reference will be made to the lowest structure in the above mound as Hut 1, Mound A).

Mound B (1963a:158) (Fig.45:2 for section)

This mound, roughly oval in shape, and c.10m from its upper to lower edge and covering an area of over 16m along the hillside, was more extensive than most of the other mounds. Gelling sectioned the mound, at a number of points, down to the natural subsoil, but was unable to detect any traces of walling. Typically, the lower part of the sections consisted of bluish-grey clay streaked with dark brown, representing collapsed turf, whilst the upper parts were a mixture of turf and soil. Gelling, although unable to find structural traces did, however, identify hearths at virtually every level. The highest of these was located just under the humus. He postulated that the build-up of turf forming the mound was probably the remains of collapsed walling, although he did not rule out the possibility that the turf had been used to create a level platform, upon which a succession of flimsy structures was erected. Oddly, considering the above statements on the probable form of the structures, Gelling only briefly mentioned the

fact that 'an unusual number' of large stones were found in this mound. He noted that most of them were lying in 'no intelligible order', but that some were clearly (see section) laid as consolidation for parts of the turf platform. He concluded that all of them probably served this purpose.

Finds - a Type 1 penny of Stephen, coined by the moneyer 'Oterche' (sic) of Norwich. This type appears to date from 1135-1141+ (1963a:158 Footnote 3). It was discovered in the very top of the solid turf in the lower part of the section. Also, a few very small sherds of glazed pottery were found just below the humus, but Gelling concluded that they were too small to be of any value.

Mound C (1963a:158-61) (Fig.46)

This mound was one of the smaller ones, but as Gelling did not give any measurements, it is necessary to give approximations based on his plan of the structure. The mound was sectioned for excavation. On this mound the outline of a small hut, as identified at this site by Megaw, was clear. The hut was roughly oval in shape, and measured some 3m by 4m. Its form was clear only from the surface of the mound, and the wall only in the section: it proved impossible to follow in plan, once the humus was removed. The same problem was encountered with a lower hut. This last hut was built on the up-slope portion of the mound, and it was assumed that this was done after the mound had been levelled. There were no traces of an internal hearth, but outside the 'right-hand wall' one was located which was at the same level as the hut, and therefore assumed to be contemporary with it. Below this level, were a series of occupation layers (at least four), consisting of hearths, traces of walling and collapsed turf. The focus, however, of these structures, was slightly down-slope from the uppermost hut. Beneath the lowest of these layers was a platform of turf. Gelling noted no order in the formation of this platform, suggesting that it had not been created as such, but had been formed from the levelling of collapsed turf walling. Below this layer, Gelling discovered evidence of the earliest occupation of this particular spot. The turf had apparently been removed from the hillside before the area was used. There was no evidence of any walling at this level, but there were the remains of a

large hearth. A small depression in the centre of the hearth, circa 25cm in diameter and 40cm deep, was found to be filled with charcoal, which proved to have come largely from Rowan. In the area surrounding this feature, there was evidence suggesting intense heat. A curious feature appeared to surround the hearth, at least on the excavated side of the mound. This consisted of a double line of wattles, the outer line of which extended sideways, forming a long, narrow strip, and ended against a flat stone. Gelling noted that there were numerous traces of collapsed wattles in this area. The lack of any traces of walling led Gelling to speculate that the 'structure', if in fact there was one, was perhaps of a similar size to the huts superimposed on it. This would have meant, however, that the living space in the hut would have been very restricted, most of the floor-space being taken up by the hearth.

Finds - none.

Mound D (1963a:157)

There are no details of the form of this mound prior to excavation, nor of the nature of the excavation itself, except that it was 'excavated rather more extensively', than, presumably, Mound E. On the general plan, this mound appears small, only slightly bigger than Mound A. Apart from confirming that the mounds were composed of superimposed occupation layers, this excavation did not produce much new evidence. The mound had been hollowed at a later period, and lined with vertical slabs to form a small shelter. There was evidence, in one undisturbed area, however, of wattles, which Gelling postulated to be the remains of the base of a turf roof.

Finds - none.

Mound E (1963a:156-7)

This low mound, of the five excavated in this area, was located furthest up the hillside, and appears from Gelling's plan to have been of similar size to Mound C before excavation. Excavation of this mound took the form of a single trench, 1m in width, 'dug across its top and down to its foot on the lower side'. It did not at any point exceed a depth of 50cm. The only record of the excavation is that it produced evidence of more or less superimposed horizontal occupation layers,

running into the lower side of the mound, right down to natural.

Finds - a small, slate slab, with the board for the game of merels marked out on one side (see Cubbon 1960). This find was from 'one of the highest levels' (1963a:156).

Possible corn-drying kiln (1963a:164-7) (Fig.47)

Gelling excavated one of two sites, which he identified as being potential corn-drying kilns, one opposite the main site, on the other side of the river, and the second further up-slope between two tributaries. Identification was based on the fact that the mounds appeared to have more stone-work in them than others, and had tops which were more deeply concave (1961:124). They, in fact, appeared more like 'very crude and small huts, too small for occupation' (1963a:164). Gelling noted that their location on small eminences was also characteristic. The mound chosen for excavation in 1960 at Block Eary, was the more easterly of the two mounds. Excavation revealed evidence of a small structure, which appeared to have been inserted into the hollowed-out mound at a later date in its history. Sections of the central part of the mound were lined with upright slabs, and there were three paving stones on the floor. This small cell was some 1.25m by 1.50m (an area of 1.8 sq.m.), and circa 1.0m high. The doorway was narrow, with upright stones on both sides, and there was a splayed, partially paved threshold. Below the paving slabs in the central area, Gelling found a peat-ash deposit, circa 25cm deep, which stretched from wall to wall. A layer of clean gravel overlay the peat ash at one level in the section. On the lower side of the mound, that is on the opposite side from the entrance, two short arms of turf extended from the outer edge for a distance of between 1.5m and 2.0m, incorporating in one case two stones, and, in the other, three. These arms were 0.5-0.75m in width. The area which they enclosed was 1.75m by 0.5m. Gelling believed that these were associated with a phase of the mound pre-dating the insertion of the stone cell, and postulated that they may indicate the flue of a corn-drying kiln.

Finds - none.

The excavations at Block Eary produced irrefutable evidence that the mounds at this site were not barrows but the products of the

superimposition of huts of turf, in some cases with stone-footings. That these huts were human dwellings was indicated by the frequency of hearths. It was clear from the excavations, however, that most of the huts did not have a stone-footing, but none of these had yielded an accurate plan. Excavations at a site at Injebreck (1963a:169), at the headwaters of the West Baldwin River, consisting of 23 mounds, similar to those found at Block Eary, produced the plan which Gelling needed.

THE INJEBRECK EXCAVATIONS

The excavation of two mounds, one of which Gelling identified as a possible corn-drying kiln, took place in April 1961.

Mound (1963a:163-4) (Fig.48)

Traces of occupation were detected immediately beneath the humus of this mound, but in the initial stages of the excavation, it appeared that the mound consisted of 'indeterminate turf debris'. The shape of the walls was soon apparent, however, in section, a distinctive pattern being formed by the individual turves. These were small, and rarely exceeded 20cm square. On the south and east sides, the walls rested on the natural subsoil, but to the west appeared to have been placed on turf-material. The structure identified was roughly oblong in shape, and measured some 3.0m by 2.0m at its widest point. External measurements were 5.5m by 4.0m at its widest point. The irregularity in the shape of the walls appeared to Gelling to be a feature of the original structure, rather than the result of collapse, but it was impossible to be sure. He postulated that the entrance lay at the north end, although the walls were badly defined there, on the basis of the two post-holes, which could have marked the position of the door-frame, and the evidence of paving in this area. The entrance would have been facing up the hillside. The centre of the structure was dominated by a large, roughly circular hearth area. Hearths in later levels appeared to be in much the same position as this one, and it would seem that the walls of this structure continued to be utilised, probably with additions and modifications. This would appear to account for the irregularities in the shape of the walls. The south wall would appear on plan to be of a rather different construction from the east and west walls, containing the bulk of the stones associated with this level,

and including a single upright. Gelling interpreted the stones as a rough footing for the wall, and presumably support was only necessary at this down-slope end. The inclusion of the long, thin stone on the west side of the baulk, for example, may, however, point to a more complex situation at this end. The discovery of a hearth at the southern end would appear to confirm this. Gelling interpreted it as an open-air hearth, probably used for cooking when the weather permitted.

Finds - one flint, which had been used as a strike-a-light.

Possible corn-drying kiln (1963a:164-7) (Fig.49)

This mound was excavated because, on the basis of the criteria outlined above for the Block Eary mounds, it appeared to be a potential corn-drying kiln. As at Block Eary, it was found that a small structure of about 1.0m square, with walls of stone and a paved floor, had been inserted into it. It had been roofed with large slabs, laid horizontally across the top of the walls. The entrance was very narrow, less than half the width of the structure, and was un-paved. At its outer edge it was slightly splayed. Traces of a door were discovered, in the form of iron nails.

Finds - iron nails.

INTERPRETATIONS

Unfortunately, in his 1963 paper, Gelling failed to outline specifically his reasons for concluding that the sites which he excavated were shielings. In 1961, the fact that the structures appeared to be flimsily built, and utilized so little stone in spite of its availability, suggested to him that their function was to provide temporary rather than permanent shelter. Again, on account of their form, Gelling assumed that they would have been occupied during the summer, rather than winter months, and 'from this it was a short step to the conclusion that they had been the temporary homes of people who pastured their cattle in the mountains during the summer months' (1961:124). Returning to the same site every year, the huts would have had to be repaired or re-built, and this would have led to the accumulation of occupation material, and the formation of a mound, or small tell.

The structures themselves had been made up of turf, or turf and

soil, and did not generally possess stone-footings. Gelling (1963a:171), concluded that it must have been considered unnecessary to have stone-footings once a platform of turf and earth had been created by the levelling of earlier huts. The roofs had been of turf, probably supported by branches and wattles. However, it was clear to Gelling that the first hut in the sequence which led to the formation of Mound A, was quite different from the other excavated huts. Not only did it possess a regular circular shape and a stone-footing for the wall, but it was also larger than the other structures. He suggested that this hut would have had a lower, conical roof, perhaps of thatch, and concluded that it compared favourably with Iron-Age circular huts. The superimposition of huts, best described as oval in shape, suggested to Gelling a possible cultural change, namely form Celtic to Norse.

For certain mounds, Gelling suggested specific functions: for example, for Mound C at Block Eary, it was postulated that the earliest hut on this spot was devoted to cheese-making (1963a:170). This interpretation was based on the existence of the wattle feature, possibly a screen, which surrounded the hearth. Gelling suggested that the wattles may have formed a complete chimney over the fire. No traces of daub were discovered, however. Other mounds which fit into the above category were those which Gelling identified as being possible corn-drying kilns. The Injebreck example proved not to have served this particular function, and Gelling instead postulated that it may have been a pen for geese (1963a:167). He drew attention to a description of an apparently similar structure in the English Dialect Dictionary under hull - '...'the goose-hull', a kind of little hut, about four feet square, formed and roofed with coarse peat sods, built on the bank of the beck, and opening on it'. Concerning the Block Eary example, Gelling (1961:124), had little doubt that the original structure (this mound had, in a later phase, contained a structure similar to that mentioned above) had been a kiln. Gelling concluded that a catch-crop of grain was raised at the site during the summer months. It is probable that when harvested, the grain had not ripened, and parching was thus necessary to prevent it from sprouting.

Another interesting feature of the Block Eary site, only touched

upon by Gelling, was the earth banks associated with the site (Fig.44). Those lying just below the excavated mounds, he suggested (1963a:170) were used for the controlling of livestock, so that if the animals had been driven up along the stream below the main group of mounds, they would have been funnelled into a small pen. The traces of banks further up the valley were, he thought, too insubstantial to have been associated with stock-control, and, more likely, indicated the presence of small fields in this area.

As far as activities at the excavated sites were concerned, besides those associated with the care of the cattle, and in particular dairying, and those concerned with the harvesting of grain (there is no mention of any traces of cultivation at either site), Gelling (1961:124) pointed to weaving, on the basis of the discovery of a loom-weight, and recreational activities, evidenced by the merels board.

The only dating evidence from the two sites was the Type 1 penny of Stephen, dating from 1135 to 1141+, and on the basis of this, Gelling concluded that the sites were occupied during the twelfth century. He (1963a:171-2) was not sure, however, how long the sites remained in use. He noted that William Blundell, who wrote an account of Man at the time of the Civil War, did not mention the practice of transhumance, and concluded that if the sites had still been in use for this purpose, he would have recorded the fact.

Field Survey (Fig.43)

Besides excavating at the sites of Block Eary and Injebreck, Gelling carried out a systematic search for similar sites from 1958 onwards (1961:124). The criteria he used for the identification of sites were: location near the c.305m contour (1,000'), generally in a valley; situation on dry ground near a stream; the presence of the place-name element eary. Investigations involved the examination of known groups of mounds, and the scouring of numerous valleys which appeared to be likely locations for this type of site. This field survey produced evidence of forty-eight sites, a total of some two hundred and sixty-one mounds, and only eight of the sites had been previously known to exist.

The sites identified in this survey were not all similar to those which had been excavated, but Gelling did identify a number of large, comparable ones (1963a:169). It was clear that Block Eary formed the largest compact group, but Gelling believed that the thirty-two, or more, mounds which he identified in the Cornaa valley in Maughold parish, could be said to belong to a single shieling. In Michael, he located thirty-three mounds, which were divided into two distinct groups, comprising twenty-one and twelve mounds respectively; again in Michael, at the head of the Sulby River, he identified two groups, one containing twenty-four mounds, and the other seventeen; at Injebreck there were twenty-three mounds, and at Archallagan, in the parish of Marown, he identified eighteen mounds. The majority of sites, however, consisted of less than ten mounds, and Gelling (1963a:167) concluded that it was unlikely that many more large sites would be discovered.

Gelling (1963a:169) postulated that the size of the sites may have been related to the degree of access that lowland settlements had to the upland pastures, and the nature of the owners. In the case of the latter, it might be expected that a king of Man would possess at least one large shieling ground, and the same might have been true of monastic owners. Gelling suggested that the Block Eary site could have been part of the land belonging to the holding of the monks of Rushen at Myroscough, Lezayre. In the case of the former, parishes such as Maughold, with one large valley allowing access to the uplands, could be contrasted with those, such as German, which do not have this single, large valley, but a number of smaller ones. Gelling believed that this could explain the concentration of mounds in a small area in Maughold, and the small, dispersed groups along the streams of German. The greatest concentration of mounds was found to coincide with the area of some of the best mountain pastures in Man, and that is at the head-waters of the Sulby river. Gelling (1963a:170) contrasted these mountain sites with the situation in the parish of Marown, where such upland pastures were not available. Here, it appears that sites were concentrated on the plateau in the south of the parish. One puzzling aspect of the field-survey was the apparent lack of sites in the northern tip of Marown, and in a high valley on the west side of Sulby

glen, both of these areas possessing at least one of the necessary criteria for site identification - names containing the element *eary*.

The size of the mounds also varied from one site to another, and Gelling concluded that this was an indication of the length of time that individual sites were occupied. Sites located on particularly favourable sections of pasture were likely to have been much frequented. This would also account for the greater number of mounds at these sites, and would suggest that the smaller sites, with low mounds, were in use for only short periods of time.

The identification of other features at the sites located by Gelling is not recorded, on the whole. Exceptions were substantial banks at a site near Brandy Well, Michael, and at the northernmost shieling in Michael, a complex series of small enclosures and banks. Also, there were cultivation marks at a site on the east side of the Glen Rushen river, to the south of the road from the Round Table to Dalby. Gelling concluded (1961:125) that the banks at the former site were used for stock control, the animals being funnelled towards a gap in the central part of the large bank enclosing the site, and that they confirmed his conclusion that the sites were associated with the pasturing of cattle. He felt that the cultivation strips indicated the raising of crops at the latter site.

6.2 PROBLEMS

(a) The Excavated Sites

The major problem concerning the excavation of the mounds at both Block Eary and at Injebreck, is the lack of information concerning the overall form of the sites. For example, there is no published site-plan of Injebreck, and consequently there is no indication of the location of the excavated mounds. There is little information concerning not only the mounds generally at both sites, but also specifically those excavated. The range in size, and the distribution of mounds would appear significant. It would have been useful also, if Gelling had given some indication of why he had chosen to excavate Mounds A-E at Block Eary. The choice, unlike that at Injebreck, could not have been a random one. If this had been the case, the selected mounds would not all have been located within such a small area, to the east of the

stone wall.

Looking at the site-plan (Fig.44), rather than this being a single group of mounds, it could be argued that there are three distinct clusters: the first is located in the area in which Gelling carried out his excavations, at and near the 290m (950') contour, and including the banks which run from the mounds to the tributary and from the latter to the river; the second is the group located to the west of the central stone wall, at and near the 274m (900') contour, and on the edge of a dry valley; and the third group is that located on the other side of the river (right in the headwaters), between two tributaries, to the south of the other two groups. The mounds of this group are located above the 305m (1000') contour. An examination of Gelling's site-plan, looking roughly east-west up the valley, rather than north-south, shows that this clustering is real, with concentrations at the 274m (900') and 290m (950') contours, and over 305m (1000'), and from this angle it could be that the lower of the two mounds marked 'K' is associated with the central group, rather than being an outlier. The excavation of a mound from each of these groups may have proved interesting.

The mounds which were chosen did vary in size. Mound B, for example, sprawled over quite a large area of hillside (diameters of between 10m and 16m) and was just under 1.5m high, whereas Mound A was low and insignificant. It is not clear, however, just how low this mound was, and although there is a plan showing three of the structures, there is no published section. Of the other mounds, C (between 8.0m and 6.5m in diameter, and 0.60-2.00m high), appears slightly larger than D on the site-plan, and E, which is more extensive than both, but lower as suggested in the excavation report (c. 0.50m), had been dug into the hillside. There is no indication as to the diameter of the mound excavated at Injebreck, but it was approximately 0.75m high. The mounds containing the possible corn-drying kilns were of the following dimensions: Block Eary - a diameter of roughly 5m, and a height of 0.65-2.00m; Injebreck - diameters of between 4.25m and 3.50m, and a height of 0.70-2.00m.

As far as associated features are concerned, although Gelling mentioned the fact that there were banks at the Block Eary site, he did

not go into any further detail about their form, except to point out that there were only faint traces of those located further up the valley. It can be assumed that no such features were identified at Injebreck.

(b) The Excavated Structures

The form of the excavation of the mounds varied from one mound to another. For example, excavation of Mound E was confined to a single trench, whereas half of Mound C, and the whole of Mound A, and of the mound at Injebreck, were excavated. The most important point concerning this, however, is that the majority of the mounds were only partially excavated, and that the evidence from Mounds B, D and E was very incomplete.

Excavation of the mounds was clearly very problematic, it being frequently virtually impossible to detect traces of structures, and at times the only evidence extracted being the fact that the mounds did consist of occupation deposits. This was true of both Mound E and Mound D at Block Eary, but in the case of the latter, re-use of the mound at a later date meant that the occupation-levels were not even consistent. The occupation material took the form of turf, soil, stones and hearth material. Collapsed turf appeared as bluish-grey clay marked with dark brown streaks, and in layers of mixed soil and turf, the former was identified as being lighter in colour. Only in a few cases was it possible to see traces of walling in plan or in section. This was the case in the excavation of Mound B, it being not only impossible to detect any traces of walls either in plan or in section, but also unclear whether the turf and soil in the mound had been used for building purposes. Gelling concluded that the large amount of soil in the upper levels of the section indicated the fact that a larger proportion of this material must have been used in the construction of buildings. A similar conclusion was reached for the structures in the upper levels of Mound C. However, in the case of Mound B, as the upper levels contained no structural traces, and only thin layers of hearth material (see section Fig.45,2), this conclusion should be treated with caution. Gelling also recorded that an unusually large number of stones were found in this mound, and speculated that these may have used to

consolidate the turf platform. They apparently lay in no intelligible order, but in the section, there would appear to be two clear clusters, with three levels of ash, and the thickest layer of hearth material, lying between them.

Mound C, in spite of the fact that it produced most evidence concerning structural details, also had unusual features. The first of these was the cup-shaped depression at the lowest level in the mound, (30cm deep, and with a diameter of 45cm at the top, and 10cm at the base on the section drawing), which was filled with charcoal, largely from rowan. This was dug into the sloping hillside, and occupied just over a quarter of the area of hearth material at this level. The subsoil around the hearth showed signs of intense heat. It is interesting to note that, although this occupation layer was located on a sloping surface, attempts were obviously made to provide a level platform for later structures. Gelling believed that the evidence indicated that this was formed by the levelling of earlier structures, rather than being deliberately constructed for this purpose. The lack of any indications of walling associated with the hearth, and its location, might have suggested that it was an open-air feature. However, taking into account the above conclusion concerning the turf platform, and the fact that Gelling noted that all the stones on the plan, with the exception of those in the section, belonged to this level, and may have formed footings for some form of structure, this seems less likely. Associated with the hearth, was another unusual feature, evidence of a double line of wattles surrounding it on the excavated side, with the outer row extending in a narrow arm towards a large flat stone. From the plan it would appear to have possibly carried on underneath this stone. Gelling recorded that there were numerous traces of collapsed wattles in this occupation layer, but is not clear whether they were associated just with this feature. There is one other feature of this mound worthy of attention. This is the possible external hearth, located outside the highest hut. Unfortunately, this is not clear in the section, and does not appear on the plan. However, it is clear that it was in no way similar to that discovered at the lowest level. A second potential external hearth was

discovered at Injebreck, but this does not appear on a published section of the structure with which it appeared to be associated.

The first query concerning Mound A, is the fact that in appearance this mound was low and insignificant. It might have been expected that this would indicate that only one or two small structures had been erected on this spot. However, this was not the case. Two sizeable huts were discovered at the lowest levels, with evidence of stone-footings for, presumably, turf walls. On top of these, an unspecified number of small turf huts had been built. Furthermore, the platform of Period 2 had been constructed of stone rather than turf. This begs the question of where the turf of Hut 1 disappeared to. Considering its size, and the fact that it underwent reconstruction, as apparently did the Period 3 hut, the lack of turf appears unusual. The lack of a published section drawing is to be felt most keenly here.

Despite the fact that this mound was one of those most thoroughly excavated, and the apparent clarity of the plan, the evidence from it is still confusing. For example, the excavation of Hut 1 is incomplete. Gelling recorded that this structure was circular, but it is possible that it was more oval in shape, particularly if the internal diameter was not much more than five metres. There are also confusing features, such as the group of six stones at the north end of the hut between the shaded stones of the Period 3 building and the stones marked in broken outline. These are on a different alignment from those stones marking half of the 'circle', and appear to belong to the larger group in broken outline. The function of stones marked in broken outline on the plan as footings for a later turf wall, is not as clear as Gelling suggested: for example, those on the west side are much smaller and more dispersed than those at the northern end. The explanation of the arm of stones extending from the circle, too, is not entirely convincing, considering that the Period 3 hut apparently had its entrance facing upslope, and that other excavated structures, for example one of the huts at Injebreck (see plan), had entrances similarly located. If surface water was the problem in this case, however, it may hint at the possibility that Hut 1 was occupied for longer periods during the year than the other huts at the Block Eary

and Injebreck sites. Looking at the Period 3 hut in more detail, it is essential to emphasise that the form of this structure was based largely upon conjecture, it being difficult to follow in the general mass of stones at this level. Consequently, its form on plan may be misleading.

One of the most interesting features of the excavations, and one which was not explored in detail, was the apparent remodelling of certain mounds at a time after they had ceased to receive new structures on their summits. There were three cases which fitted into this category: both of the supposed corn-drying kilns, and Mound D at Block Eary. In the case of the latter, the centre of the mound had been dug out, and the hollow, thus created, had been lined with vertical slabs. Much the same had occurred to one of the former, the excavated Mound K at the same site. Here, the interior (1.35m sq.) was partially lined with upright slabs, and there were suggestions that the floor had been paved. Associated with this structure was a narrow, paved entrance. The supposed corn-drying kiln at Injebreck contained a very similar structure. A small paved chamber, c. 1m sq., with walls of stones placed horizontally in this case, lay within a thick turf wall. The entrance was narrow, as at Block Eary, but not paved. The evidence, as presented here, suggests that these three structures probably served the same function, and that they represent a distinct phase in the use of these sites. Note that Gelling's observations concerning the location of two of the mounds, 'K' and that at Injebreck, still hold:

> 'Most shielings include at least one mound which differs from the rest in having much more stonework in its structure. These appear, indeed, less as mounds than as very crude and small huts, too small for human occupation. Often they are situated on small eminences, as if the builders intended them to catch the breeze' (Gelling 1963a:164,166).

This would also suggest that this type of structure forms a distinct group, and was used for a specific purpose.

As far as the corn-drying kiln is concerned, the only evidence for this are the two arms of turf attached to Mound K at Block Eary. Gelling believed that these were associated with the mound, as opposed

to the stone cell which was inserted into it. There was, however, no evidence that a flue had originally gone through the wall, or that the deposit of peat-ash beneath the stone cell ran under the wall. This evidence alone suggests that the interpretation of the mound as a corn-drying kiln is unfounded.

(c) Gelling's Site Interpretations

The first interpretation which has to be tackled, is the decision that the excavated huts were temporary in character, and that the sites were consequently only seasonally occupied. This conclusion was based upon the fact that the structures appeared to have been flimsily built, and incorporated little stone. The flimsy material used in the construction of the huts was turf. In some cases, it has been suggested that a mixture of turf and earth, in roughly equal quantities, was used. The use of turf as a building material is obviously an area which needs to be explored.

The conclusion that the structures were all of the same character, i.e., seasonal, is easier to tackle. The two huts with stone footings were clearly different from the numerous small huts which Gelling excavated, as were the structures which had been inserted into the mounds at a late stage in their history. All of these structures included a considerable amount of stonework, and thus appeared to be of more solid construction. Associated with this, is the question of the function of individual structures. It is clear that Gelling's interpretation of certain mounds as corn-drying kilns was premature, but the function of the two arms of turf and stone extending from one end of the Block Eary mound has still to be explained. It is rather similar in appearance to the feature at the south end of the Injebreck Mound, but here there was evidence of a hearth. The other structure for which Gelling suggested a very specific function, was that at the lowest level of Mound C. The interpretation of this as a hut associated with dairying is open to considerable doubt, there being no firm evidence to support it. An investigation into the dairy activities carried out at seasonal sites should indicate whether this is a real possibility.

Gelling noted that there was a change in the form of the structures

at the sites, not only as far as size was concerned, but in the type of walling. For example, certain structures had turf walls on stone footings, some had solid turf walls with no stone footings, and others appeared to have walls of a roughly equal mixture of turf and earth. It was postulated by Gelling that this may be explained in chronological and cultural terms, a theory explored more fully in Part 3. It is important to stress, however, the fact that the process of mound formation itself largely dictated the form of the structures. As the mound grew in size, the space available for the construction of new huts would have been diminished, especially if the underlying material was not levelled and a proper platform created. Not only the size of the structure would be dictated by the available space, but also its shape. This would potentially account for the appearance of huts more oblong in shape in the higher levels.

The interpretation of the sites as shieling grounds was based on the seasonal character of the structures, and their location on good stretches of pasture. This fits in with the concept of the shieling as outlined in the Introduction, but the nature and function of this type of site is an area which requires further investigation. Associated with this are Gelling's conclusions concerning other activities that were carried out at the sites, for example cheese-making at the lowest level of Mound A. He even went so far as to suggest, in this case, that the wattle feature may have formed a complete chimney over the fire. The failure to find convincing evidence of corn-drying kilns at either of the excavated sites means that Gelling's conclusion concerning the cultivation, harvesting and drying of corn at the sites is premature. The identification of fields at Block Eary is also open to question.

The other major problem concerning the sites is the dating, which is explored in detail in Part 3. On the basis of the above review of the evidence, it seems possible to draw only the following conclusions:

a) that the site was possibly occupied for some considerable time, evidence of this being the build-up of occupation deposits in the mounds. However, if new huts were erected virtually every year, it is possible that some spots were only occupied during a period of perhaps five to ten years (e.g. Mound C).

b) that there are three distinct phases in the site, the first represented by Hut 1, Mound A (and possibly the Period 3 hut), the second by the smaller huts of turf, and turf and soil, and the third by the structures which were inserted into the mounds.

c) that Hut 1, Mound A, may have affinities with Iron-Age structures.

d) that there was activity at the site post 1135-1141, but there is no evidence to suggest that this involved the occupation of the site.

(d) Previous Excavations

Gelling does not indicate, in either of his publications, that both the Block Eary and Injebreck sites were the subject of earlier excavations. It is recorded in an account of an excursion to Sulby, by the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society, on Wednesday July 18, 1887 (Excursion 1889), that members walked to Block Eary, and visited 'two remarkable groups of small Tumuli (seven and ten)' on the moorland above the farm. It was noted, by Mr. Crellin, that one of the tumuli had been 'partially examined by Mr Savage and himself, when a small Cist and some ashes were met with.'

The excursion to Injebreck took place on 22nd May, 1930 (Excursion 1930). Captain Spittall granted permission for the members to partially excavate two mounds on his land. The first mound appeared to have a surrounding wall of stones in more or less circular form, and, in the trench which was cut through it, a floor covered with a quantity of carbon was revealed. The second mound was larger, and it displayed no evidence of a surrounding stone wall. A trench was cut through it from east to west. In this there were only a few stones laid 'flat-wise'. In the centre of the trench, however, there was a 'pocket' of carbon, which contained large pieces of burnt wood. This pocket was some 10-12.5cm (4-5") deep, and over 30cm (1') in area. It was suggested that it may have been a 'fire-hole'. Near the pocket, a flint flake was found, which had a serrated edge, pointing to human usage. It was 4.4cm (1.75") long, and 2.5cm (1") broad, and knife-shaped. Other smaller pockets and layers of carbon were also found. The leader, Mr. William Cubbon, believed, on the basis of the incomplete examination, that the two mounds 'were possibly hut-dwellings and of an early period.' In

all, about fourteen mounds, clustered together, were identified. The largest number lay on the land belonging to the Commons Trustees, but there were four, or five, on the adjoining land of Captain Spittall.

(e) The Field Survey

Unfortunately, apart from short references made to other sites in Gelling's first paper, and a section on the subject in the second paper, there is no published material concerning his findings. This is particularly disappointing, considering the time and effort that must have been involved in the search for, and identification of, sites. The only complete set of information available is that on the distribution map (Fig.43), which marks the location of the sites, and the number of mounds in each group. Concerning the field strategy, Gelling outlined the criteria he used to locate the sites, and these certainly proved to be successful indicators. The main problem, basically, with this work is the lack of published detail. The evidence is not available which allows more detailed comparison to be made between the excavated sites at Block Eary and Injebreck. All that can be said about them is that they appeared, to Gelling, to be the same type of site. This conclusion clearly needs to be tested.

6.3 METHODOLOGY

(a) The choice of disciplines

The two fundamental questions concerning the sites are: 1) their identification as shielings, and 2) their dating to the Norse period. The second question is the subject of Part 3. Description of the sites as shielings is made difficult by the fact that there is no record of shieling ever having been practised on the island. Gelling was, thus, not able to use documentary evidence, folk-tradition, or the evidence of recently used sites, such as in the Hebrides, to determine the function of the sites. As emphasised in Chapter 2, in the section on the shieling literature, the 1950s and 1960s saw an increased interest in shieling sites generally in Britain, and Gelling's identification of the sites can be seen in the context of research carried out elsewhere. Unfortunately, Gelling did not, in his published accounts, indicate the source of his information about shieling.

The lack of documentary sources of shieling on Man, means that an

exploration of the practice is restricted through that particular channel. For the Perhshire *sheallings*, Bil (1983) was able to draw upon a wide variety of sources, for example, estate papers, rentals, accounts, tacks, estate surveys, correspondence and petitions, charters and chartulary books, wadsets, Barony Court records, Forestry Court records, Instruments of Interruption, tolerances, testaments and wills, Judicial Law Court Records, forfeited estate papers, county agricultural reports, maps and estate plans. The main means of advance in the study of the sites on Man, has, by necessity, to be through a detailed archaeological and geographical study. Identified problems included the lack of information concerning features other than those excavated, the assumption that all the mounds were of basically the same form, the interpretation of certain other features, and the conclusion that all the sites, consisting of one or a number of mounds, fulfilled the same function. These, and other problems, could only be solved through detailed fieldwork.

(b) The choice of study area

Having decided upon the disciplines which were to be used, the problem still remained, that even through detailed study on Man, identification of the sites specifically as shielings, would not be possible on the basis of the Manx evidence alone. Man, thus, had to be placed within a wider context, and as outlined in Chapter 1, the geographical area which formed the Kingdom of Man and the Isles, was considered to be the area which had most potential for comparative purposes. For the survey and analysis in this section, the facts that shieling sites had been identified and recorded to some extent in the Isles, that the practice was well documented (Chapter 5), and that the one of the few excavations of a shieling site, outside Man, had taken place on Skye, suggested that the area could be used as a control with which the Manx sites could be compared. The strong Norse and Gaelic histories of the two areas also made the Isles a suitable context in which to view shieling on Man, for they go some way to reduce the problems encountered in the comparison of remains of groups separated in both space and in time.

The examination of the contemporary descriptions and folk-material

relating to shielings (see Chapter 5), opened up whole new areas of potential investigation. The material provided information, for example, on how shieling fitted into the yearly agricultural cycle, when and exactly how the summer pastures were used, who were the people involved in the activities carried out at the sites, which animals, and how many, were taken to the pastures, and the form and location of the huts. Besides this material, there were also the numerous remains of sites. Even a brief glance at an O.S.1:50,000 map of Lewis, for example, showed that the island was covered in the remains of shieling sites. It was concluded that finding sites in Skye and the Outer Hebrides would not be a problem.

(c) Survey Strategies

Site selection

Two survey strategies had to be developed, one for Man, and one for the Isles. The Manx sites were of prime importance in the study, and the evidence from the Isles was to be used for comparative purposes. The examination of sites in potentially seven islands, the number of sites in each being considerable to enormous, meant that a decision had to be made concerning the number of sites that it was feasible to study in the time available, and the number which would be necessary to form a suitable data-base. In Skye and the Outer Hebrides, investigation of sites had been carried out at various stages over the last hundred and thirty years (Catalogue 5), but an examination of this material demonstrated that it was either not detailed enough, or did not answer the specific questions posed in this study. This meant that new fieldwork was necessary if the information required was to be obtained.

One of the main points to come out of a study of the material available on shieling in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, was the considerable variety of sites, both in form and location, within, and between, the different islands. It was, thus, considered that the fieldwork should reflect this, determining just how much sites varied, and attempting to discover whether some forms and locations were more prevalent than others. The choice of specific sites was dictated by this requirement, and, thus, an example of a beehive hut, an *áiridh*, and a *tigh earraich* were sought in Lewis, cellular structures in Skye,

and the remains of turf huts in the Uists. Also, sites were chosen which were located at varying distances and heights from settlements, in the hills, near the coast, alongside streams, next to lochs, in valleys, on open moorland, etc.. Within this section accessibility should also be included, sites such as those in Morsgail Forest, north Harris, being exluded on the basis of this, despite the fact that many contained beehive structures. The third factor determining choice of sites was the existence of place-names in *-áirigh*, *-sáetr* and *-ary*, all elements translated as 'shieling', and the latter indicating the coinage of names by Norse speakers. These factors ensured a fairly complete coverage of the types of site in each island. Some of the sites had already been examined, such as the beehive at Cnoc Dubh (Commander Thomas 1867:161), the existence of others had been noted (Miller 1967a; Macsween 1959b; Macsween and Gailey 1961), and it was hoped that new sites might be identified. The main aim was to provide a large and varied body of evidence with which to compare the Manx material.

The choice of a suitable research strategy for Skye and the Outer Hebrides, had to be made before a final decision could be reached for Man. The examination, and detailed recording, of all forty-eight groups of mounds identified by Peter Gelling, was impossible if fieldwork was to be carried out in the other six islands. A strategy, thus, had to be developed that would ensure that a representative selection of sites was chosen. The choice was based on the following broad criteria: numbers of mounds, thus sites with varying numbers were chosen; location, thus sites in different parishes, on open moorland, in valleys, etc., and sites with features other than mounds. A decision could have been made not to examine the sites of Injebreck and Block Eary, which had been the subject of excavations, and the site at Brandywell (Druidale 1), which had been planned by Gelling. However, there were many questions surrounding the sites of Block Eary and Injebreck, Brandywell possessed two of the most interesting features recorded at the sites, and all three were so fundamental to the study of the shieling, that they were not excluded.

(d) Creating the Database

In both Man, and Skye and the Outer Hebrides, investigation of the sites was divided into two broad sections, the first concentrating on site morphology, and the second looking at the sites in the wider context of the shieling practice, as part of the agricultural cycle.

Site Morphology

Gelling, in his survey work on Man, identified sites on the basis of their similarity to the excavated sites, using the presence of mounds, and proximity to water, as the main criteria. Emphasis was, thus, placed on those features of the sites which were similar, and there is little information available on possible variations between the sites. A reconsideration of the evidence from the two excavated sites, Block Eary and Injebreck, demonstrated that there were important variations not only between these two sites, but also between different parts of the Block Eary site, for example, the size and composition of the mounds, and, on a larger scale, the possible division of the site into three distinct groups. It was believed that a concentration upon site morphology would indicate disparities between, and within, sites, and would particularly emphasise any unique features. Such a detailed study was necessary if the function of the sites, and specific features, were to be determined with any degree of confidence. In this light, mounds, traditionally regarded as a class of monument with few distinguishing features, assumed individual rather than collective importance. Their distribution and relation to each other, size, height, shape, apparent composition, surface features, and vegetation cover, were all considered to be of significance. Detailed examination of associated features, such as banks and enclosures, was also considered to be of extreme importance.

In Skye and the Outer Hebrides, the above approach was also applied, but the existence of standing stone structures, particularly in the case of Lewis and Harris, meant that much more detail about the structures could be obtained. In the past, such structures have received considerable attention, but they had not been recorded in such a way as to be useful in this survey. In particular, their distribution and relation to other huts within a group had not been recorded.

The techniques used for the survey of the sites were plane-tabling,

survey by prismatic compass, and sketch survey.

Site Distribution

In the case of both areas, the size of the sites, and their layout, were considered important. Hence, distinctions were drawn between: linear sites perhaps strung out along streams in valleys, or along a hillside; a narrow ribbon of sites around a lake; more compact sites located in the headwaters of a river, between forking tributaries; and large sprawling sites on open moorland. The relationship between the form of specific sites and the geography of an area, was a question which had been examined by Miller (1967) for the Isles, but could be developed further, and had received little attention in Man. The second broad theme was the placing of the sites in the wider context of the landscape and of the shieling practice. Areas of interest included the distribution of sites in relation to altitude, proximity to water sources, shelter, and to soil and vegetation patterns. Also important were studies of the relationships between: similar sites; between these and other, different sites in the vicinity, comprising, for example, hut circles, cairns, chambered cairns, standing stones, and structures potentially related to pastoral activities other than shieling; and between the sites and settlements. In the case of the relationship between similar sites, it was believed that a study of sites within particular valleys, for example, may produce interesting information. An examination of different sites in an area of interest, would, it was believed, potentially answer questions concerning the former use of the sites, their length of use and the length of time that the practice of shieling operated, the source of building materials, and the use of the sites after the practice had been abandoned. The third area of relationships, studying that between sites and settlements, would be possible in the Isles, contemporary descriptions, folk-survey material, and records of the pastures belonging to settlements being available, and allowing the linking of certain sites with specific settlements. In this way it would be possible to establish the distance between the townships and the shielings, and the relationship between different pastures. The linking of sites, on Man, with specific settlements is not possible. Distribution patterns indicate only the relationship of

sites to one other. Variations can be measured, for example, between the height of the sites above sea-level, and the distance between sites within certain areas, such as specific valleys. In order to examine the question of attachment to certain settlements, the sites had to be placed within specific resource territories. In this way they could, at least, be related to a settlement, and theories could be developed concerning use of pastures, distances travelled to different sites, and the routes taken to reach them.

Thus, it was believed that an examination of the relationship between the sites and the resource territories outlined in Chapter 4, the quarterlands, treens, parishes, sheadings and deemster divisions, would provide a means of exploring this particular question. Within this, other questions could be explored, such as, the use of shieling sites as boundary markers, the possibility that the sites were part of a single phase of exploitation or whether they were the products of a number of phases, and the process of change from seasonal to more permanent sites. One area of particular interest, concerned places on Man with names in *-eary*, and the theory that these may have been home or near shielings. Such an interpretation suggested that the unnamed sites examined in this section were far-away or mountain shielings.

(e) Data Processing

Fieldwork produced a very large, and detailed, database for both study areas, and a means of sorting this body of material had to be devised, if maximum information was to be derived from it. Sorting by hand was both time-consuming and cumbersome, so the computer package dBase II was used. This made it possible to enter data in a set format closely approximating to the site catalogue cards, permitted the sorting and/or indexing of the data on any number of key words, and the data could be printed in the desired order(s) and format.

The first step was to divide the data into basic 'fields'. Those selected for Man were:

(a) Site

(b) Catalogue Number

(c) Grid Reference

(d) Parish

(e) Location (i.e. valley, moorland etc.)

(f) Number of Mounds

(g) Additional Features

(h) Slope

(i) Height (above sea-level)

(j) Availability of Water

(k) Other Sites in the Vicinity

That for Skye and the Outer Hebrides was slightly different, in that fields had to be created to indicate which island a site was found in, and had to be able to cope with the number of different types of site which were encountered. The fields were thus:

(a) Site

(b) Catalogue Number

(c) Grid Reference

(d) Island

(e) Soil type

(f) Location

(g) Height

(h) Slope

(i) Availability of Water

(j) Number of Huts

(k) Number of Mounds

(l) Additional Features

(m) Previous Use of the Site

(n) Settlement (to which the shieling belonged)

The field for soil was created for Skye and the Hebrides, because of the detailed soil surveys that exist for the islands (see Hudson *et al* 1982 and Bibby *et al*). This information is not available for Man.

Once the data was entered in the various fields, it could then be indexed on any of these fields, for example, site. Information from the other fields, could then be listed for the sites, for example 'list site, parish, height for site'. This would give a complete run of sites in alphabetical order, and list both the parish names and the height of the sites above sea-level. In this way the data could be combined in a number of different forms, and comparisons could be drawn, and

variations noted, quickly, between the sites.

6.4 CONCLUSIONS

Examination of the conclusions drawn by Gelling for both the excavated sites and those identified as a result of survey, suggested that there were areas which would benefit from further, more detailed research. Specific problems were identified and a methodology developed to tackle these.

CHAPTER 7: PREVIOUS SURVEY AND EXCAVATION IN THE ISLES

INTRODUCTION

The first approach outlined in Chapter 3 was to place Man in the wider context of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles, and to carry out survey work, particularly in the islands of Skye and the Outer Hebrides. This chapter is concerned with an examination of the survey strategies and results of previous research on shielings in the Isles. It concentrates solely upon those studies which have been directed towards a greater understanding of the shieling, and thus, does not consider the work of Commander Thomas (1860a;1860b;1867), Muir (1862) or W. Mackenzie (1904), who were primarily interested in the history, and possible origins, of apparently 'ancient' structures. Details of the work carried out by these antiquarians, together with structures visited and described by others, are included in Chapter 5 and in Catalogue 5.

7.1 SURVEY

The single most wide-ranging publication is that of Miller (1967a). He carried out regional surveys of shielings in Scotland, in Assynt and North Lochtayside on the Mainland, as well as in the Inner and Outer Hebrides, and Orkney. In the Inner Hebrides, only Rum and Canna were the subjects of investigation. Research in the Outer Hebrides was more extensive, Miller identifying sites in the Uists, Harris and Lewis. His approach was a geographical one, examining sites in the context of the landscape, and noting variations in the location and the form of sites. Miller identified factors such as the availability of decent pasture, water, shelter and building materials as clearly affecting the distribution of sites. For example, he noted the correlation between shieling sites and prehistoric structures, such as chambered cairns, in the Uists. These observations and conclusions were based on the identification and recording of sites. The locations of sites were given in six-figure grid references, and there were descriptions of the general location and main types of structures encountered. The majority of sites were not surveyed or recorded in sufficient detail, however, to provide information for a detailed analysis of form and location.

7.2 SURVEY AND ANALYSIS

Although Miller's work identified factors affecting the location and form of sites, and permitted comparisons to be drawn between sites and site locations within, and between, islands, it was essentially a catalogue of identified sites, and there is little analysis attempted. The only author who has analysed information derived from field-survey of shielings in the Hebrides is John Love (1981). His work centred on detailed survey on the island of Rum, and the analysis was based on a data-base consisting of some 377 huts. First, Love examined the distribution of sites, looking specifically at such factors as altitude, vegetation and shelter. In the case of altitude, he discovered that sites were located at three distinct altitudes; as far as vegetation was concerned, three plant communities appeared to be favoured, and although a relation between siting, aspect and shelter was not easy to demonstrate, useful conclusions were drawn. Other factors were also identified as of importance in site location, for example, the availability of building materials, proximity to fresh water and the presence of small knolls. Three basic types of shieling construction were noted: cellular, chambered, and rectangular, and each was considered in some detail. Absolute numbers, percentages of type per total, and percentages of variants within the general groups per group total, produced interesting information. Such questions as the frequency of 'mounding', the location of entrances and the identification of distinctive features, were of particular interest.

7.3 SURVEY AND EXCAVATION

Love, however, was not able to offer any conclusions concerning either the internal structure of the mounding associated with the huts or the dating of the sites, on the basis of the survey work. The only research on shielings, which has produced evidence concerning the mounding, and has had the potential to provide dating evidence, is that of Macsween and Gailey (Macsween 1959b; Macsween and Gailey 1961), who carried out the only excavation on such a site in the Isles, in 1958, in North Skye. A large number of shieling sites had been identified in the peninsulas of Vaternish and Trotternish, and it had been noted that many had developed mounds between 91cm (3') and 2.4m (8') in height. In

1958, an opportunity arose to examine one such site in detail, and to carry out a trial excavation of a hut, which had developed a mound 1.1m (3.5') high (Macsween 1961).

The excavated hut (Catalogue 5, R7, and Fig.50) was one of a group of ten, or eleven, huts, situated in the Abhainn a Ghlinne valley, on the east side of Vaternish, on a second, and lower, break of slope. The latest hut on the mound, Hut 3, consisted of two chambers, connected by an internal entrance. At the foot of the mound on the north side were the remains of a straight section of stone-walling, the purpose of which was unclear, and at the foot of the west end were the basal stones of a small oval feature, 91cm (3') by 1.2m (4'). The excavation took the form of a trench, 91cm (3') wide, and 4.3m long (14'), which was driven into the north side of the mound, from just outside the straight section of walling, through the walling of Hut 3, and ended in the centre of the larger chamber. Beneath, and within, Hut 3, a portion of wall was uncovered, together with a stone-edged hearth, clearly associated with it. Two sherds of 'cràggan' type pottery were found at this level, between the hearth and the wall. Virtually at the base of the section, the remains of a third hut were identified, between the wall of Hut 3 and the outer straight wall. The remains took the form of a wall, two courses of which survived. A third had slipped down against the outer face. Outside, and level with the base of the wall, was a layer of ash 91cm (3') thick. The excavation also produced information about the outer straight wall, which proved to be of relatively massive construction. It consisted of large boulders, many set on edge, and there was evidence of at least two courses. To the north of the wall, and half way up it, a layer of peat and wood ash, some 30cm (1') wide and 5-7.5cm (2-3") deep was found. The natural deposit at the base of the section consisted of a sticky blue fluvial clay, up to 30cm (1') deep. Below this, there was a well-developed iron-pan, overlying river gravels and rotted basalt. Hut 1 had been excavated into these clays.

Macsween and Gailey (1961:80-1) wrote that the site was typical of the shieling sites identified in North Skye, being located on a drier slope of the river valley, in proximity to a stream, and lacking any signs of cultivation. The excavation demonstrated that there had been

repeated occupation at the site, but it was not possible to determine the length of time that each hut had been in use. Little information was obtained about Huts 1 and 2 due to the restricted nature of the excavation, but it was believed that they were probably curvilinear structures of similar form to Hut 3. The evidence indicated that the stone walls were supplemented externally with sods, and the macro-remains included in the occupation material, suggested a heather-covered roof, and some straw bedding in the interior. It was concluded that the lack of any evidence of timber suggested that the roofing timbers were removed at the end of each season and carried back to the permanent dwelling, as had been the case in Lewis. The exact function of the section of straight walling was not determined, but it was postulated that it may have been part of a small enclosure used for milking or for separating young animals from the milkers. Also, the function of the small oval feature at the west end was not established. It was believed that it was probably associated with the latest phase at the site.

Unfortunately, the excavation failed to produce any dating evidence but did indicate that, as in Man, hut sites were used repeatedly. The evidence also suggested that, as in the case of the Rum shieling huts, many were placed on artificial mounds, created by a succession of huts on the one spot. The single find, the sherd of 'craggan ware', was of little use for dating purposes, this type of pottery having a long history and varying little through time. Macsween and Gailey (1961:83) noted that it appeared that such pottery was manufactured in Uig, Trotternish, probably within the twentieth century.

It was mentioned above, that the excavation was part of a larger survey of shieling sites in North Skye (Macsween 1959b; Macsween and Gailey 1961). The Trotternish peninsula was particularly rich in such remains, huts and enclosures being identified in each of the major river valleys on the west side of Trotternish: Glen Haultin, Romesdal, Hinnisdal, Conon and Rha. Groups of four to five individual buildings were most common, but there were also cases of groups consisting of twelve to twenty huts, and in exceptional cases of up to thirty huts, for example in Glen Conon and Glen Haultin. The largest concentration

of huts, forty within a radius of about 1.6km (1 mile), was found in the latter glen. It was noted that the sites lay at a distance of 3.2km (2 miles) plus, from the permanent settlements in Trotternish, and that they generally lay at a height of 183-259m (600-850') O.D. Few groups were found above 259m, and none over 304m (1000') O.D. Sites were also rarely to be found on the valley floors, which were liable to flooding, but a considerable number were located alongside small streams on valley sides. On the east side of Trotternish, it was found that the distribution of sites was more sporadic, on the open, undulating moors. Here, well-drained slopes in proximity to streams were most favoured. Sites were identified by being bright green patches on the purple-brown heather moorland.

Circular or semi-circular huts were the most common structures at the sites, on average 2.4-3.1m (8-10') in diameter. These were entered via a single doorway 91cm (3') wide, and had a smaller opening within, giving access to a similar, but smaller, adjacent structure, some 1.8-2.4m (6-8') in diameter. It appeared that the larger room had been used as living quarters, and that the smaller was the dairy or store-room. Recesses used as cuphoards were found in some of the structures. At some sites, there were complex suites of four or five huts. In some areas, rectangular huts were found, on average 2.7m by 2.1m (9 x 7') internally, and Macsween (1959b:76) believed that were the most recent shieling huts. The association of some of the huts with cultivation ridges, suggested that the sites may have been cultivated at a time of population pressure, perhaps in the 1830s and 1840s. Enclosures were associated with many of the groups of huts, and were generally some 13.7m (45') in diameter. These were constructed of earth, or of varying proportions of stone and turf, and were believed to have been used as milking pens. Favoured sites, were those where only one or two banks were necessary to form an enclosure.

7.4 CONCLUSIONS

Examination of published research on the shieling indicated that, although field-work had been carried out generally in the study area, few sites had been examined and recorded in detail. The approaches of both Miller and Love indicated the value of location analysis, and in

the case of the latter also of detailed analysis of the form of the structures.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines specific features of a number of sites on Man identified as shieling sites by Peter Gelling, and of those identified as shieling sites in Skye and the Outer Hebrides. The former were examined in detail through fieldwork carried out during the period 1986-1990 (Catalogue 1 and Fig.51), and the latter in 1987 (Catalogue 2 and Figs.52-54). The individual features considered are mounds, structures, banks, and cultivation evidence.

8.1 THE MOUNDS

A. THE MANX EVIDENCE

In the report on the excavations at Block Eary and Injebreck, Gelling, although providing information about the excavated mounds, did not provide any details concerning those which were not the subject of investigation. Information on these is restricted to the observations made by Basil Megaw, that the mounds of Block Eary varied considerably in size and shape, and that some of them had central concave depressions. Gelling, in searching for sites similar to those excavated, examined known groups of mounds near the 305m (1000') contour, situated on dry ground near a stream. He recorded the number of mounds at sites, and noted that the size of the mounds varied from one site to another. This is as far as his descriptions of the mounds at individual sites went, however. Hence, there is little information available about the mounds at any of the sites, and it was believed that a detailed examination of them, may not only indicate similarities between sites, but also perhaps point to important differences between them. The first site which was examined, as part of the fieldwork programme, was the site of Block Eary. Here, it was noted that there were significant variations in the form of mounds in different parts of the site. This line of enquiry, thus, seemed worth exploring.

Sites which were examined as part of the fieldwork programme are to be found in Catalogue 1 and are referred to by name and the site number in the text, for example, Block Eary (M9-11). The M represents Man.

(a) Identification of mounds

Identification of possible shieling mounds began with a re-examination of the mounds at the sites of Block Eary (M9-11) and Injebreck (M17), identified by Gelling. The first requirement was the need to be able to distinguish between man-made mounds and natural features, there being frequently little surface indication to suggest that mounds are accumulations of occupation deposits (see Fig.84 for diagram of mound formation). In many cases, the appearance of the mounds is such that it is impossible to mistake them for natural features. Many of the Block Eary and Injebreck mounds, those of Druidale 1 (M1), and of Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), for example, are located on relatively flat, or gently sloping, land and appear as large grassy knolls (e.g. Pl.3a). Identification is not as easy, however, where mounds have built up against a slope. These are often slight, and barely detectable, as in the case of Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15), or are large spreads of material, as at Block Eary, and have the appearance of areas of soil slip. Generally, in such cases, identification is aided by the shape of the slumped material, and also by the vegetation cover. Many of the mounds have a covering of green grass and reeds in areas which otherwise are heather and rough grass covered (tussock). In the case of Block Eary, however, many of the mounds of Groups A (M9) and B (M10) stood out because of their heather and moss cover in an area dominated by rough grass.

The vegetation cover can also hinder identification. The mounds at Laxey (M18), Cringle Plantation 1 (M29) and at Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), for example, are largely obscured by a dense covering of bracken, and it is possible that this vegetation cover was responsible for the failure to identify sites in the valleys of Glion Kerral (M21) and the Blaber River (M31). At the site of Druidale 2 (M2), it is a dense covering of heather which makes identification difficult. The only means of locating mounds, in each case, is to look for slightly raised areas of vegetation, and to walk over the whole area searching for changes in the height of the land on foot. Once possible mounds have been identified, distribution and surface examination can then indicate whether they are likely to be mounds of occupation deposits.

There are further difficulties, however. For example, at the site of Slieau Dhoo (M27), it would appear that accumulations of material formed by the slippage of soil down the steep slopes, created platforms on which structures could be erected. At other sites, it is possible that where there was a slope, levelled surfaces were created for structures, by the mounding up of soil and turf. Mounds, in such cases, are, thus, a combination of natural features, man-made platforms, and occupation material.

Distinguishing between mounds which may have been related to shieling activities, and those which may have been tumuli, is more difficult. This is highlighted, for example, by the fact that the mounds at the sites of Block Eary (M9-11) and Injebreck (M17) were originally identified as collections of tumuli (see Chapter 6). Megaw and Gelling used the appearance of saucer-shaped depressions in the mounds to aid identification, but the presence of such features cannot be relied upon and can possibly also be misleading (many natural mounds also have surface depressions, as have tumuli). There are also frequently few traces of stones on the surface of the mounds, which may hint at their past use, either in the form of possible walling, or to indicate that the mounds are tumuli. Identification, based on surface examination is, thus, particularly in the case of single mounds, very difficult and other channels of information have to be utilised (e.g. Kerroodhoo (M22)).

(b) Number of mounds

An examination of Gelling's figures pointed to the fact that there was considerable variation in the number belonging to particular sites. Gelling identified a number of particularly large sites, consisting of between 17 and 37 mounds, but found that the majority of sites contained less than 10 mounds. The figures quoted by Gelling for the large sites would appear, though, to be often misleading. In the case of Block Eary, for example, Gelling wrote that there were 37 mounds belonging to this site. An examination of Block Eary, however, shows that there are at least two distinct sites at the head of this valley, a fact which is recognised on Gelling's distribution map (Fig.43). It was suggested by the author (Chapter 6) that what was identified as a

single site by Gelling could be divided into three separate groups, i.e. one near the 274m (900') contour, one near the 290m (950') contour, and one in the headwaters of the river at a height of over 305m (1000') O.D.. These have been named Groups A (M9), B (M10), and C (M11) respectively. It is possible that Groups A and B belonged to a single site, but, in the case of Group C, there is no reason to see this as also part of the same site. In considering the number of mounds, the combining of those belonging to Groups A and B, produces a total of 26 mounds, and Group C has 7. If the total of 26, however, is broken down into the two groups, A and B, there are now figures of 9 and 17 mounds. The total of 37 mounds is reached by the inclusion of the mound AA, and 3 outliers.

This is also the case at Druidale. Here, distinct sites are located in the headwaters: Druidale 1 (M1) with 10+ mounds; Druidale 2 (M2) with 6, possibly 7 mounds, Druidale 3 (M3) being a group of 7 mounds, and Druidale 4 (M4) having a single mound. This gives a maximum total of 25 mounds in the headwaters of the `Sulby River. This would also appear to apply in the other large valleys, such as Cornaa (M19), where, although in separate groups, Gelling assumed that the mounds were all part of one large site. In the case of Archallagan (M16), it would appear that although the mounds were located within one general area, they were located some distance from each other.

One site which does have a large number of mounds concentrated within a relatively small area, which can clearly not be broken down into different groups, is Injebreck (M17). Here, 21 of the 23 mounds identified by Gelling, were found located between two tributaries in the headwaters of the West Baldwin River. The size of this site, suggests that the total number of mounds for the combined groups A and B of Block Eary, is not an outstanding one.

The majority of the sites covered in the fieldwork carried out by the author, however, consist of clear groups of 10 or less mounds. In fact, examples of sites containing each number of mounds between 1 and 10, were examined. Sites with 10 or more mounds are Block Eary B (16) (also Block Eary A and B if they are regarded as a single site (25)), Druidale 1 (10), Injebreck (21) and Lhergyrhenny (10). In the case of

Lhergyrhenny (M25), there appear to be two separate groups of mounds, one consisting of 4 mounds, and one of 6. The over-riding impression, therefore, is of small groups of mounds, and it can be postulated that the sites identified by Gelling in the larger valleys, were concentrations of such groups, as opposed to particularly large sites.

(c) Size and shape

The size of the mounds is, as noted by Gelling, found to vary from one site to another, but there are also important variations within sites. The first site at which this was noted was Block Eary. Groups A (M9) and B (M10) were found to contain a characteristic type of mound (Type 1), large and roughly circular, with a diameter of 6m to 10m, and between 0.8m and 2m high. These appear to be composed entirely of turf, there being very little or no surface evidence of stonework. Mounds of this type appear as bright green, reed covered knolls, and generally lie on relatively flat, to slightly sloping, areas of land. Group A contains 4 such mounds and Group B appears to have contained about 6 (some of these have been damaged by the stone wall which was built on top of them). There are no similar mounds belonging to Group C (M11), although mound DD is considerably larger than the other mounds belonging to this group. Fieldwork identified this type of mound at other sites: it is the characteristic of Laxey (M18); a number are to be found at Injebreck (M17), and the truncated mounds at Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14) were clearly also of this type. In the case of the mounds of the latter site and of Laxey, the similarity between the mounds is very clear, despite the fact that identification is hindered by the dense covering of ferns. The only other sites which have mounds belonging to this group are Druidale 1 (M1, mound G), Druidale 2 (M2, mound C) and Druidale 8 (M8). The mounds of Druidale 2 are large, both in diameter and height, but their shape makes them slightly different in appearance from the type described above, and they are, therefore, placed in a separate group.

A second type of mound (Type 2) was recognised at Block Eary, in Groups A and B. This is a mound which has been built up against the steeper parts of the hillside, and is, consequently, rather more oval in shape than the other mounds. One side of the mound is formed by the

hillside and the downslope side fans out and slopes gently. These were found to be slightly smaller than the above mounds, but are still of considerable diameter and height. Examples at Block Eary are mounds A, B and C in Group A, and J to N in Group B. Another site with a large number of such mounds is Juan ny Clarys 2. The site consists of a hollow, around the sides of which mounds have built up against the slope. These are 4m to 6m in diameter, and are no more than 0.5m in height. At first sight, they appear to be the accumulations of slipped material. Other examples of this type of mound are to be found at Slieau Dhoo (M27).

Three of the mounds at Druidale 2 (M2) appear to combine characteristics of both the above types of mound (Type 3). They are oval in shape, with a long axis of 9m, 10.8m, and 14.6m respectively, a short axis of 5.3m, 5.7m and 6.2m, and a height of c.2.0m, c.1.25m and c.1.5m. They are, thus, large mounds and are vaguely similar in appearance to those at Block Eary (M9-10), appearing as green splashes on the heather covered hillside, and being reed covered. However, their shape is similar to those which have built up against a fairly steep hillside. Examination of the site and the mounds, points to the fact that they built up originally on the edge of a steep slope, thus near the bank of one of the streams and where the slope falls steeply to the road. Material has slipped at the lower edge, where the slope becomes steeper, thus creating mounds which have considerable down-slope extensions. Mounds of this type are also found at Injebreck (M17), where the slope is not steep enough for the mounds to have built up against them, but at the lower ends, material has collapsed and fanned out.

The first two types of mound, outlined above, account for a considerable number of the mounds at Block Eary. There are still, however, a number which do not belong to either type (Type 4). Mounds H and I, of Group A (M9), for example, were found to be considerably smaller than the other mounds in this group. In Group B (10), there are also three small mounds, X, Y and V. However, it was found that Group C (M11), located in the headwaters of the river, consisted entirely, with the exception of mound DD, of much smaller mounds. None of these is

over 5m in diameter, and they are all under 0.5m high. Two of the mounds are markedly oval in shape. Mounds between 4m and 7m in diameter and less than 0.8m in height (generally less than 0.5m), were found to be characteristic of the majority of sites visited. These mounds are, on the whole, roughly circular, but there are also mounds which are more accurately described as oval in shape. At Druidale 1 (M1), 6 of the mounds could be placed in this category, 3 of the Druidale 2 (M2), possibly all of those of Druidale 3 (M3), the 3 Slieau Curn (M13) mounds, at least 3 of the Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14) mounds, a large number of those at Injebreck (M17), all of those at Lhergyrhenny (M25), those at Cornaa (M19), 1 of the Sulby Reservoir mounds (M20), and the smaller mounds at Slieau Dhoo (M27).

There are mounds, however, which cannot be placed in any of the above categories. The most important of these are those which appear more like barrows than mounds (Type 5). There are only two examples of these, and both are to be found at Druidale 1 (M1). Mound F is an elongated mound, 23m in length and 10m wide, at its widest point. It ranges in height from 0.75m, at the east end, to 1.5m at the west end. Mound I is also an elongated mound, 21.96m in length and 10.1m in width. It has a height of roughly 1.0m for most of its length, but this decreases slightly towards the east end. Mounds which are oval in appearance, have been described above, and the mound at Archallagan (M16) can be added to this list. None of these, however, is of the length of the above mound, and none of them would be described as being similar in appearance. In the case of the Druidale 2 (M2) mounds, the oval shape was caused by the slippage of material, but the mounds of Druidale 1 lie on relatively flat ground, and it appears, at first sight, that the shape cannot be attributed to this. On the plan of the site by Peter Gelling, what is described as mound I here, was believed by Gelling to be three separate mounds. The site has been visited on a number of occasions by the author, and, although the mound could represent an accumulation of material from three separate mounds, it does appear as a single mound, I, with the smaller mound J at the west end. This would, however, account for the strange shape of the mounds, which is otherwise very difficult to explain, and the proximity of

mounds F and G, for example, points to the fact that mounds were located within very short distances of one another. This is also true of other sites, for example, Block Eary A (M9) and B (M10). Both of the mounds at Druidale 1 are similar in height and surface appearance to mound G, suggesting that there could be a relationship between them.

(d) 'Satellite' mounds

A possible relationship between large and smaller mounds was first noticed at Block Eary. Mound W in Group B (M10) has what appears to be a small mound, as opposed to an accumulation of slipped material, attached to its south side (X). This mound is about a third of the size of W. There is also a possible example of this in Group A (M9), mound G having the much smaller mound H close by it. There do not appear to be any examples in Group C (M11), although Gelling did show one mound (EE) with a smaller one attached on the south-east side. An examination of this mound, however, did not produce evidence that this was the case. The site of Injebreck (M17) provided further information concerning 'satellite' mounds. At least two large mounds with smaller ones were identified at the site. Mound B, for example, is a large mound, similar to those which are characteristic of Block Eary A and B, with diameters of 10.6m and 8.34m, and a height of 0.5m. Mound C, to the south-south-east, is of a similar height, but has diameters of 5.8m and 5.37m. 'Satellite' mounds do not, however, appear to be a general feature of other sites visited on Man. One site with a possible example is Druidale 1 (M1). Gelling's plan of this site (Fig.44) showed a line of four mounds at the east end of the site, three of roughly the same size adjoined, and a smaller one at the west end. Survey suggested that the three large mounds were, in fact, a large single mound, I, and it is possible that the smaller one, J, could be regarded as a 'satellite'. However, the majority of mounds at this site are small, and J could be a separate mound. Another mound at this site has a feature attached to its west side. This is mound E, but the associated feature is a depression with an encircling bank, rather than a mound.

(e) Composition and surface features

Information concerning the composition of the mounds was derived from surface examination. Many of the mounds, however, have been the

subject of considerable damage by rabbits, and others have suffered from erosion. These activities made it possible for the author to gain some information about the internal make-up of the mounds without damaging them further.

Gelling concluded that the mounds were created by the superimposition of huts of turf, or turf and soil, and that there was a general lack of stone used in the structures, either as footings or as walling. One of the features of the mounds identified by Megaw at Block Eary, and used by Gelling as an indication that mounds were the remains of shieling huts at other sites, was saucer-shaped depressions in the top of the mounds. Clearly, it was important to establish whether this was a constant feature of the mounds covered in this field-work. Mounds with depressions were noted at virtually every site, but these varied considerably in diameter and depth, and were not always located in the centre of the mounds. Possible saucer-shaped depressions were identified in a few of the mounds at Block Eary (M9-10), but in the majority of cases they were not as clear as might have been indicated by Gelling. It was also found that, in most cases, the large depressions identified were more oval in shape, for example, Mound B at Injebreck (M17), the depressions at Slieau Dhoo (M27), Druidale 2 (M2) and Druidale 4 (M4). Mound H at Slieau Dhoo possesses the clearest evidence of a structure on its surface. This takes the form of a depression, roughly 1.5m by 1.0m, and almost 0.5m in depth. This feature appears as a hollow, surrounded by a turf wall, and it seemed possible to postulate an entrance at the south-east end. A structure may also be indicated by the two small depressions in Mound F at Lhergyrhenny (M25), but the evidence is less clear here. At most of the sites the depressions are not clear features. At Druidale 1 (M1), the Juan ny Clarys sites (M14-15), Slieau Curn (M13) and Laxey (M18), for example, the only depressions noted appeared to have been created by rabbits.

The above discussion of depressions is restricted to those which do not generally appear to contain stones: mound H at Slieau Dhoo is a slight exception, in that there are two stones at the point where an entrance is postulated. A distinction is drawn between depressions with

and without stones, because the latter was not a feature noted by either Gelling or Megaw. The lack of surface evidence of stones suggested that the mounds of many of the sites were composed largely of turf. However, the identification of stone structures, at Block Eary (AA in M10, and BB in M11) and at Injebreck (A, M17) points to the fact that structures were erected in this material, as opposed to turf and possibly wood. Survey work began at Block Eary, and it was apparent from an examination of the mounds of Groups A (M9) and B (M10), that surface stones were not an important feature. Examination of the mounds of Group C (M11), however, suggested that this conclusion could, at least, not be applied to this site.

Mounds DD, EE, GG, and HH, of Block Eary C (M11), have a number of stones visible on the surfaces. The most interesting of these are mounds DD and EE. The former is a large mound, with diameters of 7.5m and 6.5m, and it is over 1.0m high. There is a depression in the mound towards the north end, roughly rectangular in shape, and over 1.5m in length. Within this depression a number of stones are visible. At the south end of the mound, a second, much smaller, depression was located, in each side of which a slab of stone is exposed. Mound EE is much smaller, with diameters of 2.0m and 3.0m and a height of just over 0.25m, and lies on the narrow spur of land to the north of DD. At the higher, east end of the mound, there are a number of stones visible, forming the eastern edge of a slight depression. The distribution of stones in the other mounds is more random, and there is no clear structural evidence.

The lack of surface evidence of stones in Groups A (M9) and B (M10) suggested that the observations at Group C (M11) were atypical of the mounds in general. This appeared to be confirmed by an examination of mounds at Injebreck (M17), Druidale 1, 2 and 3 (M1-3), Laxey (M18) and Sulby Reservoir (M20). Although some of the mounds do have one or two stones visible, these are not associated with depressions, where they exist, and do not lie in such a way as to indicate possible structures. At Druidale 1, for example, one of the few stones visible in the mounds is that protruding from the north flank, at the west end, of mound F. At some sites there are more stones visible, for example at Juan ny

Clarys 1 (M14), mounds A and B both have a number of stones of quartz and slate visible on the surfaces, at Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15), there is a scattering of slate and quartz over the whole site, and at Cornaa (M19) and the Lhaggan (M24), a notable feature of the mounds is the large quantity of stone incorporated within them. Other mounds, such as that identified at Sartfell (M26), appear, at first sight, to be devoid of stone, but a closer examination, especially of the rabbit burrows, shows the inclusion of a number of large stones.

The first site to produce convincing structural evidence was that at Lherghyrhenny (M25). The majority of the mounds of Group 2 have diameters of less than 5.0m and are between 0.5m and 1.0m high. In all of them, stone, in varying quantities, is visible. On mounds C and E, there appear to be the remains of small rectangular structures, of similar size to those suggested to have been corn-drying kilns at Block Eary and at Injebreck, thus, just over 1.0m square. They are also similar to the depression noted on Mound H at Slieau Dhoo. These structures are considered in more detail in section B.

Although not indicating a surface structure, another interesting feature was noted at the site of Slieau Dhoo (M27). On the summit of the small mound I, three large slabs are visible, indicating perhaps a covering of stone at the top of the mound. The stone structures excavated by Gelling were found to have been capped with stone, and one of their characteristics was the apparent location on small eminences. Mound I is some 3.0m in diameter, and those at Block Eary (M10-11) and Injebreck (M17) are less than 4.0m.

A feature first noted at Druidale 4 (M4), was subsequently found at the site of Lhergyrhenny (M25). This is the appearance of stones at the foot of a mound, effectively encircling it. In the case of Druidale 4, these are large pieces of quartz, and at Lhergyrhenny, granite. They are most noticeable around mound A at this site.

The only chance to examine a mound in section came in October 1989. The mounds located above the river at the site of Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), have been truncated, over the years, as the river has undercut the bank. The sections, have, however, been obscured by a dense vegetation cover (bracken and heather), and the removal of this would

have created further damage. In October, part of the mound had slipped owning to prolonged heavy rain, exposing a section through the mound (Pl.13a). This was the top 70cm of the mound. At the top of this was a thin layer of turf and heather, beneath which was a larger layer, some 60cm deep, of grey-brown soil. This consisted of soft and crumbly brown soil, with patches of grey clayey soil. Within this layer were a number of stones, including one upright (30cm in length and 10cm in width), and five smaller, flatter stones laid horizontally. Comparison of this section with an exposed area of natural, beneath mound H, proved interesting, the latter being largely composed of a variety of small stones. The natural contained little soil, and very few sizeable stones.

The above has concentrated on those mounds which appear to be made up largely of turf, but also have surface indications of stone, and, in some cases, internal evidence. At the site of Lhergyrhenny (M25), a further type of mound was noted. Mound D, of Group 2, consists of large slabs of stone, with a thin turf covering only on its down-slope side. The mound has a diameter of 2.5m, and is only about 40cm high. A similar mound of stones is located further down the hillside, separate from Groups 1 and 2 (Pl.19a). It consists of very large slabs and boulders, and has a diameter of 2.5-3.0m. It is some 80cm in height. Similar mounds were not found at any of the other sites visited. Mounds incorporating considerable amounts of stone exist at the Lhaggan (M24) and at Cornaa (M19), but these are turf and stone mounds, and are much larger than those noted above.

(f) Size and Composition

The above section was concerned with the composition of the mounds, and the size is of considerable significance in this context. Gelling's excavations demonstrated that the size of the investigated mounds was related to the number of superimposed structures on one particular spot. The largest mounds encountered during the author's survey work are those belonging to Groups A and B at Block Eary (M9-10). If the size of a mound does represent the number of structures, then these two sites have seen more repeated building than any of the other sites visited. This could suggest that they were used more intensively,

perhaps for longer periods of time during a year, and that the structures needed to be repaired more frequently. Alternatively, the popularity of the sites may have been such that they saw use over a very long period of time - a number of years, decades, or even centuries. The lack of flatter mounds is particularly noticeable in these two groups. The only other sites which have a number of similar mounds, are those of Laxey (M18) and Injebreck (M17). In the case of the former, the six mounds identified are of roughly the same dimensions. At Injebreck, however, there are also a number of smaller, flatter mounds, indicating that only a certain number were used repeatedly. This would also appear to have been the case at Druidale 2 (M2)and at Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), for example.

Sites such as Druidale 1 (M1) are particularly interesting. Here, the only mound which would not look out of place at Block Eary is mound G. Mounds F and I are also of considerable size, but the rest of the mounds are small, and a few of them are virtually flat. This suggests that the site may have begun in a much smaller form, thus that there were only three locations of structures, or that structures were abandoned through time, leaving, perhaps, only these three mounds still in use. It is also possible that once these mounds reached their current height, they were abandoned in favour of new locations. The possibility that mounds F and I were created by the collapse of virtually adjoining mounds, produces an interesting distribution of perhaps two groups of four similar mounds. Although it is difficult to understand how this site was used, one thing is clear. The mounds may have been in use contemporaneously, but some have been the site of much greater activity than others.

The height of the mound cannot always be used as an indication of the depth of occupation material, however. A number of the mounds at Slieau Dhoo (M27), for example, appear to have built up on natural mounds, and it is possible, at other sites, that level surfaces were created on which structures were erected. This seems likely in the case of those mounds which have built up against a slope.

The large diameters of the mounds, also, do not always indicate the size of the structures which were erected. In the case of the

relatively flat mounds, where there is a build-up of material to a height of only a few centimetres, it is possible to be relatively certain about the size of the structure which occupied that particular spot. At Druidale 1 (M1), structures with external dimensions of perhaps some 4.0-5.0m are indicated, whilst at Slieau Curn (M13), the size indicated is 4.0m by 3.0m. However, as a mound develops, unless it is levelled before a new structure is erected, the available area which can be used gradually diminishes. This means that, although it appears that potential structures indicated by small mounds, such as those at Slieau Curn, would have been of inferior size to those of Groups A (M9) and B (M10) at Block Eary, for example, an examination of the surface area on the summits of the latter mounds, indicates that there would have been roughly the same, or a smaller, area available on which to build a hut. Where there are depressions on the mounds, these give a reasonable idea of the size of structures. In the case of the clearest depressions, those at Slieau Dhoo (M27) and at Lhergyrhenny (M25), structures with internal dimensions of 1.5m by 1.0m are indicated, and at Injebreck (M17), a structure, 2.0m by 1.25m is indicated. External dimensions would suggest structures roughly 3.0m by 4.0m. These dimensions are similar to those of Gelling for one of the huts in Mound C, Block Eary (M10), and the small cells in the mounds at Block Eary (M10-11) and Injebreck (M17), which Gelling postulated to have been the remains of corn-drying kilns. The other structures located by Gelling were larger, that at Injebreck, for example, being internally 3.0m by 2.0m.

B. THE HEBRIDEAN EVIDENCE

Mounds were encountered in each of the islands in which fieldwork was carried out. However, the form taken by the mounding varies considerably, and, although Skye produced some interesting comparative material, the closest parallels were found in the Uists. The discussion, presented below, is not divided into sections examining specific aspects of the mounds, as for Man, but into sections on the different islands. This format was chosen because of the variations encountered, and because, in most cases, the mounding is not the most significant feature of the sites. The final section does, however,

attempt to draw certain general conclusions about the form, number and significance of mounds identified.

The sites covered by fieldwork by the author are to be found in Catalogue 2. Sites, in the text, are referred to by name and by the catalogue site number, for example, Beinn Bragar (H17), H representing Hebrides. Reference is also made in this section to sites which had already been recorded or referenced. These are to be found in Catalogue 5, and the site number is prefixed with R, representing Recorded or Referenced.

(a) Lewis and Harris

The mounding in Lewis and Harris is quite different from that in Man. Here, all the mounds encountered were small, and have substantial evidence of stone structures. There was no evidence to suggest that turf structures were ever used to any great extent. The lack of mounding is consistent with the use of stone structures at shieling sites, which would not only have lasted longer than turf huts, but would also have been easier to repair. A number of the mounds appear to have been created deliberately, to serve as platforms, providing either a level surface, or raising the huts above possibly damp ground. Examples can be found on Beinn Bragar and Beinn Rahacleit (H17). However, it is likely that many of the mounds are accumulations of occupation material. Material, such as bedding and roofing material, would gradually accumulate within the hut, slowly raising the floor level. It would have been possible to level this when a stone hut collapsed, and the stone could then have been re-used in a new hut, erected on the old debris. This would appear to have been the case at Gleann Airigh na Gile (H6), for example. Associated with hut A, is the only turf feature encountered during fieldwork. This takes the form of a spread of material, a few centimetres high, to the west of the hut. The identification of the feature as occupation material is possible because of the vegetation cover. It appears as a bright, grassy and reed-covered patch.

Although significant similarities were not noted between mounds in Lewis and those of the Manx sites, one feature of shieling sites in Lewis, which may have a bearing on remains in Man, is the form taken by

collapsed structures, particularly beehives. These are very similar in appearance to the piles of stone and turf found at Lhergyrhenny, although they are generally larger. The only beehive recorded in detail is that at Cnoc Dubh (H15), but remains of roughly circular and oval structures were encountered at other sites, for example, Ollashal (H12). It was found that, in most cases, the stones of the structures had collapsed inwards, creating features which, like the Manx examples, from a distance have the appearance of cairns.

(b) Skye

The above features were not noted at the sites examined in Skye, but it is recorded, by the Royal Commission, that heaps of stone, representing the remains of shieling huts, were found at, at least, one site in Duirinish (R1). Mounds similar to those in Man do exist in Skye, and all of the sites examined possess some degree of mounding. They range in height from a few centimetre to 2m, and appear as bright green, grassy knolls, often with a liberal covering of rushes or ferns. In Glen Conon (H1) and Glen Hinnisdale (H3), the mounds are located on flat to gently sloping land, and have, thus, a similar appearance to the Type 1 mounds of Block Eary (M9-10). In the valley of the River Rha (H4), and at Moaladh Mor (H5), the mounds are located on rather steeper slopes, and have thus been subject to slip. Generally, two or three mounds were identified at the sites examined, but Macsween and Gailey (R7-10) and the Royal Commission (R2-6) noted sites with between two and fifteen mounds in Duirinish and Waternish.

The feature which distinguishes these mounds from the Manx ones, is that all of them have inserted within them, or on top of them, the remains of stone structures. In Glen Conon, three mounds were identified at site A (H1), which vary in height from a few centimetres to 2m. The largest of the mounds (A), which appears as an accumulation of stone with a covering of turf, has within it the remains of at least three attached, but not interconnecting, stone cells, each roughly rectangular, and some 2m by 1m. The drystone walls survive to a height of about 1.25m. Mound C also has structural remains, pointing to the possible existence of at least two cells, but these are not as clear as in mound A. All that remains on the very low mound, B, pointing to the

fact that it was once the site of a structure, are a few scattered stones, and a central hollow. Mounds and cells are also to be found in Glen Hinnisdale (H3), and on a particularly large mound, at least four structures can be identified. The cells, in some cases, are very small, and similar to the stone structures excavated by Gelling, and have the appearance of having been built into the tops and the sides of the large mounds. Reference to sites in Catalogue 5 shows that cellular structures, particularly twin-celled ones, are also a feature of shieling sites in Duirinish and Waternish, and that drystone walling is frequently to be found in central hollows within the mounds.

At the sites in the valley of the river Rha (H4) and at Maoladh Mor (H5), slightly larger, more rectangular, structures of turf and stone are to be found, located atop small mounds. In the case of the former, it seems likely that mounds had been created partly as platforms for the structures, but in the latter, at least one of the structures appears to have been built into existing occupation deposits. This is suggested by the large accumulation of material at the upslope end of hut B.

(c) North Uist

Similar mounds to those associated with the twin-celled structures of Skye, are to be found in North Uist, and were identified at three of the ten sites examined. They were first encountered at the site of Ben Aulasary (H24). Here, there are three large mounds, which can clearly be identified by their vegetation cover, and their elevation above the surrounding land. The smaller amounts of visible stone-work in these mounds, suggesting that the bulk of them consisted of accumulations of turf, earth and occupation material, points to a closer link between these and the Manx examples. Many of the Skye mounds, as noted above, appeared as turf-covered heaps of stone.

Two of the mounds are located on relatively flat to slightly sloping land, and the third is higher up-slope, and has built up against the hillside. Mound A is roughly circular, with diameters of 18m and 16.34m, and is some 1.5m high. Two hollows can be seen on the top of the mound, containing a few stones, and possibly suggesting inter-connecting cells. A strange feature, in the form of small turf

banks, can be seen at the base of the mound, on the north side. Mound B is smaller, with diameters of 8m and 9.76m, and is about 1m high. There is also a depression on this mound, towards the south end. This is 4.40m by 4.58m, and five stones are visible within it. There is possibly an entrance, 82cm wide, facing north. Mound C is similar, as far as location is concerned, to the Type 2 mounds of Block Eary (M9-10). It has built up against a fairly steep slope, and the slope thus forms one side of the mound. On the down-slope side, material has slipped and fanned out along the hillside, giving the mound the appearance of being much larger. There is a great deal more tumbled stone associated with this mound than with either of the others, and it is clear why it has been described as a cairn on the O.S. maps. On the flat area of the mound, and occupying most of it, there is evidence of a structure, in the form of upstanding dry-stone walling. The structure measures some 2m square internally, and there seems to be an entrance at the north end. Similar large mounds, with the evidence of small stone structures erected upon them, are to be found at Blashaval (H22), and Uneval (H27) in North Uist. In the case of the latter, the mounds are located on the edge of a loch, and have the remains of more than one structure on each: mounds A and C have four, and B has two. The mounds at this site are particularly large, with diameters of 20m and 11m, 10m and 15.2m, and 40m and 15m respectively. This suggested that they may be natural features rather than accumulations of occupation material.

(d) Benbecula

Only one mound was identified in Benbecula, of the thirteen sites visited. This is at the site of a chambered cairn (H42). Two of the huts at this site have been built into the north side of the now ruinous cairn, but the third (A) is located to the south, slightly down-slope. The mound is slight, and has the characteristic appearance of a grassy knoll. On top of the mound are the remains of a rectangular structure of stone, consisting of two small, separate (i.e. not inter-connecting) rooms.

(e) South Uist

Mounds are significant features of three of the seven sites

examined. These are Haarsal 1 (H45), North Locheynort (H47) and Kildonan Glen (H48), and are very similar to those of North Uist. At the sites, there are four, two and four mounds respectively, which vary considerably in size and shape.

At Haarsal 1, three of the mounds have diameters of between 5m and 8m, and are between 0.5m and 1.8m in height. These dimensions are similar to those for many of the Manx mounds. The fourth mound is much larger, having diameters of 17m and 16m, and being over 3m high. However, the size of the mound is related to the fact that it has built up against a slope, and has suffered considerable slip of material. The flat area on the top of the mound is only some 4m across. This type of mound is encountered on Man, and is comparable to mound C at Ben Aulasary (H24) and C at Uneval in North Uist (H27). The surfaces of the mounds were found to be scattered with stones, and, in the case of mound A, stones appear to ring the base of the mound, as at Druidale 4 (M4) and Lhergyrhenny (M25) on Man. Hollows form clear features on the summits and sides of the mounds, and in most of them there is either tumbled stone, or dry-stone walling. Mounds A, C, and D, appear to have had a single stone structure on them, but mound B, has evidence of at least two stone structures. These are located on the slipped material, near the base, rather than on the top. This is occupied by a large hollow, in which there is no evidence of walling. In all except one case, the structures indicated are rectangular in shape. The exception is the apparently semi-circular structure at the foot of mound B.

At North Locheynort (H47), two mounds are easily identifiable, as grassy knolls. Both are extensive, being located on slight slopes, and material has fanned out on the down-slope sides. A has a diameter of over 10m and a height of roughly 0.8m, and B, which is more oval in shape, has diameters of 15m and 11m, and is roughly 1.5m high. The flat area on the top of this mound is, however, less than 6m across. As on the mounds of Haarsal 1, the presence of structures is indicated by hollows, with, in most cases, evidence of tumbled stone. On mound A, four very small structures were noted, the clearest being on the top of the mound. These are two rectangular structures sharing a common wall, and are possibly two rooms of a single hut. The single structure on

mound B is better preserved, dry-stone walling surviving to a height of some 70cm in most parts. A possible second structure lies towards the foot of the mound.

The only other site at which the mounds are the most obvious features, is that in Kildonan Glen (H48). The mounds are very similar to those described above, and were identifiable because of their similarity also to the Manx mounds. They stand out as large grassy knolls. The smallest mound (C) has a diameter of just under 6m, and the largest (D) has diameters of 17.3m and 15.3m. They range in height from 0.5m to over 3.0m. All of the mounds have hollows on their surfaces indicating structures. Mounds A, B and C have evidence of single structures, whilst D has evidence of perhaps four. Two of these are located on the top of the mound, and two are on the lower east and west slopes. One notable feature of the stones incorporated in this mound, is that some are set in an upright position.

(f) Barra

The information about sites on Barra is based on evidence set out in Catalogue 5. Green mounds seem to be features of shieling sites, and, as in the case of the above groups, they are crowned with the remains of round, oval or rectangular structures of stone. Site R58 has eight mounds, Site R59 has three, and Site R60 has two.

DISCUSSION

From the evidence set out here, it is clear that mounds composed entirely of turf, as excavated by Gelling in Man, would not appear to be a feature of shieling sites in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, although mounds are relatively common. This appears particularly strange in the case of the Uists, as it was stated by Carmichael (1884:472, and Chapter 5) that the shieling huts of North Uist were constructed of turf, and that the roof was of sticks covered with divots. He distinguished between this type of hut, *both cheap*, and the stone bothy, *both cloiche*, or beehive, which was to be found in Lewis, but not in the Uists or Barra. Even if the mounds were created by the repeated building of turf huts, it is clear that in their latest stages, they were occupied by stone structures.

The number of mounds at sites varies, but all of the sites visited

have four, or less. In the case of Skye, fieldwork in Waternish and Duirnish, suggested that groups of more than four do occur, and that as many as fifteen mounds were found at one site. The research of Macsween in Trotternish (see Chapter 7), suggested groups of from twelve to twenty mounds, and in exceptional cases thirty mounds. Macsween's definition of a group, however, appears to differ from that of the author. For example, he points to the existence of a group in Glen Haultin, which consists of forty mounds within a radius of 2.5km (1 mile). This may be the number of mounds belonging to one shieling ground, but it is likely that there are a number of smaller groupings within it. There are no published references suggesting similar sized groups in the Uists, or in Barra. This was considered to conflict with the evidence about shieling activities derived from published material and folk-memory. The impression gained from these sources, is of large groups of people migrating to the hills for the summer months. The evidence from fieldwork points to the fact that, at least in these cases, the shieling grounds were occupied by small groups of people. This would, however, accord well with the general impression gained of the Manx sites, that they consisted, on the whole, of less than ten mounds.

Although variations in the size of mounds at specific sites were noted, this is not as noticeable as at the Manx sites. For example, very few small, relatively flat mounds were identified, such as those at Druidale 1 (M1). The smallest are mound B at Glen Conon 1 (H1) in Skye, mound D at Haarsal 1 (H45) in South Uist, and mound C at Kildonan Glen (H48), also in South Uist. The majority of the mounds are large in both diameter and height, and are generally located on flat to slightly sloping land. A number are much larger than those on Man, particularly in the Uists. Only a few examples of the Type 2 mounds identified at the sites in Man, i.e. built up against a slope, were recorded. Many are roughly circular, but there are also mounds which can be more accurately described as oval, such as mounds A and C of Uneval (H27), North Uist. Mound A at this site, can be compared with mounds F and I at Druidale 1 (M1) in Man. The size of the mounds, consequently, points to repeated building activity in a limited number of locations, over a

considerable period of time.

One feature noted at sites in Man, but not found in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, is 'satellite mounds', small mounds apparently associated with larger ones. However, a number of the mounds of the Uists have flatter extensions, similar to that of mound B of Injebreck (M17) in Man, on which there is evidence of structures.

The most striking difference between the mounds of Man and those of the Isles, is, as already alluded to, the appearance of stone structures on, or inserted into, all of them. Hollows are very clear features on all of the mounds, usually more oval than saucer-shaped, and in the vast majority of cases these contain either tumbled stone or evidence of dry-stone walling. Most mounds contain evidence of single structures, but many of the larger ones possess up to four hollows and evidence of stone-work. The structures indicated by this evidence are located not only on the summits of the mounds, but also on extensions, and near the bases. The remains of turf structures on the surfaces of the mounds were not identified, but turf banks can be seen on mound A of Ben Aulasary (H24), and mound C at Unevel (H27) in North Uist, and on mound B at Haarsal 1 (H45) in South Uist. The function of these features is not clear. Unfortunately, none of the mounds had been subject to any damage, so it was not possible to examine them internally, as on Man. However, it was clear from surface examination that, in a number of cases, mounds were composed largely of stone rather than turf, and had merely developed a grass covering. Such mounds are to be found in Skye and Lewis, for example, and can be compared with those identified at Lhergyrhenny (M25) in Man.

The final aspect of the mounds which is worth considering, is whether, from the surface evidence, it is possible to tell anything about their possible functions, thus, whether it is possible to distinguish between different types of structure from the mound. One case where this may be possible is when a mound appears to have a 'satellite' or a lower extension, suggesting that the latter could have served secondary functions, for example, as small stores for dairy equipment or dairy products. This is not, however, a feature common to sites in Man or the Isles. A second possibility is where the mound

appears to incorporate a large amount of stone, but this will be considered in more detail in the following sections.

8.2 THE STRUCTURES

A. THE MANX EVIDENCE

(a) Identification of structures

The identification of possible structures was outlined in the section on the composition and surface features of the mounds. Hollows on the summits of the mounds were used as a means of identifying possible structures of turf, but, in the vast majority of cases, the depressions are not clear features. In the case of the stone structures, identified and excavated by Gelling, their existence was noted by the greater amounts of stone-work in the mounds, and their location on slight eminences. In the first part of this chapter, possible structures of stone were noted at other sites, both on and within mounds, and will be explored more fully below.

(b) Turf structures

The only clear remains of possible turf structures to be noted from surface examination of the mounds are to be found at Sartfell 2 and 3 (M34-35). The only other feature occurs at the Druidale 1 site (M1). This, however, is not found on a mound, but attached to it. The mound in question is E, and adjoining it, to the west, is a roughly circular depression of some 4m by 3.5m. Encircling this, is a turf bank, some 25cm in height, and there is a possible entrance facing north. Although much larger, the similarity between the features is clear, and they are the only two to be recognised at any of the sites covered by fieldwork.

(c) Stone, and stone and turf structures

Six stone structures were identified at the sites of Block Eary and Injebreck by Peter Gelling, five at the former (in Gelling's mounds, A, D and the two marked K; catalogued as mounds U, O and AA of site M10, and BB of site M11), and one at the latter (mound A of site M17). The two structures excavated in Gelling's Mound A (U), Huts 1 and 3, were roughly circular and oval respectively. In three cases, the structures were small, roughly square cells of stone, inserted into mounds of turf, apparently composed of occupation debris. In the case of Gelling's mound D (O), and the excavated mound K (BB) at Block Eary,

the structures were partially lined with vertical slabs of stone. That at Injebreck (A) had courses of dry-stone walling, and Huts 1 and 3 of Mound A were represented by stone footings. The diameters of Huts 1 and 3 were, internally, some 6.2m and 4.8m respectively, whilst the internal area of each of the other structures was just over 1m square. The two structures postulated to have been corn-drying kilns (BB of M11 and A of M17) were partly paved, and, in the case of the Block Eary example, the narrow entrance and approach were paved as well. This is also true of the entrances to Huts 1 and 3 of Mound A. Post-holes were found associated with the latter two huts, but with none of the others. It appeared, in the case of Injebreck, that the structure, in its latest stage, had been roofed with slabs of stone. The sixth structure, on mound AA of site M10, although being described by Gelling as being similar to the small square cells, was a slightly larger rectangular structure of stone and turf, and this difference suggested a different function.

An examination of the reports of earlier excavations at these sites, produces some interesting evidence in relation to stone structures. At Block Eary (Excursion 1901:219-20) it appears that partial examination of one of the mounds by Mr. Savage, some years earlier, had revealed a small cist and some ashes. At Injebreck (Excursion 1930:431-2), partial excavation of one of the mounds on Captain Spittal's land, indicated the presence of a surrounding wall built of stone, 'in a more or less circular form'. A floor of carbon was revealed in the trench cut through the mound. The second mound, excavated at this site, did not produce similar evidence, but there were a few stones laid horizontally.

These were not the only sites, however, to produce such evidence. At Lhergyrhenny (Kermode 1894a:27-9), for example, a mound was excavated in 1883, and produced evidence of a small chamber of stone. The mound was rounded, and 'without a depression on its top'. It was 1.2m to 1.5m (4-5') high, and the diameter of the mound, at the base, was about 4.9m to 6.1m (16-20'). The mound had been partially excavated before the arrival of the antiquarians, and flat stones had been found, forming the sides of a small 'cist', at the north-west side. Also in

this area of the mound, fragments of baked clay were found, and a layer of ashes. Near the centre of the mound, the corner of a well built wall, running east-west, was revealed, composed of 'flat stones carefully laid with sods between them'. This wall proved to be part of a chamber, some 1.5m (5') in length, and 0.8m (2.5') across. The height of the walls outside was also some 0.8m (2.5'). The chamber rested on soil, and did not appear to have a covering of stone. It was filled with soil, and there were no traces of any bones. Beneath this structure, other 'portions of wall were met with', and these were at different angles from the top one. All of them were carefully built of large flat stones, laid, rather than on edge, with sods between. At the original ground level, there was a layer of ashes, which appeared to be of wood, gorse and heath, and below this, were flat stones stones resting on the natural soil. At this level, 'nests' of broken red quartz were noted, as were fragments of red clay. Kermode (1894a:28) noted that the size of the stones incorporated in the mound was such that considerable labour would have been involved in getting them all to that particular spot. He assumed that they had been collected from the stream below the site.

One other site produced interesting evidence. In 1927, a mound, belonging to another possible shieling site, was excavated on the Lhaggan, Glen Rushen (Joughin *et al* 1928:231-2; M24). This mound had a height of just over 1.0m (3'9"), and a diameter of 10m (33'). There was a single slate stone upright visible, showing a few centimetres above the sod. Excavation of the mound revealed four large upright slates, irregularly placed within a space of some 1.2m (4'), and number of large slates laid in a horizontal position. These, also, were not placed with any regularity. There were no signs of carboniferous material or the effects of incineration. What was clear, however, was that the mound was artificial, particularly in the laying of the stones in the turf. A number of large quartz boulders were incorporated in the mound, as well as the slate.

The evidence from the above sites suggests that the features which were believed, at the time of excavation, to be cists, were possibly of similar form and function to those of Block Eary and Injebreck, or that

they indicate yet another use of the sites. They all appear to have been small rectangular structures, with walls largely composed of sizeable slabs of stone. There is also evidence to suggest that there may have been larger structures of stone. In each case, the excavators emphasise the appearance of the stones as walling. At the Lhaggan, this takes the form of upright and horizontal slates, the former perhaps being similar to those of the Block Eary structure (M11:BB). At Lhergyrhenny, all of the walls encountered were constructed of layers of flat stones with sod in between. The discovery of a number of walls, at different levels and angles, at this site, suggests the repeated building of small stone and sod structures on the one spot, arguing against the possibility that this was a tumulus. On the floors of the structures, and just below, the excavators found layers of ashes, except in the case of the Lhaggan. This is also similar to Peter Gelling's discoveries. Below the partly paved floor of mound BB, the building was filled from wall to wall with a deposit of peat-ash some 25cm deep.

Much more recently, it has been suggested (Morris 1983:121-2) that the clearest parallel for the remains of a structure at the site of Keeill Vael in Druidale, is Hut 1, Mound A at Block Eary (catalogued as U, M10). On the basis of this apparent similarity, it was postulated that it may also have been a 'shieling hut (Morris 1983:124). Interesting features of this structure included the use of large upright stones, and the existence of probably associated post-holes, burnt patches and pits (Morris 1983:121). Morris noted that the use of large uprights in a circular structure can be instanced at the Braaid, but believed that the difference of relative scale between the two was too large to allow direct comparisons. Reference to the above discussion, however, points to the fact that uprights were a feature of a number of the small structures, and it seems possible that the remains excavated by Morris can be added to this group.

The conclusion which must be drawn on the basis of this evidence, is that the stone structures identified at Block Eary and at Injebreck are not unique to these sites, and may, in fact, have been a common feature of a number of sites on Man.

Surface examination of mounds, in the field-work carried out between 1987 and 1990, led to the identification of a number of features, which, it could be suggested, indicate the remains of stone, or stone and turf, structures. A considerable number of the mounds were found to have stones protruding from, and scattered over, their surfaces, but in many cases there were no indications that these are structural remains. It is possible that the depressions and stones on mounds DD and EE of Block Eary C (M11) indicate structures, but the evidence is not sufficiently clear for this to be suggested with any certainty. The only two sites, so far, to produce clear evidence are Lhergyrhenny (M25) and Slieau Dhoo (M27). At the former, the traces of roughly rectangular structures can be seen on the top of mounds C and E. In both cases, the structures would appear to have been of turf and stone, and are slightly larger than those described above, being internally some 1.5m in length and 1m in width, and can be compared with that on mound AA at Block Eary (M10). These differ from the small cells not only in shape and size, but also in being located on the top of mounds rather than being dug into them. At the site of Slieau Dhoo, stone, and stone and turf structures are indicated on mounds C, H and I. That on mound C is similar to those already described, but the other two are rather different. That on mound H has the appearance of a small hut circle constructed on the summit of the mound, with a hollowed centre, surrounded by a slightly raised bank of turf. Internally, the structure has diameters of 1.5m and 1m, and the depression has a maximum depth of 0.5m. It is postulated that there is an entrance facing south-east, marked by two large stones. Mound I is placed on an eminence, and has three large flat slabs centrally placed on its summit, and a small square hollow. It is possible that this could also have been a small cell, it being too small for human habitation.

The above discussion has been confined to the stone structures within the mounds. There is, however, an interesting feature associated with mound BB of Block Eary C (M11), which ought to be considered in this context. This was, after all, one of the main features which led Gelling to postulate that the structures were possibly corn-drying kilns. The form which this feature takes, is that of two short arms,

apparently of turf, but with stones visible on the surface of each one. The arms continue for a distance of 1.5m beyond the edge of the mound, and the area between them is some 0.75m across. Within the arms, there is a marked depression, clearly visible on the photographs of the mound (Pls.7a,7b). This is possibly related to the excavation of the structure, however, rather than being an original feature. A depression is not noted by Gelling in the excavation report. Similar features were not found to be associated with either the Injebreck structure, or with mound AA of Block Eary, by Gelling, or by the author, and there was no indication that they may have been present at any of the other sites suggested to have the remains of such stone structures. This feature would, thus, appear to be unique to this one mound.

The final structure to be considered in this section is not directly associated with a mound, but could be related to shieling. This is the small rectangular hut, 4.6m by 3m, at Injebreck (M17), located alongside the east tributary stream, below the promontory-like area of land on which the mounds lie. This hut has three walls of turf and the fourth is formed by the natural rock. There is a small entrance in the north-east corner. There is evidence of activity in front of the stucture, including a short stretch of turf bank. Similar structures were not identified at the other sites, and it may be that it represents a separate phase of use of the Injebreck site from that indicated by the mounds.

DISCUSSION

Although information about stone structures on Man is still limited, the appearance of stones in and on many of the mounds, and the identification of possible structures at two of the sites, points to the fact that the use of turf in the huts, represented by the mounds, to the exclusion of stone, may have been overstressed by Gelling. Excavations by Gelling at Block Eary and Injebreck demonstrated that a number of the huts were composed entirely of turf, but, in the case of mounds B and C, large amounts of stone were revealed, clearly associated with structures in the case of the latter. In the first part of this chapter a distinction was drawn between those sites consisting of mounds with few surface indications of stone, such as Block Eary A

and B (M9 and M10), and those where rather more, or considerable numbers, are visible, such as Block Eary C (M11) and Lhergyrhenny (M25). The natural conclusion, based on this evidence, would seem to be that stone was more convenient for the construction of certain huts, perhaps even necessary in the case of the small cells, and could, thus, be indicative of function. The appearance of stone on the surface of many of the mounds perhaps indicates a change from turf to stone in their later phases.

B. THE HEBRIDEAN EVIDENCE

(a) Identification of structures

Identification of structures, associated with shieling sites in the Isles, was not found to be a problem. Stone structures were found, in the vast majority of cases, to be the main features of the shieling sites examined in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, and reference to Catalogue 5 would suggest that this is also true of the other islands, in which remains have been recorded. In this part of the chapter, the section on turf structures will be omitted, there being no surface evidence at sites to suggest that structures were erected in this material. Although the evidence of the mounds points to the fact that turf was an important building material, and it is clear that it was used on the external faces of walls of a number of structures, any surface remains of turf structures have been obliterated by the erection of stone huts on the summits and sides of the mounds. The only possible indications of turf structures are the depressions found in the mounds, but, most frequently, these are found to contain evidence of stonework.

However, although turf huts were not found at any of the sites believed to be those of shielings, one hut without stone was discovered. This was in Lewis, near the site of Airigh na Gaoithe (H10), and was a modern rectangular hut constructed entirely of peats (this includes the roof). At the time it was visited, it was being used for the storage of peat cutting implements, and the belongings of those involved in the activity. The hut appeared to be of solid construction, and inside, although relatively dark, it felt surprisingly roomy and warm. The discovery of the hut was important as it gave an idea of what

the turf huts of Man may have looked like, and how they may have been constructed (Pl.33a).

Although a section on turf structures is unnecessary in the Hebridean context, a number of other sections are required if the variety not only of structures, but also of locations, is to be taken into account. As emphasised in the earlier sections, the structures are, in many cases, not associated with mounds, but with other features.

(b) Numbers of structures

These varied considerably, both between sites, and between the different islands. Clear groups of structures were found to be a feature of the Skye sites and a number of those in the Uists, generally those which also have mounding present. In Lewis, it is much more difficult to speak of groups, because of the distance between individual structures. Without getting too involved in an area which will be explored more fully in Chapter 9, it would appear that although groups of stone structures are to be found in shieling sites in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, large groups (thus, of the size of the larger Manx sites) are uncommon.

(c) Size and shape

A variety of structures were examined in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, but direct parallels for those in Man were not found. Most similar, certainly as far as size is concerned, are the cellular structures of Skye, but even these have a very distinct appearance and are not directly comparable. Many of the structures are, in fact, quite different from those indicated by the remains at sites on Man, but are described below to give an idea of the variety of structures that are to be encountered in the Isles.

The cellular structures

The most common features of the shieling sites of Skye were found to be the cellular structures of stone, for example, those found at Glen Conon A (H1), in Glen Hinnisdale (H3), and recorded in Waternish (R4-6) and Duirinish (R1-3). This was also the type of structure excavated by Macsween and Gailey in the Abhainn a' Ghlinne valley (see Chapter 4; R7-10). All of these are associated with some degree of

mounding, and the structures frequently appear, like the Manx examples, to have been built into the mounds. In the case of the cells examined in fieldwork, the dimensions are roughly 2m. by 1m. The dry-stone walling survives to varying heights, that at mound C in Glen Conon, for example, existing as a single course, whilst that of mound A survives to a height of some 1.25m. There is no record of any examples of huts with walls containing uprights, and none were identified during fieldwork. This walling does, however, generally, consist of large blocks of stone. In all of the larger cells, there is a single entrance from the outside, and an internal entrance into the smaller cell.

The most common huts are those which have two interconnecting cells of stone, but a couple of single-celled structures are to be found at the Glen Hinnisdale site (H3). One is associated with mound A, and the other lies on the west bank of the waterfall of the Lon Coire Chaiplin. Both are circular structures, but the form of the latter is particularly clear because it lies directly on the surface of the slope, rather than on a mound. It has a diameter of some 3m, and its turf-covered stone walls stand to a height of 0.5m in places. There are two clear entrances, facing east and west. A similarity between this structure and that noted on mound H of Slieau Dhoo in Man would seem possible, both best described as resembling small hut circles.

Similar cellular structures were not noted in the other islands in which fieldwork was carried out.

Beehive structures

The beehives, or corbelled *boths*, are, essentially, confined to Lewis and Harris, in particular the southern part of the former and northern part of the latter. The only similarity between these and the possible remains of stone structures at the Manx sites, is the form assumed by the huts when they have collapsed. This is comparable with the cairn-like features at the site of Lhergyrhenny in Man (M25). Otherwise, there are no similar features. Only one beehive was recorded in detail in Lewis: the *both* planned by Thomas at Cnoc Dubh, Garynahine, and subsequently described and photographed by Mackenzie (R20). Little now remains of this beehive, which was still occupied at the end of the eighteenth century, and it was recorded again, before it

collapses completely (H15). Similar structures are described in Appendix 3 (R11, R15-20, R21, R24, R25, R27).

An examination of the photographs of the Cnoc Dubh beehive (H15, Pl.36a,b) shows the size of the blocks of stone which were used to construct this corbelled hut. This is particularly interesting in relation to Kermode's (1894:28) comments concerning the size of the blocks at the site of Lhergyrhenny (M25). It was clearly not unusual for massive blocks of stone to be incorporated within structures, which were only used seasonally. The walls survive to a height of rougly 1m, and are 90cm thick. This was considerably thicker than the walls of other structures examined, most being around 50cm. Other interesting features of these structures, although largely obscured in the case of Cnoc Dubh, are the ambries, or cuphoards, in the walls. Similar features were not indicated in the stone structures excavated by Gelling, and are absent from the cellular structures of Skye.

The beehives are circular or oval structures, and in the Cnoc Dubh hut the diameters are 3.5m and 2.9m, giving an internal area of 10.2m square. One doorway is clear, facing east, and is particularly low. The lintel is still in place, and the height is some 70cm. A second doorway, facing west, has been obscured by tumble. One structure, which appears from a distance to be a beehive hut, but subsequently proves not to be, is hut A of Ollashal. This hut has slightly tapering, but not corbelled walls, and has an internal plan which is similar to that at Cnoc Dubh. The remains of roofing and door timbers are still in place. The internal area of this hut is particularly small, being only 5.3m square. Other huts comparable with that at Ollashal were not encountered.

Áiridhean, and other rectangular structures

These are the huts most frequently encountered in Lewis, and similar structures are to be found in the Uists. They are huts built of stone, but ones which would have had a roof which incorporated wood. The first examples were examined at the site of Gleann Áirigh na Gile (H6). Here, three fairly well-preserved huts lie on slight mounds, alongside one of the streams at the headwaters of the River Barvas. The huts are rectangular in shape, and have well-defined squared corners.

The walls survive to a height of over 1m, and are 50-60cm thick. These are constructed of large blocks of stone, but not of the size of those incorporated in Cnoc Dubh, for example. Each structure has opposing doorways in the long walls. The internal area of the huts is 11.3m square, 9.6m square and 9.4m square for A, B, and C respectively. Inside each of the huts, there are a number of ambries, at different levels, and in hut C there are the remains of a fire-place at the east end. Within this hut, wooden slats can still be found in the walls, and there are traces of wood on the ground both inside and outside. This hut is the only one of the three which has largely retained its external turf covering, which gives it a mound-like appearance from a distance.

Very similar huts can be found around Loch Tairbeart nan Cleitichean (H16), and on Beinn Bragar (H17), Beinn Rahacleit (H19), and Beinn Feusag (B18). However, there are also, in these groups, huts which have thicker end walls, and thus appear more oval in shape than those at Gleann Airigh na Gile (H6). This is true of the huts examined on the island of Great Bernera (H7), the Uig Road hut (H13), and hut B at Ollashal (H12). Modern equivalents of these huts are to be found at the sites of Cuiashader (H9 and Áirigh a Bhealaich (H8) in Lewis. Although there is a considerable variety of structures to be found at these modern shielings, the dominant type of hut is the *áiridh*, roughly rectangular in shape and with rounded end walls.

Structures similar in appearance to those with squared corners, are to be found on Baleshare (H20) and at H21 in North Uist, at a number of sites along the coast in Benbecula (H37 ff.), and at Loch Druidibeg (H49) in South Uist.

The types of hut described above, however, although accounting for a large number of the rectangular huts encountered during fieldwork, do not account for them all. In Skye, for example, there is the rectangular structure in Glen Hinnisdale (hut B, H3), little of which now remains, but which is quite different from the other huts identified in the area. Similar structures are to be found in the valley of the River Rha (H4). Rectangular structures with slightly bowed walls are to be found at Maoladh Mor (H5). In these, the

entrances lie in the short walls facing down-slope. Structures which are rather more similar in appearance to these huts than to those described above, are to be found on the Great Bernera Road (H14) in Lewis. Two of the five huts in this group were recorded, all being very similar in appearance. They have not only bowed long-walls, but were the first structures to produce clear evidence of internal division of the huts, by means of two rows of stones, marking the passage between the opposing doorways. This created a very small area at the down-slope end, and a much larger space between the doorways and the up-slope short wall.

The rectangular structures of the Uists which do not fit into the above categories, are those which have been built into and out of the remains of earlier structures, and those which consist of more than one room. In the case of the latter, clear examples are to be found at the site of a chambered cairn in Benbecula (H42), and at Loch Airigh na'h Achlais (H44) in South Uist. Less clear, but probable examples, can be found on mound A at Ben Aulasary (H24) and on mound A at Uneval (H27) in North Uist, and on mound C at Haarsal 1 (H45) and mound A at North Locheynort (H47) in South Uist. The best preserved huts are those at Loch Airigh na'h Achlais. The structures, as a whole, are similar in appearance to the rectangular, slightly round-cornered huts, common in Lewis. However, the larger rooms tend to be smaller than these, and are roughly square or rectangular, with dimensions in the case of hut A at Loch Airigh na'h Achlais of 1.96m and 1.65m, and hut B 2.24m and 1.91m. In hut A, as in hut A of H24, there are opposing doorways in the long walls. Hut B, however, has only one entrance, and it is placed in an unusual location, in the south-west corner of the hut. This is a feature which is interesting in the context of the stone structures excavated by Peter Gelling on Man (BB at Block Eary M11; A at Injebreck M17), both of which have entrances located, not centrally, but to one side. Similar entrances were not found at any of the other sites. The second rooms in both of the Loch Airigh na' Achlais huts are smaller, and appear semi-circular in shape; that of hut A is externally 1.62m by 1.50m, and that of hut B is 2.4m by 1.8m. The walls of these rooms are roughly 50cm in width, thus giving internal areas of 1.12m square and

2.47m square, considerably smaller than any of the other huts encountered. The most interesting features, however, of these structures is the lack of internal doorways connecting the two rooms, and, in the case of hut B at Loch Áirigh na'h Achlais, the lack also of an entrance into the smaller structure from the outside. This is also true of the structure at H42. There is a possible entrance into hut A of Loch Airigh in the east wall. It was unfortunately impossible to derive further information about these structures because of the poor nature of the remains at other sites. At none of these is it possible to determine anything other than the fact that they seem likely to have been two-roomed structures.

The final type of huts to be considered in this section, are those built into the remains of older structures. This is very much a feature of the Uists, and the most common sites of re-use are those of chambered cairns. The most characteristic feature of the structures at such sites is their rough nature; they have very much an appearance of rubble construction *(compare Pls.41b and 43a). They are found at the* site of the Aisled House, Ben Risary (H25), North Uist, the sites of the chambered cairns at South Clettraval (H26), and Uneval (H28) in North Uist, the chambered cairns at Áirigh na h-aon Oidhche (H41) and H42 in Benbecula, and at the site of the chambered cairn, Haarsal 2 (H46), in South Uist. In the majority of cases, it is only the outlines of the structures which are clear, features having been obscured by tumble. All are fairly small and rectangular in shape (between 2-3m in length, and 1-2m in width), and the walls survive to a height of no more than 1m. Entrances and internal features are generally not clear.

The *Tigh Earraich*

The only recorded examples of the 'spring dwelling' are to be found at the site of Bilascleiter (H11) in north Lewis. These are very different in appearance from the other shieling huts recorded, and are easily identified. At this site, nine large rectangular structures stand on a sizeable grassy knoll, and are in various states of preservation. The walls are of massive dry-stone construction, containing large boulders. There is little evidence to suggest a careful selection and placing of stones to form the walls. The

structures, which in appearance are very similar to black-houses, are some 10m in length, and 2m to 3m wide. Each one has a single doorway, lying a third of the way along the long wall, facing in towards the centre of the mound. At least one has evidence of a fireplace, but, interestingly, there is little indication of ambries in these structures. The only other structures encountered during fieldwork which bear any similarity to these, are those of Glen Conon B (H2).

C. A DISCUSSION OF CERTAIN EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL FEATURES OF STRUCTURES NOTED BY PETER GELLING

The features noted by Gelling are examined in a separate section, because information concerning similar features could not be obtained from a surface examination of sites in Man. Comparative material was sought from published material relating to the Hebrides, and further afield.

Two interesting features were discovered associated with Mound C at Block Eary. The first was an external hearth, and the second was a feature surrounding the hearth of the earliest hut. In the case of the former, Gelling identified a second example associated with the Mound at the Injebreck site. The feature, belonging to Mound C, took the form of a double line of wattles, the outer line extending sideways in a long, narrow strip, and appearing to end against a large stone. The hearth and this feature, suggested to be a screen, occupied most of the area of the hut. Gelling postulated that they were perhaps associated with cheese-making.

Unfortunately, although many of those who visited shielings in use in the Hebrides (see Chapter 5) recorded details of the structures they encountered, there is little information concerning the ways in which the butter and cheese were produced, and where this was carried out. It is clear from the descriptions of Thomas (1860a:130) and Carmichael (1884:472), for example, that small huts for the storage of dairy products did exist, but there is little more information than this available. There is certainly no indication that special screens existed. Evidence concerning external fires is also lacking: where fires are mentioned they are generally located at one end of the huts, the other end being occupied by the bedding.

DISCUSSION

In the first section on Man, possible turf and stone structures were identified, and it was emphasised that it is likely that stone was a more important building material at the sites than has hitherto been recognised, and that its use could be related to the function of the structures or their dating. Gelling believed that huts were constructed almost entirely of turf, or turf and soil, and that there was only a little evidence for stone footings. The evidence presented above, would suggest that although this may be true of the excavated mounds, it cannot, necessarily, be applied to all those sites believed to have been shielings. An examination of the Hebridean evidence points to the fact that there is little evidence available concerning structures erected in turf at shieling sites, but it does provide an indication of the variety of structures which can be erected out of stone. This ranges from small cellular structures to the enormous 'spring dwellings', which are, in appearance, more like blackhouses. It also produces important evidence concerning functional differences. For example, there is a very clear difference between the remains of the *tigh earraich*, intended to shelter animals as well as humans, and the remains of the summer shielings.

Parallels for the mounds on Man which have surface evidence of stone are easy to find in Skye and the Uists. In most of these cases, though, there is a clear relationship between the stone and hollows on the surfaces of the mounds. Parallels were not found for the small stone structures in Man, but the double celled structures of Skye and the two roomed structures of the Uists, point to the use of smaller cells or rooms for the purpose of storage, usually of dairy products. Carmichael (1884:472; see Chapter 5), describing the shieling huts of North Uist, wrote that there were usually two huts together, the larger the dwelling, and the smaller the dairy. This appears also to have been the case with certain beehive structures visited by Thomas (Chapter 5). The stone structures on Man are independent structures, but it is possible that those mounds on Man, apparently with 'satellite' mounds or flatter extensions, could also be viewed in this context.

Gelling concluded that the small stone structure at Injebreck (M17)

may have been intended for penning geese. The similarity between this structure and the two at Block Eary is very clear, and it seems likely, from the evidence presented in section A, that similar structures were excavated at Lhergyrhenny and at the Lhaggan. There is also the possibility of another structure at Slieau Dhoo (M27). An examination of evidence presented for 'goose-houses' by Pounds (1944:208) suggests that Gelling's interpretation is not as unlikely as it seems. Pounds identified a number of these structures in Cornwall, which were essentially small, stone cells, roofed with slabs, and at least one had evidence suggesting that a door had been hung at the entrance. All had been earthed over to a depth of at least 30cm (1'). The only differences between these structures, and those found by Gelling, appear to have been that they had floors of beaten earth, and were usually located in a thickened hedge. The excavated Injebreck and Block Eary cells have evidence of paved floors, and are located on eminences, slightly away from the main groups of huts. As far as the Hebrides are concerned, it is noted (see Chapter 5), that other stock, including geese, were taken to the summer pastures, but it is not indicated whether there were separate pens or structures constructed for them. Archaeological evidence does not point to the use of structures similar to those in Man. One possible function of the structures is as stores for dairy products. This might explain the need for flagged floors and stone roofs. However, the lack of such structures at other sites on Man, the lack of parallels in the Isles, and the fact that their existence would suggest a communal storage of dairy products, which is certainly not a feature of the Isles, would suggest that this is no more likely than the 'goose-houses'. The fact also that the structures are dug into the mounds suggests that they represent a different phase of use of the sites, possibly relatively modern. A shelter for lambs seems quite likely.

The two larger rectangular structures identified, and the turf hut, were clearly used for different purposes from the above, and the most likely use is as habitations. No parallels were found for these.

8.3 THE BANKS

A. THE MANX EVIDENCE

In Chapter 5 it was noted that enclosures for cows or calves were sometimes found at shieling sites in the Outer Hebrides, and in Chapter 7 it was recorded that Macsween found enclosures frequently associated with sites in Skye. On Man, Gelling suggested that, at Block Eary, the converging banks of Group B (M10) would have been used to direct animals into a small pen. Banks used for possibly a similar purpose were noted at Druidale 1 (M1), and at Glen Dhoo (M32) a complex series of 'small enclosures and connecting banks' was found (Gelling 1963a:170). This evidence can, however, be fleshed out, and distinctions drawn between different types of enclosure.

Boundary banks and banks possibly related to stock-movements

By boundary banks, boundaries apparently enclosing a site are indicated, rather than banks which form part of a pen for cattle or other animals. It is recognised that these would also have acted as stock-controls.

The best example is that at the site of Druidale 1 (M1), but other possible examples include banks at Druidale 2 (M2), Upper Sartfell (M26) and Block Eary (Fig.62). On Figs. 56-57, it can be seen that an extensive bank on the south side of Druidale 1, effectively completes the enclosure of this site, which has the Sulby River on the north side, and small tributary streams bounding the east and west sides. The bank is of earth, has a breadth of 1m to 1.5m, stands to a height of some 25cm, and has a total length of some 200m. It might have been expected that this bank would have started at the base of the slope up to the site, alongside the west tributary, but this is not the case. It starts instead, a few metres above the stream, and curves up the slope to mound D. From here, it then heads in a south-south-easterly direction, and gradually turns east towards mound H. Here, it appears to disappear, and there is no indication that it continues to the east tributary. Gelling noted that there were two entrances in this bank, one opposite mound D, and one where the bank appears to terminate, near mound H. An examination of both these sections indicates two sets of two stones, that to the east set some 3m apart, and that to the west about 2m. In each case there is not a clearly defined passage through the bank. In fact, it appears as if the bank continues, but at a

slightly lower level. However, these stones are clearly of significance, for no other stones are visible on the surface of the bank for its entire length.

Associated with this bank is a second smaller one, and possibly two banks to the south of it. The first runs from the west end of the boundary bank, and roughly parallel with it, for a distance of 23.5m. The two banks are not joined, but there is little space separating them. This second bank is narrower, being 90cm to 1.1m in breadth, but is of similar height. Again, no stones are clear on the surface of the bank. The two other banks are of similar dimensions, and this similarity would suggest that they are associated. These are curving banks of earth, the ends curving in towards each other, but not meeting. There is no indication of short walls, forming one or both ends of an enclosure, and there is no build up of turf at either end suggesting that these may have been torn down for some reason. The west ends of both banks are much closer to the tributary than either of the other banks, and on Plate 2a there is a suggestion that they may have continued through the marshy area through which the tributary stream flows.

At Druidale 2 (M2), the bank is less clear, varying in height along its length, between 10cm and 30cm, but is roughly 1m wide, and, hence, a noticeable feature. Effectively, it fulfils the same function as the main bank of Druidale 1, stretching between the two tributaries, and enclosing the site on the upslope side. Before the construction of the road down through the valley, the lower boundary of the site would have been the Sulby River. Again, there is no indication of stone in the boundary.

It is interesting to compare the banks of Druidale 1 and 2 with that associated with the rectangular structure of Druidale 5 (M5). This is some 33.2m long, 1.34m wide, and just over 0.5m high. It is constructed of a mixture of earth and stone in varying quantities along its length.

A similar bank to those at Druidale is to be found at Upper Sartfell (M26), and this also is an upslope boundary of the site, being located virtually at the head of the valley. However, the site is not

enclosed in the same way as the Druidale sites, lacking two of the four boundaries necessary to totally enclose the site. Here, the site lies on a ledge on the north side of the stream, so that the stream, effectively, forms one boundary. The slope beyond the stream is much steeper, and it is necessary to scramble up it for most of its length. The site side of the valley is also steep above the ledge on which the site is located, and there is no evidence of a boundary along this line. There is also, however, no visible boundary in the lower parts of the valley, suggesting that animals could range freely up and down the valley, but not beyond the barrier located almost at the top.

The banks associated with Block Eary B (M10) are also clear features, but it is not as easy to argue that they may be boundary banks. The two banks which Gelling argued were used for stock control and led into a small enclosure, are 100m and 50m long respectively. They stand to a height of roughly 1m, and have a breadth of about 1m. The first appears to run from mound S to the nearest tributary stream, and the second from this stream to the river. There is a break in this bank, possibly an entrance. The apparent enclosure is some 10m across. One interesting feature of the banks, is the fact that the longer one may have continued past mound S and under the stone wall. Between mounds Q and P, there is a raised section which has more of the appearance of a turf bank than a mound, and it could be postulated that the bank continued for some distance beyond mound S. This would suggest that the mounds along this line, and in front of it, may be of a later date than the banks. However, this is merely speculation, and the area beneath the stone wall has suffered so much disturbance that it is impossible to be sure about the features which may be indicated beneath it.

In relation to these banks at Block Eary, it is possible also that the traces of banks between two of the tributaries, at a higher level, may also be related to the provision of site boundaries, as opposed to being the small fields suggested by Gelling. The remains are very faint, pointing to the fact that they were unlikely to have been used for the purposes of stock control. It could be suggested that site boundaries are likely to have been greater constructions, but as long

as the lines of demarcation were clear to those using the sites, there would have been no need for more massive divisions. There is no boundary evidence associated with Block Eary C.-

Enclosures

Apart from the possibility of the small pen at Block Eary B, Gelling did not find any evidence of enclosures at Block Eary or Injebreck. In fact, very few of the sites identified as shielings have such evidence. Exceptions include the sites of Upper Sartfell (M25) and Glen Dhoo (M32), recorded by Johnson (1986). At the latter site, there are two large enclosures on opposite sides of the stream. On the south side, there is a diamond-shaped enclosure, each side of which is 20m long, and on the opposite side of the stream a larger, irregular-shaped enclosure occupying a relatively flat area of land. At Sartfell, there is a single, large roughly rectangular enclosure, with long walls of 23.13m and 18.50m respectively, and short walls of 15.90m and 10.53m. The walls, in both cases, are of earth and stone, and are between 1m and 1.5m in width. At Sartfell, they survive to a height of 0.25m to 1.25m. There is an entrance in the west end of this enclosure, and one at the south end of Enclosure B at Glen Dhoo. There is no clear entrance to Enclosure A at Glen Dhoo.

Associated with the enclosures, in both cases, are mounds, similar to those found at the other sites. At Glen Dhoo, two mounds are to be found within the diamond-shaped enclosure, and at Sartfell, there is a single mound immediately outside the entrance, and a second one was noted by Johnson, lying on the bank of the stream below the ledge on which the enclosure lies (1986).

These three enclosures lie in small, relatively steep valleys. The valleys were scoured for the remains of banks which may have been related to stock control, but the only one located was that at the head of the Upper Sartfell valley, first noted by Johnson.

Similar enclosures are not to be found at other sites, but there is an interesting feature at the site of Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), which ought perhaps to be considered in this section. Three sides of a possible small enclosure of earth lie on top of the section of ridge and furrow to the south-east of mounds A and B. The banks are between

15cm and 25cm in height, and have a width of 40cm to 70cm. If there was a fourth side, they would enclose an area of 100sq.m. Although, however, there does not appear to be a fourth side to the enclosure, one of the central ridges which runs through it, is slightly raised, and appears to divide the feature into two narrow sections. Within the enclosure, the ridge and furrow has not been obliterated, and is roughly on the same alignment to that outside. It would have been expected, that had this been an enclosure for stock at the site, the ridge and furrow would have been destroyed. Similarly, if this had been used as a small crop raising area at a later date than that indicated by the ridge and furrow, it might also have been expected that this would have been disturbed in some way.

The remains of another possible, but much less clear, enclosure, are also to be found at the site of Lhergyrhenny (M25). Two earth banks, forming two sides of a possible compound, were identified, some distance below Group 2, towards the river. The banks are small and narrow, less than 50cm in height and width. However, it is unclear whether this can be associated with the mounds, the remains of a wheelcase showing that this site was also important industrially.

B. THE HEBRIDEAN EVIDENCE

The evidence from the Hebrides suggests that boundary banks and enclosures were not common features of the shielings. Only one of the sites, that on the Great Bernera Road (H14), produced possible evidence of animal pens, but it was not clear whether these were associated with the structures. Evidence is lacking from other sites. There are, however, a number of references to both boundary banks and enclosures in the published material. Macsween (see Chapter 7), for example, noted that enclosures were associated with many of the shielings in Skye. These were generally some 13.7m (45') in diameter, and had walls of earth, or varying proportions of turf and stone. He believed these to have been used as milking pens. Enclosures and boundary walls have also been noted by the Royal Commission at the sites of Talatoll (R69) and Gartavaich (R68) in Kintyre, Beinn Bheag (R64) in Colonsay and Margadale (R61) in Islay. The site of Gartavaich has evidence of a small enclosure bank, surrounding a structure, and it may have

incorporated a small open-ended hut at its north end. More interesting is the enclosure at the site of Talatoll. This is circular, with an external diameter of 12.2m, and within the south-east sector is a hut. This is clearly a parallel for the enclosure and mound at Glen Dhoo, despite the fact that the enclosure of the latter is rather different in shape. At the site of Beinn Bheag, the banks are best described as boundary banks. The site lies within a relatively sheltered gully, and it is enclosed at both ends by the remains of a turf and rubble bank, which traverses the surrounding rocky uplands to form a roughly circular enclosure, some 56m in diameter. In places, the boundary can only be followed in the form of a band of rubble. The remains of a substantial turf and stone dyke also exist at the site of Margadale, and this dyke may also represent an associated boundary or enclosure-wall.

DISCUSSION

The examination of the various banks at sites led to an identification of two very different types, those appearing as boundaries enclosing a site, and those forming pens, or small enclosures. The only two sites which are very clearly enclosed, are those of Druidale 1 (M1) and Druidale 2 (M2). This is, thus, not a common, feature of the sites, and suggests that there was something special about the Druidale valley, which necessitated their enclosure. An examination of the Hebridean material, points to the fact that the enclosure of shieling sites in the Isles, was also uncommon. One possible reason for the enclosure of the sites in Druidale, could be that four parishes have claim to land in this area. This might have made it necessary for landowners to stake their claims. This question of the relationship between sites and boundaries is explored, in detail, in Chapter 9. Gelling concluded that the banks at the site of Druidale 1 were related to stock control, and acted as a funnel, channelling the animals towards, and into, the site. This was also suggested by Johnson (1986:24). This seems likely, but on the basis of the Hebridean evidence, it would appear that such controls were unneccessary if the animals were cattle, the herds being able to drive them without difficulty. If it was necessary to pen the animals, a

compound similar to those at Glen Dhoo (M32) and Upper Sartfell (M26) could have been provided. An examination of the entrances through the enclosure, showed that they are small, and would not easily have permitted the entrance of cattle. It would, thus, appear possible that the animals associated with the use of the banks at the site may have been sheep rather than cattle. The smaller banks, which are very similar in appearance and must be associated, can be explained in terms of sorting funnels for the animals before and after they entered the compound.

The possibility that the banks at Block Eary are related to a phase of activity earlier than that indicated by the mounds located on its postulated extended line, and those in front, suggested that these may have served as enclosure banks, as well as being related to stock-control. They would, effectively, have marked the upper limit of a site, possibly that indicated by Block Eary Group A (M9), for example. One of the most important aspects of the banks is the size of the enclosure, into which it was argued animals could have been driven. This is not only a feature which is unclear, but the area between the two banks is very small, and it would have been possible to pen only a few animals, presumably cattle, in such a tiny enclosure. The large number of mounds suggests that there may have been a large number of people, at any one time, not only in the Block Eary valley, but belonging specifically to Group B (M10), and it can also be assumed that there would have been quite a number of cattle. One possibility, however, may be that animals were driven between the two banks, and then through the gap in the shorter one, into an area which was enclosed by the river and the tributary stream. Macsween (see Chapter 7) noted, in Skye, that favoured sites for enclosures were those where only one or two banks would have been necessary to form a compound. If what has been suggested above, was the case at Block Eary, only the one bank was necessary. It can also be suggested that the smaller pen may have been used for calves, or other animals, separated from the main group as it turned into the compound.

Only three large compounds were found at sites believed to be shielings, and these are in similar locations, on the sides of

relatively small and steep valleys. Another feature which the sites have in common, is the small number of mounds which appear to be associated with them, two in the case of Glen Dhoo (M32), and possibly two also at Sartfell (M25). Both of these features make the sites unusual, and it is suggested here that they are different types of site from those such as Block Eary (M9-11), Injebreck (M17), Druidale 1 and 2 (M1 and M2). The enclosures are large, well constructed, and the incorporation of large amounts of stone in the walling of the Sartfell example (M25), points to quite different constructions from the banks described in the section on boundary banks, and banks associated with stock movements. These would also appear to differ from those described by Macsween (see Chapter 7), generally some 13.7m in diameter, and of earth, or varying proportions of turf and stone. These structures were believed to have been milking pens. This seems unlikely to be true of the Manx examples. The enclosures are the main features of the sites, suggesting that the activity associated with them specifically, was of primary importance. The lack of similar enclosures at all the other sites believed to be shielings, and the general lack of enclosures of any form, also suggests that their interpretation as milking pens is incorrect. The most likely explanation for such large pens, however, is the gathering of stock for some reason. The mound evidence suggests that there were fewer people resident at the sites, and it could be that the activity demanded fewer personnel.

Johnson (1986:25) saw the sites in terms of private stockades, or self-contained units, lived in yearly by the same people, and pointed to the evidence of the mounds located within the enclosures at Glen Dhoo (M32). In the case of the circular enclosure, however, there are also mounds outside it, and at Upper Sartfell (M25) there are no clear mounds within the compound. Implicit in the discussion so far is the assumption that the mounds and the enclosures are contemporary. This need not be the case. Examination of the walls of the Upper Sartfell enclosure, for example, points to a similarity between them and the wall associated with the structure at Druidale 5 (M5), suggesting they could belong to a different period than the turf banks associated with other sites. Also worth considering, is the fact that steep valleys are not

very suitable terrain for the pasturing of cattle. It may be that the enclosures were used for the control of sheep, rather than cattle, in which case the small number of mounds might be explained. Although it is impossible to be certain about the function of these enclosures, it is clear, however, that the sites are quite different from the majority of the other sites believed to be shielings, and it seems reasonable to suggest that they may be related to a practice of stock grazing, which is rather different from that implied by the word *shieling*.

The final enclosure, that of Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14) was clearly not a stock- compound, and it is difficult to postulate alternative uses.

Fieldwork in the Hebrides did not produce any evidence with which to compare the Manx material. However, an examination of published sites pointed to the fact that banks do exist at a number of sites, and that distinctions can be drawn between boundary banks and enclosures in the islands, as well as in Man. One of the most interesting enclosures is that at the site of Talatoll, which is an important parallel for that at Glen Dhoo.

8.4 THE EVIDENCE OF CULTIVATION

A. THE MANX EVIDENCE

The suggestion that cultivation was carried out at shieling sites was made by Gelling as a result of his identification of possible corn-drying kilns, fields at Block Eary, and the long cultivation ridges at the site of Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14).

Gelling had already proved by exacavation that, in their latest stages, BB of Block Eary C (M11) and A of Injebreck (M17) were not corn-drying kilns. The only evidence to suggest that they ever were, appears to have been the two arms associated with the former. The excavation of mound O of Block Eary B (M10; Gelling's mound D) produced evidence of another similar structure, and its location is not comparable with that of the above structures. It, thus, appears clear that the evidence for the corn-drying kilns must be rejected.

The second piece of evidence, concerning the fields at Block Eary, is also open to question. It has already been suggested here, that the traces of banks may have been related to site boundaries. However, Gelling was correct to point out that these banks are mere traces, and

may be little more than stones picked off the hillside. The lack of cultivation traces between the banks suggests that crops were not raised here, but this does not exclude the possibility that the area was cropped.

The third piece of evidence is far more convincing. The area of ridge and furrow at the site of Juan ny Clarys (M14) is located on the raised, flat area to the south of the river, and stretches between mounds A and B to the north, and mounds C and D to the south. It continues for a short distance beyond these mounds into the heather, which covers most of the area. In width, the strips begin along the eastern edge of the raised area and continue to the gully, which cuts through the site. Shorter lengths are also to be found, running WSW-ENE (that is, perpendicular to that on the raised area), on the slope below mounds A and B. The ridges vary in size, but most are approximately 50cm to 60cm wide, and have a height of 10cm to 15cm. The distance between the ridges varies between 50cm and 1m. The relationship between the ridge and furrow and the mounds is clearly of crucial importance in deciding whether the former pre-date, post-date, or are contemporary with the latter. Unfortunately, for the most part, the ridge and furrow abuts the mounds, and does not cut into them. There is one section of mound B, where it appears that a ridge may have continued onto the lower part of the mound (Fig.65, Pl.12a). This cannot, however, be argued with any great degree of confidence.

B. THE HEBRIDEAN EVIDENCE

The conclusion drawn for the Manx sites is confirmed by the evidence from the sites examined in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, and the evidence from published sources. Here also, very few sites have any evidence of ridge and furrow. An exception is the site located on the Great Bernera Road (H14). Here, there are the remains of lazy-beds running down the slope of the ledge, on which the site is located, towards the road. They continue on the other side of the road. The evidence, at this site, clearly points to the use of the site for cultivation purposes at a different period from its use as a shieling. Macsween (see Chapter 7), noted cultivation remains associated with some of the huts in Skye. He suggested that the sites may have been

cultivated at a time of population pressure, possibly in the 1830s and 1840s.

DISCUSSION

The only convincing evidence that cultivation was practised at the sites, is that of Juan ny Clays 1 (M14). It is difficult, however, to determine whether the ridge and furrow is contemporary with the mounds, and thus with the site as a possible shieling, or whether it is later. There is a suggestion that it is later, in that one of the ridges appears to continue across mound B. However, the surrounding of the mounds A and B with ridge and furrow, and the lack of evidence of possible animal pens at this site (with the exception of the possible enclosure on top of the cultivation strips) suggests that it is unlikely that they are contemporary. A more plausible explanation is that the site was cultivated after it was abandoned, the area having been fertilised by the presence of animals, in particular cattle, and the climate or pressure on land being such that sites were cultivated as part of the shieling activities, or that crops were dried in corn-drying kilns.

8.5 CONCLUSIONS

The examination of the Manx sites in the wider context of the Isles confirmed the conclusion that many of the sites are shielings. However, it is clear that the range of sites in Man is much greater than recognised by Gelling, that there is greater variation in the structures to be found at them, and that the individual site chronologies are much more complex than he recognised.

The sites range from simple to complex, that is from one or two mounds (single mounds may be related to other activities) to over twenty; from sites consisting of mounds alone to those with enclosures and/or banks for stock-control and from sites with small circular mounds of turf located on relatively flat areas to those with mounds built up against slopes, oval or elongated in shape, and with evidence of stone as well as turf structures. Variations between the sites in the Hebrides were noted: generally these were between islands. There was little variation in the form of the mounds and structures at individual sites and few had evidence of enclosures and/or banks. This

suggests that sites with such features in Man may have been related to activities at these sites which should not automatically be classed as 'shieling'. Examination of the structural evidence suggested a number of different phases at certain sites and it was postulated that these could indicate functional changes as well as chronological ones.

CHAPTER 9: SITE DISTRIBUTION AND ORGANISATION

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 9 examines wider aspects of the sites than the previous chapters, looking at them in the context of their location, and their relationship with other types of site and resource territories. The first question tackled is the identification of specific groups, or sites. In the previous two chapters, concentrating on the features of the catalogued sites, the existence of specific sites was implicit. However, in considering wider questions of location and relationships, it is important to establish how and why these specific sites were identified. This section is followed by that concerned with the locational aspects, considering the importance of such factors as altitude, soil and vegetation patterns, shelter and aspect, proximity to water and the availability of building materials, and the effect that these elements have had on the form of the sites. The third part is concerned with the relationships between the sites and those of possibly different function and period, which are found in the immediate vicinity of the sites in question. Also, it explores the broader relationship betweens sites, resource territories and permanent settlements. In Chapter 6, outlining the methodology used for the study of sites, it was suggested that the placing of the Manx sites in the context of the resource territories indicated by the land divisions, may produce some interesting results. This would permit of a study of a variety of questions, such as the likelihood that the sites do all serve the same function, the phasing of the sites, thus, whether they all belong to a single period of exploitation, the use of sites as boundary markers, as suggested for sites in Perthshire by Bil (1983:91ff.), and the process of change from seasonal to permanent settlement sites. For the purpose of this analysis the data-base was increased, and was based upon the list of sites, believed to be shielings, in the Manx Museum Sites and Monuments Record.

9.1 IDENTIFICATION OF SITES

The numbers of mounds and structures found at sites in Man and the Hebrides was considered in Chapter 8. However, it is necessary to

examine the identification of distinct groups and sites in a little more detail. It has already been noted that Gelling and Macsween tended to regard mounds and structures located over quite a large area, as belonging to single sites. They do not appear to have used specific distances. John Love (1981:43), however, has done this, using a distance of 100m to differentiate between groups of huts on Rum. On Man, differentiation was based on an examination of the individual sites, and a rigid distance was not adopted. In most cases, the sites consist of very obvious clusters, and in a few cases there are boundaries around them, such as at Druidale 1 (M1) and Druidale 2 (M2).

The division of the mounds of Druidale 2 and Druidale 3 (M3), however, was more problematic, like that of Groups A (M9) and B (M10) at Block Eary. An examination of the mounds belonging to the two groups suggested, at first, that they belonged to a single site, in spite of the fact that they are separated by a stream channel. Examination of Block Eary C (M11), for example, did not suggest that the two mounds located on the spur to the north of the central group, belonged to a separate group. The identification of the bank running between the two streams, to the north-west of the Group 2 mounds, however, pointed to the fact that this small area had been enclosed for some reason. Field-walking of the land on either side of the stream cuts, looking for a continuation of the line of the boundary, proved fruitless, and confirmed that the bank was confined to this one area. This suggested that there were at least three separate groups in the headwaters of the valley.

Examination of other valleys points also to the existence of distinct groups, for example, the two Juan ny Clarys sites (M14, M15) in Upper Glen Rushen. Here, the sites are located some distance from each other, and the form of mounds belonging to each one is quite different. The situation in the small valley of Lhergyrhenny is, however, not so clear. Here, there are two distinct groups of mounds, but it is difficult to decide whether they belong to a single site, or separate ones. The proximity of the two groups suggests that they should be regarded as forming a single site.

In the Hebrides, clear groupings are to be found in Skye and in the

Uists, and there are some examples in Lewis and Harris. In some cases, the mounds or huts cluster, as at Glen Conon A (H1) in Skye, Ollashal (H12) in Lewis, Uneval 1 (H27) in North Uist, and at Kildonan Glen (H48) in South Uist. Also frequent, however, and more usual in Lewis, is for the mounds or huts to be located some distance apart, and it is not entirely clear whether they are part of groups or are individual structures. This is the case on Great Bernera, for example, (H7), and on Beinn Bragar, Beinn Rahacleit, and Beinn Feusag (H17-19). In the Uists, at sites such as Ben Aulasary (H24) in North Uist, and at Haarsal 1 (H45) in South Uist, the mounds are widely spaced, but clearly belong to single groups.

An examination of the figures compiled by John Love (1981:43), on the numbers of huts per group, produces interesting results with which to compare those produced by the author for Man, and the Hebridean islands in which fieldwork was carried out. Love found that the majority of huts are to be found singly or in pairs, but that clusters of four, or of eight or nine, huts are not uncommon. Only a few sites were found to have more than nine huts, and the average figure was 3.8. This compares favourably with the conclusion that the majority of the sites in Man and the other islands consist of small groups of huts (ten or fewer), although the concentration of single and paired structures is only common in certain islands.

One of the main problems in Man relates to single mounds. It is difficult, on the basis of surface examination alone, to be sure whether mounds can be placed in the category of possible shieling mounds, or whether they are the products of other activities. In the case of mounds such as that at Kerroodhoo (M22), the form and the location of the mound points to the fact that it is not the same as those at Block Eary (M9-11), Injebreck (M17) or Druidale 1 (M1). This is also the case for the mound at Glen Chaltun (M23), and at Doarlish Cashen (Catalogue 6). However, there is a possibility that the mound belonging to Druidale 4 (M4) is an accumulation of occupation material, and the mound of Druidale 8 (M8) is certainly of the same type as those mounds identifed at Druidale 1 (M1) and 2 (M2), for example. The mounds at Archallagan (M16) are also problematic, being widely spaced, and

there being litte evidence to suggest that they are associated. It seemed unlikely, from an examination of their distribution, that they were mounds of a similar type to those of the-major sites.

9.2 LOCATION FACTORS

(a) Altitude

In his field survey, Gelling (Chapter 6) used, as one of his criteria in the identification of shieling sites, the location of mounds near the 305m (1000') contour. Megaw, in her discussion of the *eary* sites of Man (Chapter 10), noted that the 'shieling-mound zone' lay largely above 287m (941') O.D.. An examination of the sites covered in this fieldwork, and the other sites identified as shielings by Gelling (see Fig.43), would suggest that a height of over 240m (787') is a more realistic figure for the supposed 'shieling-mound zone'. Sites such as Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15) lie at a height of 241m (791') O.D., Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), Cornaa (M19), Cringle Plantation 1 (M29) and Burroo Mooar (M12) at 244m (800') O.D., Injebreck (M17) and Laxey (M18) at 259m (850') O.D., and Lhergyrhenny (M25), Slieau Dhoo (M32), Druidale 1 (M1) and Block Eary A (M9) at heights between 270m (886') and 280m (918') O.D.. The sites examined which lie within 10m (32'10") of the 305m (1000') contour, or over it, are Druidale 2 (M2), 3 (M3) and 4 (M4), Block Eary B (M10) and C (M11), Slieau Curn (M13) and Upper Sartfell (M26). An examination of Gelling's distribution map (Fig.43) points to the fact that there are few sites, other than those mentioned, which are to be found above the 305m (1000') contour, but that there are a significant number lying just below it. Below the 240m (787') line, there are the sites of Archallagan (M16) at 183m (600') O.D., and the Lhaggan (M24) at 213m (699') O.D. There are no sites below an altitude of 152m (500') O.D. on Gelling's distribution map, and this is confirmed by field survey. The vast majority of sites are, thus, found in the transitional zone between lowland and upland, the belt between 150m (492') and 300m (984'), with only a small number in the mountain zone (over 300m), and a concentration of sites between 240m (787') and 300m (984').

An examination of the altitude of the Hebridean sites produced a completely different set of data. Only one site was catalogued which

lies at a height of over 250m O.D. (Maoladh Mor (H5)), and only five of the forty-nine are at a height between 130m (426') and 190m (623') O.D.. The rest of the sites lie between sea-level and 95m (312'). This reflects two factors, the first being the geography of the islands, and the second, the way in which fieldwork was carried out. An attempt was made to cover a variety of sites in each island, but, inevitably, problems of accessibility meant that there was a bias in the material towards sites at lower altitudes, and nearer to settlements. Important information can, however, be derived from this data, if these two factors are borne in mind. Rather more useful in the context of altitude, is the survey work of John Love (1981:39-63; see Chapter 3) on the island of Rum. Love has identified three hundred and seventy-seven huts on the island, and an examination of altitude produced some interesting results which are worth comparing with those of Man. Shielings are to be found from sea-level to a height of 450m (1474') O.D.. However, 90% of the huts are found to lie between 50m (164') and 350m (1148'), and there are two concentrations, the first between 66m (217') and 233m (764'), and the second between 266m (873') and 333m (1092') O.D.. The greatest number of huts lie between 100m (328') and 133m (436') O.D.. Comparing this with the Manx figures, it is clear that the Manx sites begin at a height above the peak for Rum, and finish at a height just below that where the number of Rum sites falls off dramatically (333m). It is interesting to note that where a concentration has been suggested for the Manx sites (240m-300m), there is a fall-off in the number of sites in Rum. Love found that the distribution of the huts corresponded with the heights at which most flat land is to be found, in each of the four zones which have substantial numbers of shieling remains. Within these zones, he noted that there were concentrations of sites around specific altitudes. An examination of the Manx sites, in the context of the parishes, suggested that the distributions are roughly similar. There are no striking differences.

(b) Soil and vegetation

It was concluded above that the majority of sites were located in the transitional zone between lowland and upland, thus, between 150m

(492') and 300m (984') O.D.. Here, peat is restricted to hollows, and much of the land consists of brown podzolic soils. It is argued that these soils developed originally beneath a cover of deciduous woodland (Kear 1976:43). The slopes are now colonised by fern, scrub and rough pasture. Above 300m O.D., is the mountain zone dominated by peat soils. The sites located at such altitudes lie on heather-covered slopes, where the peat cover is thin and discontinous, and are associated with deer grass, purple moor grass and rushes. The soils are stony and freely drained.

In the Hebrides, the majority of catalogued sites lie on land belonging to the Map Units 4, 392 and 394. The former consists of blanket peat, and the primary use of the land is as rough grazing. Sites located on this map unit were identified in Skye and Lewis. In the latter two map units, the main soils are peaty gleys and peat, with some peaty podzols and peaty rankers. This land is largely restricted to use as rough grazing, but there are areas suitable for improvement. Sites on 392 were found in the Uists, and on 394 in Lewis and the Uists.

(c) Shelter and aspect

These were not factors considered by Gelling, but certainly the latter was felt to be important by Johnson (1986). Many of the sites are located either on the lower sides of fairly steep valleys, such as Block Eary A and B (M9-10) and Lhergyrhenny (M25), or in sheltered headwaters, for example Glen Dhoo (M27) and Block Eary C (M11). Those which appear to be in more exposed locations are generally sheltered by the surrounding peaks, for example Druidale 1 (M1) and Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14). Others such as Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15) are actually located in hollows. An examination of the mounds at the sites also shows that shelter has exerted an influence upon their location, many nestling against the hillsides. The evidence from the Hebridean islands concurs with these conclusions, but there are also interesting features common to individual islands. In Lewis, for example, the wide valleys which are to be found in South Uist, Skye and Man, are absent, and although many sites are frequently in small valleys, these are much more exposed locations. Examples of this are Áirigh na Gile (H1), and Cuiashader

(H9), and huts on Beinn Rahacleit (H19). Those not associated with valleys are on open moorland, and here shelter is obtained in a number of ways. For example, huts are located against, or near, rock outcrops, such as on Great Bernera (H7) and at Cnoc Dubh (H15). Others nestle into the hillside, as on Beinn Feusag (H18). In the Uists, a number of huts have been erected in the remains of, and around the bases of, older structures. Although it is likely that this choice of location was largely related to the availability of building materials, a certain degree of shelter would also have been provided.

An examination of the evidence for aspect on Man, points to a predominance of south-facing locations (i.e. S, SW, SE, etc.) in the data-base. However, the frequency of north facing locations suggests that shelter may have played a more important role in the choice of suitable sites, than a favourable aspect. This also appears to be reflected in the Hebridean material, south-facing slopes being dominant, but a large number of sites lying on north-facing slopes. In both cases, east-facing slopes appear to be avoided. It must, however, be borne in mind that local topography exerts the greatest influence on sites. An examination of sites at Block Eary (M9-10) and at Upper Sartfell (M26), for example, shows that the steep slopes on one side of each of the valleys, necessitated the concentration of structures on those slopes facing south-west and south-south-west respectively.

(d) Proximity to water

This was another of the criteria used by Gelling in the identification of possible sites, but the validity of using this has been questioned by Bil (1983:84), who believed that, at least for the Perthshire shielings, the availability of water in determining site location has been over-emphasised. On Man, there is a clear correlation between sites and river valleys, and in particular, the tributary streams of these valleys. This was found, also, to be the case in Skye, there being concentrations of sites in the major river valleys. In the Outer Hebrides, however, the correlation is not as strong, and this is, naturally, related to differences in the topography. Sites do appear in small river valleys, and alongside either small streams or lochs where they occur. However, there also a large number of sites which are some

distance from the nearest water supply, and it cannot be argued that their location is related to this factor.

An examination of the figures for 'distance from the nearest water supply' in the dBase II file, indicates that the majority of examined sites lie within 30m (inclusive) of streams or rivers. One of those lying at a greater distance from water than this, is Block Eary B (M10). In this group, the main cluster of mounds is located quite high on the slope, away from the river and the nearest tributary. This is also the case at Lhergyrhenny (M25). One figure which is particularly worth noting, is that for the mounds at the Lhaggan. The distance from the river would indicate why Gelling did not include this site on his distribution map of shieling sites. In the Hebridean data-base, there is a definite bias towards sites located at a distance of 100m, and over, from the nearest water supplies (57%). Breaking this down, although the majority of sites lie between 100m and 200m (inclusive), there are virtually the same number between 5m and 30m (inclusive). An examination of these sites, shows that nine of them lie in, and on the sides of valleys, both large and small, three on the edge of lochs, and one on the bank of a small stream flowing down a steep hillside.

The evidence suggests that there is a correlation between water and sites, but it is more correct to see the correlation as being between valley locations and sites. Although this may appear to be one and the same thing, the valleys provided more than just water: they provided shelter, advantages of aspect, good grazing land, natural protection for animals and herds (reducing the need to erect large numbers of barriers), and ease of access from the lowland settlements. In areas where there are few such valleys, other factors come into play, and it would appear that the proximity of water was not always dominant.

(e) Availability of building materials

The most striking examples of this factor, are those where shieling huts have been erected in the remains of chambered cairns and prehistoric dwellings in the Uists. Examples of this are the Aisled House on Ben Risary (H25) in North Uist, Áirigh na h-aon Oidhche (H41) in Benbecula, and Haarsal 2 (H26) in South Uist. There are a number of other examples listed in Catalogues 2 and 5. The remains re-used most

frequently are the chambered cairns, with their large supplies of sizable stones. Huts are erected in the remains, such as at Haarsal 2 and Áirigh na h-aon Oidhche, or around them, such as at the chambered cairn H42. At the site of the Uneval chambered cairn (H28), as well as stone being used in the construction of huts within the remains, it is likely that it was also used in the huts of the site of Uneval 1 (H27) at the foot of the slope. It is interesting to note that the structures generally associated with the cairns are, on the whole, rough constructions.

Natural features, also, are utilised at sites. For example, rock outcrops have been used in Lewis (Thomas 1860b:138; see R26) to form one side of a structure, whilst in Man (e.g. M10) and North Uist (H24, C), this has been achieved by building huts against steep slopes. Scree slopes (Love 1981:50) are ready supplies of stone, and although a relationship between scree and sites was not noted by the author, Love found that on Rum, many huts were located at the foot of such slopes. In all of the islands there is some evidence that turf was used as a building material. This ranges from evidence in Man that huts were constructed entirely of turf, to the use of it as an outer shell and as roofing material in Lewis. The material was readily available, and would have been easier to work with than large boulders. The only site to produce any evidence concerning the source of this material, is that of Injebreck (M17) on Man. Here, very slight, roughly rectangular depressions can be noted between some of the mounds, and it is possible that these are the areas from which the turf was stripped for the construction of the huts. This was not a feature identified at any of the other sites. It has been suggested in Chapter 8, that stone was probably a more important material in the construction of huts at sites identified as shielings in Man, than has hitherto been recognised. At many of the sites, there is little surface evidence of stones, but the rivers and streams are sources of varying sized blocks. The large slabs frequently encountered, however, have clearly not been obtained from such sources, and suggest that the ground was scoured for suitable blocks.

(f) Form of sites

The above sections have examined various factors which have influenced the location of sites, and it is interesting, also, to consider the effect that these have had upon the actual form of individual sites. An examination of the published material on shieling sites in the Hebrides, pointed to the fact that linear distributions of huts were common at sites located alongside rivers (e.g. Margadale (R61), Islay). This, however, is not a feature of the Manx sites. More characteristic is the clustering of mounds in clear groups. This is the case at Block Eary, Druidale, and in Upper Glen Rushen. Linear distributions might have been expected in these valleys, but only in the case of the latter are the mounds even located on the river bank, those at the former two sites being located some distance from the rivers and streams. Field-work within the Hebrides indicated greater variety in the form of shieling sites. Linear distributions can be found alongside streams in Lewis, but, more commonly, are to be found along hillsides, and around the numerous lochs. Clear groups of structures did occur, as witnessed by Thomas (see Chapter 5), but none of those examined consisted of the remains of more than three or four structures. In Skye and the Uists, clustering is a feature of the sites. In the case of the Uists, the availability of building materials exerts a strong influence on the distribution pattern, and there are, thus, small groups of huts located in, and around, the remains of older structures. There are examples of linear distributions, however, such as that at Haarsal 1 (H45), where the mounds are fairly widely spaced along the bank of the stream.

The grouping of mounds and structures, although common, varies considerably from one site to another, both in form and the numbers involved. Distinctions, for example, can be drawn between sites which consist of loose groupings, such as that at Ben Aulasary (H24) in North Uist, and those which are compact groups. The majority of the Manx groups are examples of the latter.

9.3 RELATIONSHIPS

(a) Relationship between the sites and possibly earlier sites in the vicinity.

In the section on building materials, a relationship has been noted

between shieling huts and older sites, such as chambered cairns. This is a common feature of sites in the Uists, but was not one which was recognised in the other islands. However, in Man, one interesting relationship, first noted by Gelling, was that between his sites and hut-circles. A number of sites, which he identified as shielings, had been marked on the 1957 edition of the 1 inch O.S. map, as hut-circles, these structures also being found in the Manx uplands. Gelling also suggested that Hut 1, Mound A, at Block Eary (M10, mound U) could be regarded as 'an impermanent version of an iron-age circular hut', and it has been postulated by Morris (1983:121-122), that the structure underlying Keeill Vael at Druidale may be similar. Gelling concluded, in the dating of the shieling sites, that the hut-circles identified in the mountains, were possibly the precursors of the shieling mounds, and that the relatively small numbers of such huts, suggested that there was a great increase in transhumance in the Norse period.

In Catalogue 1, a number of sites are included in the section on Druidale for the sake of comparison. This is one of the valleys in which a number of well-defined hut-circles are to be found, and Druidale 1 (M1) is one of the few sites which seems to have a structure, similar in appearance to a hut-circle, associated with it. The only other site, at which hut-circles are found in close proximity to mounds, is that at Slieau Curn (M13). These apparently associated features will be considered first, and then the relationship between different sites.

The feature, which is very similar to a hut-circle, at Druidale 1 (M1) is associated with mound E. It is a large, roughly circular depression, to the west of the mound, with diameters of 4m and 3.5m, surrounded by an earth bank, 25cm high. There appears to be a small entrance facing roughly north. There are no similar depressions associated with any of the other mounds at the site, with any of the mounds identified at the other sites in Man, or with any of the mounds found at sites in the Hebrides. The question which must be asked, is whether this feature is earlier than, contemporary with, or later than the mound. An examination of the mound and the circle points to the fact that the latter is not later than the mound, and that it is

unlikely to predate it, the circle appearing as an integral feature. It does not, therefore, seem likely that the huts which have formed the mound, were utilising an earlier feature.

At Slieau Curn (M13), the circles, which appear as depressions and do not have clear surrounding banks as at Druidale, are located on the north side of the stream, slightly higher up-slope than the mounds. The features have similar diameters to that at Druidale 1 (M1).

An examination of the hut-circle site, Druidale 7 (M7), pointed to the fact that, although the feature at Druidale 1 is similar in appearance, it is much smaller than the circles to be found at this site. The possible circles identified at Druidale 6 (M6), during field-walking, are also much larger than either that at Druidale 1 or at Slieau Curn (M13). These appear as large green circular depressions, surrounded by turf banks, and have little evidence of stone in their make-up, unlike those at Druidale 7 (M7). They have diameters of 7m to 9m, and the walls stand to a height of 50cm to 75cm. The double feature, thus, two circles joined, can be directly paralleled at Druidale 7. After the discovery of the circles of Druidale 6, it became clear that what had been described as a mound at Druidale 4 (M4), may, in fact, have had more in common with these than with the mounds identified at the other sites in the valley. The diameters are virtually identical, and, in general appearance, the mound is very similar. One unusual feature of the mound, already noted (Chapter 8), is the appearance at its base, of a number of pieces of quartz. This can be paralleled at Druidale 7, quartz being incorporated in all of the hut-circles, but is not evident at Druidale 6. The surface of the Druidale 4 mound is very uneven, and is occupied by a large oval depression, 4.2m by 1.45m, larger than those encountered at any of the other sites on Man. It is also worth considering in this context, the evidence of the structures excavated by Gelling and Morris (see above). Both appear to have been much larger than the other structures excavated by Gelling, and those indicated on the surfaces of mounds (Chapter 8), and would appear, as far as size is concerned, to be more comparable with the hut-circles.

Other features similar to those described above were not

encountered in the Druidale area, despite intensive field-walking. However, it is still clear that, at least in this valley, there are a number of sizeable hut-circles, as well as a number of mounds, and that, in both cases, clear groups can be identified. All of the groups are located in similar situations, on the slopes immediately above the Sulby River, in the case of those on the south bank, and just above the line of the road, in the case of those on the north bank. The relationship between the different sites, however, is unclear, and it is only possible to say that the area has been one of a certain amount of activity over, potentially, a considerable amount of time.

One other site which ought to be mentioned in a discussion of the relationship between the sites identified as possible shieling sites, and older sites, is that of Burroo Mooar (M12). This is an odd site, having a large number of strange hollows dug into the hillside, and three very slight mounds with stones scattered over their surfaces. At least one of these stones is an upright. The identification of this site as a shieling site is very uncertain, but if it was such a site, then the evidence suggests that it may have made use of an earlier site.

The evidence from Skye and the Outer Hebrides for the re-use of sites has been outlined above. However, in all the cases where this does occur, there is no suggestion that the original sites were related to transhumance. In the case of the chambered cairns, this is very clearly not the case. The only structure identified at any of the sites examined which is similar to the feature at Druidale 1, is the small circular hut C at the site in Glen Hinnisdale (H3). Hut-circles of the type found in the Druidale area were not found at any of the Hebridean sites. The published material also suggests that the existence of hut-circles is not a feature of the sites.

(b) Relationship between the sites and possibly later sites in the vicinity

Only two examples of this were noted on Man, and none in Skye and the Outer Hebrides. Both of the structures are similar, and presumably related to the same activity. The first structure was discovered in Druidale, and is catalogued separately as Druidale 5 (M5). The second

was found at Lhergyrhenny, and is catalogued with the site (M25). In each case, the identified structures are long, narrow, rectangular structures quite different in appearance from the rectangular enclosures at Upper Sartfell (M26) and at Glen Dhoo (M32). Internally, the Druidale structure has a length of some 12m and a width of 3.9m, whilst that at Lhergyrhenny is 8m long and some 2m wide. Both have well-constructed walls of stone, with an external covering of turf, and these stand to a height of 1m, and are 1m to 1.18m wide. Those at the former site have suffered collapse in certain sections, but those at the latter are very well preserved. In both structures there are single clear entrances in the short walls, which face north-north-west and north-west respectively, but, in the case of Lhergyrhenny, it would appear that there was a second, much smaller, entrance in the south-east end, marked by two uprights. Attached to the structures, are, again in both cases, two arms of stone and turf, one much shorter than the latter. These have the effect of creating a small court in front of the entrances to the structures. One of the arms, however, continues in the form of a long bank, along the hillside in the case of that at Druidale, and down-slope, alongside a small stream in the case of that at Lhergyrhenny. Both banks are solid constructions of earth and stone, but that at Lhergyrhenny survives to a greater height.

The location of the structures alongside small streams, and the single long banks associated with them, suggest that they are related to stock-control, and the structural evidence suggests that they were not roofed. In the context of animal enclosures, it can be postulated that animals were driven up towards the structures between the banks and the streams, and that they were reduced to a single file to enter the enclosures. That such well-built enclosures were used for animals in the mountains is quite clear from the evidence of the large circular sheep-pen of stone that can be seen on the side of Snaefell, immediately above the mounds of Group 2 at Lhergyrhenny, for example, and is suggested by the large rectangular enclosure in the small Upper Sartfell valley. The nature of the construction of the two enclosures suggests that they do not belong to the mounded sites, but their dating is not clear. The use of large quantities of stone, could suggest a

date later than that for the earth banks associated with the mounds, and the good state of preservation might indicate a relatively recent date.

However, it does seem clear that these features indicate continued use of the areas, in the vicinity of the sites believed to be shielings, for grazing purposes, although the activity associated with them would appear to be rather different from that associated with the word *shieling*.

Other structures believed to be related to stock-control were noted at the catalogued sites of Glion Kerral (M21) and at Cringle Plantation 2 (M30), although the possibility that the latter is some form of hut should not be discounted. It was also noted, but not recorded, that there is a large, roughly circular enclosure of turf and stone at the head of the dry valley leading down to Block Eary C (M11), on the north side of Snaefell, just off the road (SC 407 888), and that there is a rectangular structure, similar to those described above, on one of the steep slopes above the Laxey valley (SC 406 885).

(c) The relationship between sites and resource territories - the Manx sites and the parishes

Gelling examined the distribution of identified sites in relation to parishes, although it is clear that this was a convenient way to categorise the sites, and explain the distributions, rather than being related to the examination of the sites in terms of resource territories. The parishes are believed to have been created in the first half of the twelfth century (Chapter 4), and this would, on the basis of Gelling's arguments, be exactly the time that the shieling mounds were being used (the coin of Stephen from Gelling's Mound B at Block Eary is dated to the period 1135-1141+). If it is assumed that there was no structure of territorial division in operation before this period, and that shieling sites were being used by this date, then it is likely that there would have been some considerable degree of conflict concerning the ownership of certain grazing sites, and access to traditionally held pastures.

However, the above involves a large number of assumptions and, although it would be easy to postulate further, it is more useful to

examine actual site distribution patterns. The parishes are the smallest resource territories in which it is possible to examine site distribution, the quarterlands and treens being units of enclosed land, and thus not containing the sites located on the common pasture. The larger units are the sheadings and the deemster divisions, but although it is interesting to examine the distributions of sites within these, the latter, in particular, is too large to show up any local patterns.

The parishes have been described by E. Davies (1956:100) as 'very noticeable units of the countryside', and the fact that they do form very distinct geographical areas lends weight to Reilly's theory (1988:28) that these ecclesiastical units were based on earlier secular divisions. It will be assumed for the basis of this analysis that the territorial divisions indicated by the parishes were in existence at the same time as the sites. The sites which are used in an examination of distribution patterns are basically those recorded in the Manx Museum Sites and Monuments Records, which is based on the survey work of Peter Gelling (Catalogue 6), but which includes a number of other sites identified as possible shielings. All the sites in Catalogue 1 are included. A number of sites, however, had to be removed, namely those with place-names containing the element *eary*. Mounds or other remains possibly associated with shieling activities have yet to be identified at sites with names in *eary*-, and it would appear that they have been included in the shieling list solely on the basis of their names.

9.4 DISTRIBUTION

(a) Basic patterns

Examination of the remaining list, indicates that sites are to be found in all but five parishes. These are, as might be expected if the sites are shielings, those on the northern plain - Jurby, Andreas and Bride, and two of the southern parishes - Santon and Arbory. Three sites are included in the S.M.R. for Arbory, but these are places with names containing *eary*, and have, thus, been removed. It would have been expected that, given the lack of sites in the lowland parishes, there would be considerable numbers of sites in all of those which have access to the uplands. There is, however, considerable variation in the

numbers of sites in parishes. The greatest concentration is in Michael (18), and this is followed by Braddan (12) and Lezayre (9). The remaining parishes have between one and six sites.

There is a single factor behind this patterning, and this is the way in which Peter Gelling carried out his field-work. One of the main criteria used in the location of sites was proximity to water. Gelling, consequently, scoured the major river valleys, and their tributaries, for sites, and, hence, the distributions show a bias towards valleys. There are concentrations of sites in those parishes which have large numbers of small valleys, such as Michael, and very few in parishes such as Maughold and Lonan, which have only a limited number. The numbers of sites are, thus, not a reflection of the amount of upland pasture which the parishes had access to, which might have been expected.

The bias in the distributions is potentially, however, not a problem, in that the relationship between valleys and sites could be a real one. The field-work carried out in this survey suggests that there is a relationship, the majority of sites being within 30m of the nearest source of fresh water. An examination of the S.M.R. figures for site location, shows that out of sixty-seven sites, thirty-nine (58%) have a very clear relationship with rivers or streams, being located in close proximity to them (Group 1). Eighteen sites (27%) are located either on the slopes of river valleys, in the area between two streams which are quite widely separated, or some distance above the headwaters of valleys (Group 2). A distinction is drawn between these sites and the above, because the latter are usually high on the slopes of the valleys, and it is difficult to argue that there is a relationship between the sites and water. The third category contains those sites which apparently have no relationship with valleys or fresh water of any form (Group 3). There are ten such sites (15%), and all, with one exception, lie on enclosed land, or on the edge of it. If the river and valley numbers are combined, there are fifty-seven sites, which form 85% of the total number of sites in the data-base. The relationship noted above between sites and valleys would, thus, appear to be confirmed by the S.M.R., which contains all the possible shieling sites

identified.

An examination of the sites in Group 3, shows that seven lie on enclosed land, and two on the edge of it. Of these, doubts have been expressed concerning the identification as shielings, of the two mounds at Lhergyrhenny (Sulby Reservoir M20) and the mounds at Archallagan (M16). Most of the others are also questionable cases. The problems in determining whether single mounds may be shielings have been highlighted, and this factor, together with the location information, suggests that the mounds of Doarlish Cashen and Shughlaigquiggin, may be the products of other activities. In the case of the former, the mound is, again, of a very different appearance from the mounds encountered at the majority of sites, it is located at the edge of a field boundary, and is in close proximity to the site of the possible Norse farmstead excavated by Peter Gelling. The location of the mounds at the Barony, recorded as 'tumuli' on the various maps of the island, in the vicinity of Rullic Keeill Vael, also points to the fact that the mounds are as likely to be related to this feature, as to the shieling practice.

(b) Height

Within the groups, the height distributions, and concentrations within them, are worth noting. The distribution for the sites of Group 1 is from 183m to 360m O.D., for Group 2 from 207m to 396m O.D., and for Group 3 from 146m to 265m O.D.. The concentrations in the groups occur at heights of 244m and 274m O.D., at 244m, and 183m O.D., respectively. The height of 183m is roughly the level of the extent of cultivation of Man, although the numerous fields beyond this level, show that cultivation has extended much further upslope in certain periods. The lack of sites below 183m can be explained in terms of the plough. However, there are twenty-two sites, belonging to each of the three categories, which are found on enclosed land, or on the edge of it, suggesting that perhaps a different explanation should be sought for the dearth of sites below 183m.

There are only three parishes with a large number of sites. These are Braddan, Lezayre and Michael. It was believed that an examination of the heights of the various sites, in each parish, might provide some

clue as to the possible organisation of the shieling practice within these resource territories. The figures show that the distribution of sites within the upland area ranges from 183m (600') to 360m (1180') for Braddan, 183m (600') to 314m (1030') for Lezayre, and from 229m (750') to 396m (1300') for Michael. Within these distributions, there is clearly, in each case, a concentration of sites between 240m (787') and 275m (902') O.D.. There is no evidence to suggest that two bands of sites may be represented in the data, pointing to the existence of perhaps spring and summer shielings. The evidence could, however, point to a movement of sites upslope, in which case those over 300m would be the most recent.

Combining the figures for the remaining parishes, the range of site heights, 165m (540') to 290m (950'), is slightly higher than that for Lezayre, but lower than that for Braddan and Michael. The distribution of sites within this range is a fairly even one, there being no significant gaps in the data. There are, however, concentrations at 183m, and between 213m (700') and 250m (820') O.D., which may be significant. There is, thus, again no evidence of two sets of sites, and the evidence from some of the parishes also suggests that a movement of the sites upslope did not occur. The parishes are Marown, Maughold and Patrick, and there are concentrations of sites at 183m (600'), 244m (800') and 213m (700') respectively. In the case of Marown, this is related to the limited amount of upland available in this parish, and in Patrick the land is merely lower, sites being located in the upper reaches of the Rushen River at a height of 213m (700'). The Maughold evidence is less easy to understand, particularly when it is borne in mind that there is a large area of upland available, and that the majority of the identified sites lie on enclosed land. It could be suggested that the sites had stopped being used by the time that the land was enclosed, thus making it unneccesary for new sites to be found.

(c) Distance

The possibility of two or more sets of sites was rejected on the basis of height distributions within the parishes. However, an examination of the possible distance of the sites from settlements,

suggests that there may ~~to~~ have been different types of site on the basis of this factor. Bil (1983:177ff.) has argued that the distance between farm and shieling site determined who stayed there. Thus, it could be expected that there would be a larger number of residents at a distant site, than at one within a relatively short distance of the farm. In Man, it is impossible to link sites with specific units, and it must be taken into account that the scale of things is quite different from Perthshire. However, although all of the sites in Man would have been less than six miles from settlements and could be reached quite easily in a day, distinctions can perhaps be drawn between sites such as those at Block Eary, Injebreck, Druidale and Glen Rushen at the headwaters of major rivers and located some distance from permanent settlements, and those located on the edge of the enclosed land, immediately above the settled areas. This is most noticeable in the parish of Michael. The evidence, on the whole, however, does not support such a conclusion.

(d) Numbers of sites - farm and shieling

It has been suggested that the numbers of mounds may be related to the distance that the sites lay from the permanent farms. However, the numbers may also reflect different forms of access to the pastures beyond the outfield. The numbers of sites in the majority of the parishes are very small, and would not suggest that each treen or estate-owner, for example, would have had his own site. Furthermore, if the sites are seen in the context of a gradual movement up-slope, then this further reduces the number of sites possibly in use at any one time. The evidence from sites such as those at Block Eary, and at Druidale, suggests that if they are related to the practice of shieling, this was carried out communally. Whether, by communally, use by the estate-owners of one particular parish is indicated, or use by smaller groups of estate-owners, is not clear. The fact that there are only a few sizeable sites, suggests that these may have been organised on a large scale, thus, on a parish basis. It could be suggested, then, that those sites with only two or three mounds, may have been in use by individual land-owners.

Examination of pasture organisation in Scotland, for example, shows

that it was a complicated arrangement, operating between landowners, farms of an estate, and between the tenants of any farm. Macsween (1959b:81) noted that not every farm in Skye had access to a shieling, and related the absence to farms whose inbye grass and outfield pastures were sufficiently extensive that shielings were not required. This situation could have been the case in the north-east parishes of Man. Here, there is less arable land available, than on the west coast for example, and there is an intermediate zone of pasture between the arable and the rough mountain pasture. In some places this intermediate zone replaces the arable zone. It could be suggested that access to these pastures made the use of shielings less of a necessity. Where shielings were required, Bil (1983:191) found that, in Perthshire, some of the farms had two or three sites, and whereas those with one, had sites generally restricted to the main strath valleys, those with two or three, had sites in the tributary valleys also. In the context of numbers of sites, Bil (1983:194-197) also noted that the subdivision of large shieling grounds by land-owners often occurred as a response to increasing demands on hill grazing land. It could be suggested that a subdivision of large sites occurred at Block Eary and Druidale, for example. This might explain the likelihood of a separate site, Group C (M11) in the headwaters of the river, and possibly also the existence of Groups A and B, at the former site. In the Druidale valley, subdivision could have been responsible for the boundaries that can be detected at two of the sites.

(e) Basic location factors

A number of theories can be postulated for the location of sites in specific areas. However, the greatest determinant of site location and distribution has to be the topography. In the case of Block Eary, for example, much of the land on either side of the Sulby River is too steep to be of any use, and hence there are concentrations in the tributaries where more suitable land for grazing purposes and the erection of temporary settlements is available. The same is also true of large parts of the River Glass, Glen Auldyn and Glen Dhoo, and may explain the concentrations of mounds around the headwaters of these valleys. Explaining the distribution in these terms, obviates the need

to produce complex theories concerning pasture organisation for example, the numbers being directly related to the fact that there were no other suitable locations available. Implicit in this conclusion also is the likelihood that the sites would have been used repeatedly over a long period of time, and there is no need to see those sites above the 300m (984'), for example, as being the most recent in terms of establishment.

9.5 USE OF SITES AS BOUNDARY MARKERS

This is an aspect of the shieling which has only been explored by Bil (1983: Chapter 6). He pointed to the fact that there was considerable evidence in Perthshire to support the conclusion that shielings were used to delimit estate properties. The shielings were a territorial resource, had clearly recognised boundaries, and could, thus, also be used to demarcate other boundaries. The use of sites for this purpose in Man is a question which is difficult to explore. There is little physical evidence to suggest that there is any relationship between sites and the boundaries of the parishes, but within the parishes, it is possible that sites could have been used to demarcate the territories nominally belonging to different estates. This would clearly have been necessary where there were extensive tracts of homogenous land.

9.6 PERMANENT COLONISATION OF THE SITES

The only possible evidence of this process is at Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14), where there is an area of ridge and furrow over part of the site. This perhaps represents the first stage in the permanent colonisation of a shieling site. The lack of sites in certain parishes, can be explained in terms of the encroachment of permanent settlement on former pasture grounds. An examination of the larger valleys, demonstrates that land has been enclosed, in many cases, right up to the headwaters, and, in some instances, the land between these tributaries has also been enclosed. A distinct contrast can be drawn between the small valleys of the parish of Michael, for example, and the large valleys of Maughold and Lonan, and it is clear that the rate of survival of sites would have been much greater in the former than in the latter. As has been emphasised already, however, the location of a

number of sites on enclosed land does suggest that other reasons than the plough may be responsible for the lack of sites, and that a dearth may actually indicate that sites never existed.

9.7 CONCLUSIONS

The identification of individual sites proved to be more complex than anticipated. The fixed distances used by Macsween and Love were rejected in favour of a system which looked at specific cases. In many instances there were clear groupings. However, in valleys such as Block Eary, Druidale and Cornaa, it was difficult to distinguish between single large sites and smaller groupings. It was suggested that, in a number of cases, the large sites were in fact a number of smaller groups. The preponderance of small groups was confirmed by the Hebridean evidence.

The distribution of the sites, in both Man and the Hebrides, was affected by altitude, soil and vegetation, shelter and aspect, proximity to water, and the availability of building materials. However, on Man and Skye, the single most important factor appears to have been a valley location. This did not always involve proximity to water. The valleys offered the benefits of all the other factors listed above. In the other islands, although a correlation was noted between sites and valleys where they existed, other factors have been significant in site location. For example, in the Uists, it was found that the availability of building materials in the form of older structures, exerted a considerable influence on the choice of location.

A possible relationship between shieling sites and hut circles was noted by Peter Gelling in Man. Only a very small number of sites, however, do demonstrate such a relationship, and it was not noted in the Hebrides. There was little to suggest that the mounds represented the continuation of an earlier tradition represented by the hut-circles. The discovery of structures of a potentially later date in close proximity to two of the sites on Man, and the identification of enclosures on open moorland near others, pointed to the continued use of these areas for grazing purposes, but of a different nature, and added weight to the theory expressed in Chapter 8 that many of the features at the mounded sites could indicate functional changes.

Examination of the relationship between the sites and the parishes in Man, indicated concentrations in Michael, Braddan and Lezayre. The relationship between valleys and sites - was confirmed, and a concentration of sites between 240m and 275m was noted. There was no suggestion that there were two levels of sites in the parishes, spring/autumn and summer shielings, and this appeared to be confirmed by the evidence of distance from permanent settlements to the sites. The numbers of sites, as they stand, point to the fact that each treen-owner, for example, was unlikely to have had his own site, and would certainly not appear to have had more than one. It was suggested, however, that the difference in size between the majority of sites and those at Block Eary and Injebreck, may reflect the difference between individually-owned and communal sites. Returning to basic location factors, however, suggested that the size of these sites may be, in fact, related to the nature of the valleys in which they lie, thus, their suitability for pasture and the erection of temporary settlements. It was postulated that the lack of sites in the north-east parishes, may reflect the greater availability of outfield pastures. Evidence for the use of sites as boundary markers was not clear, and that for the permanent colonisation of sites was restricted to the ridge and furrow at Juan ny Clarys.

PART 3: THE DATING

PART 3: THE DATING

INTRODUCTION

Part Three explores the question of the dating of sites identified as 'shielings', and the 'shieling practice', in Man, to the Norse period. This involves a consideration of artefactual, site, onomastic and comparative evidence.

Chapter 10 is a presentation of the conclusions drawn by Peter Gelling concerning the dating of sites identified through survey-work, and by Eleanor Megaw on the Manx *eary* sites. Problems with the evidence, and reasoning behind the conclusions are emphasised, and in a section on methodology, the approaches which, it was believed, offered opportunities to explore some of these problem areas and produce new evidence, are described. In a study of the onomastic evidence, it was concluded that the placing of Man in the wider context of the Kingdom of Man and the Isles would permit of an examination of the question of the use of the Gaelic word *ary* in Man as opposed to Norse *sæter*. Chapter 11 explores the current state of research on the use of these naming elements in the Kingdom and further afield, and concentrates particularly on the research of Dr. Fellows Jensen, one of the main sources of inspiration for this study. In Chapter 12 the results of a detailed archaeological and geographical study of the sites containing the place-name elements is presented, and the implications of this new work discussed. The following chapter concentrates on comparative archaeological material from Norse and insular Celtic contexts. In the case of the former recent research in Norway and the North Atlantic islands has produced a considerable body of material with which to compare the Manx evidence. It was recognised, however, that, given the possibility that the sites on Man may have had origins in the pre-Norse period and may have continued to be used after Norse influence had waned, there may be significant similarities between these and 'shielings' of other Gaelic areas. Wales and Ireland were chosen, the evidence from the Hebrides having been explored in Part 2, and offering only limited dating evidence.

CHAPTER 10: THE DATING OF SITES TO THE NORSE PERIOD

INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines the dating evidence for the sites identified as shielings on Man, and for the shieling practice. The site evidence, from the survey work and excavations of Peter Gelling (1961; 1963a), is presented first (A). This is followed by a section in which information acquired by the author during fieldwork is outlined (B). The third section reviews the research of Eleanor Megaw (1978) on the *eary* sites of Man, believed to be older shieling grounds (C). Problems arising from the conclusions drawn by Gelling and Megaw are highlighted, and difficulties encountered in the author's survey are discussed. The final part of the chapter presents the methodology employed to solve some of these problems.

10.1 DATING EVIDENCE

A. GELLING'S SITES

Two pieces of artefactual evidence were used in the dating of Block Eary. The first was the coin, identified by Dr. J.P.C. Kent, as a Type 1 penny of Stephen, coined by the moneyer 'Oterche' (sic) of Norwich (Gelling 1963a:158, Footnote 3). This type appears to date from 1135 to 1141+. The coin was discovered in Mound B, located at 'the very top of the solid turf in the lower part of the section' (Gelling 1963a:158). The exact location is unfortunately not shown on the section drawing, and a plan of this mound has not been published. Gelling believed that its exact location was relatively unimportant, the coin perhaps having been lost somewhere in the vicinity of the site, and incorporated into the mound in a cut turf. The only other finds in this mound were a small number of tiny pieces of unglazed pottery, also found immediately beneath the humus, but were too small to be of any use for dating. The coin indicated a date within the Norse period, and Gelling believed that, even if it was lost as much as a century after its minting, it would have still have indicated a date within this period, the Kingdom not being ceded to Scotland until 1266 (Broderick 1979:f.49v; see Chapter 3).

The second artefact was the slate gaming board, discovered in 'one

of the highest levels' of Mound E at Block Eary (Gelling 1963a:156-7), and its significance has been discussed by A. Cubbon (1960:66-70). The board consists of incised lines forming a pattern of three squares, one within the other, and there are lines at ninety degrees at the centres of the sides of the squares. The game indicated is that of 'merels', or 'Nine Men's Morris', and is one of considerable antiquity. This was not the first such find on Man. A stone gaming board was discovered at the site of Cronk yn How, Lezayre (Bruce and Cubbon 1930b), a site where there is evidence of Early Christian occupation and the possibility of occupation during the Norse period and later, and a second possible one was found on a stone from Kirk Maughold churchyard. It was recovered in the excavation of the east keeill, at floor level, just outside the door. Cubbon looked particularly to Norway for comparative material, and discovered that merels, and other similar board games, were popular in the Viking period, and postulated that the games may have been a normal part of the equipment of men in this period. Turning to Britain, it was clear that the game was widely known, but only in post-Norman contexts. Cubbon found that the game was frequently discovered in association with cathedrals, abbeys and castles. The discovery of a wooden gaming board in Ballinderry crannog in 1932 (see R. Kermode 1935a;1935b), was of particular interest. Although for the game of hnefatafl (a Scandinavian game more like chess and draughts), the edge of the board was decorated with patterns which were paralleled with those found on tenth century cross-slabs on Man. It was suggested that the board may have been made in Man (Hencken 1933), and Cubbon took this as further evidence of a Norse date for the Block Eary example. His conclusion (1960:70) was, thus, that:

> '....Mr. Gelling's fascinating discovery places us on firmer ground, and yields a glimpse of how the shepherds may have whiled away the long summer evenings near the shieling huts in the Manx uplands during the period of the later Norse kings of Man.'

He believed that it was tempting to suggest that it was the Viking settlers who had introduced the game into the island, but he did not reject the theory that it may have been the religious houses of twelfth

century England which were responsible.

Besides the finds, Gelling (1963a:171) believed that the structural evidence also indicated a Norse date. He contrasted the large, circular hut (Hut 1) at the lowest level of Mound A at Block Eary with the oblong structures that superseded it, and postulated that whereas the former had Iron-Age affinities, the latter could point to 'Norse methods of building'. The former hut was the only one which he considered to suggest that the site at Block Eary was occupied in the pre-Norse period.

In his field survey, Gelling (1963a:171) noted that hut circles were to be found in the mountains at much the same height as the mounds. They were quite different in appearance, showing signs of solider construction, and there was little or no evidence of mound-formation. These structures were generally considered to belong to the Iron Age, and Gelling postulated that they may have represented an earlier phase of 'shieling' than the mounds. Comparing the relative numbers of known hut circles and mounds, the considerably larger number of the latter suggested a 'great increase in transhumance in the Norse period'. He (1961:124) pointed to research in Norway, which had demonstrated that the type of summer settlement which he had identified on Man, was becoming more common, in that country, during the period 600 to 800 A.D., immediately before the Viking period, and suggested tentatively that the custom was, in fact, introduced to Man by settlers from Norway. However, he also pointed out that it was equally possible that this was an insular, British, tradition, which appeared in Man during the pre-Norse period. He cited the evidence of Hut 1, Mound A, at Block Eary as possible evidence to support this conclusion.

The final reason for postulating a Norse date for the sites seems to have been the apparent association with the place-name element *eary*. Although, Gelling (1963a:168-9) concluded that this word most likely entered the Manx language from Gaelic, as opposed to being introduced as a Gaelic loan-word through Norse, as occurred in Northern England, in both of his papers the element would appear to be linked in his mind with the Norse period (1961:124; 1963a:172). It did not suggest to him that the sites were Gaelic.

As far as the extent of time that the sites remained in use is concerned, Gelling (1963a:171-2) believed that if transhumance was being practised in the mid-seventeenth century, the fact would have been recorded by Blundell (Chapter 4, Chapter 6). The fact that there is no mention, suggested to Gelling that the practice may have owed its main development to the Norsemen, that it possibly flourished during the period of Norse rule, and that it waned as Norse traditions died out in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. He did, however, speculate that some people may have continued to resort to the mountains with their cattle in the summer months long after the practice generally had stopped.

B. SURVEY WORK BY THE AUTHOR

Unfortunately, only three finds were discovered during the field-survey on Man, and they are of limited use in either dating or indicating the function of the sites. All three were discovered in Upper Glen Rushen, two from Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14) and one from Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15). In the case of the former, both finds were flints, one recovered from a collapsed section of mound H, and the other from the track leading to the second site. Neither could be used for dating purposes. In the case of the latter, the find was a sherd of a large nineteenth century manganese glazed domestic vessel (Horne, pers.comm.), discovered in a small gully to the west of the site. Taking into account the apparent survival of the word 'eree' into the late eighteenth century, this single find could indicate an even later use of this particular site.

Examination of individual sites, however, and comparative analysis, has led to the identification of certain features which possibly indicate different phases of use of the sites, and others which may indicate an origin in different periods. A number of these features are unique and would appear to indicate specialised activities, for example at Glen Dhoo, Upper Sartfell, and Druidale 1. Other sites have features which suggest that their function may have changed through time, for example Block Eary, Injebreck and Juan ny Clarys 1. Examination of these features, although not providing any absolute dating, does permit of the creation of basic individual site chronologies, and can help to

establish any chronological differences between sites. The former is particularly significant, it having been widely assumed that features at the sites were contemporary.

The clearest example of a basic site chronology is Juan ny Clarys 1, a site at which there are a number of mounds and an area of ridge and furrow. Gelling argued that the ridge and furrow indicated that cultivation occurred at the shielings. Examination of this site, however, suggested that the ridge and furrow belonged to a later phase of use of the site. This was consistent with the evidence from sites in the Hebrides, which, having been fertilised by the presence of cattle over the years, had become favourable sites for cultivation and even permanent settlement at times of climatic improvement or population pressure. On top of the Juan ny Clarys ridge and furrow, however, there is evidence of some form of enclosure, which would indicate yet another phase of use of the site.

In the case of Block Eary, it was postulated in Chapters 6 and 9 that rather than a single site, there may have been three separate groups in the upper reaches of the valley, and that they may not have been occupied at the same time. It was also suggested that the banks, probably used for stock control, may have been connected with one specific group of mounds and with a specific phase of use of the site. Examination of the structures indicated that there are a considerable number of quite distinct phases of use of Block Eary, probably spanning a very long period of time, and that the form of the structures may reflect different activities. For example, the large circular structure, assigned an Iron Age date by Peter Gelling on the basis of its form, could be associated with a phase of permanent settlement of the site at a time of climatic improvement. Perhaps the banks are associated with this phase of use rather than one of seasonal settlement. This could then have been followed by periods of 'shieling', the residence of groups of people (probably women) responsible for the pasturing of cattle and the production of dairy products, for considerable periods of time during the summer months. This lengthy occupation would have involved the presence of living-quarters of sufficient size to make the stay there bearable, and

also the presence of ancillary buildings associated with the storage and processing of the milk, and the storage of the associated equipment. After this phase of use of Block Eary, it can be postulated that its dairy function and use for long periods of time during the summer could have declined, and that although it continued to be visited, residence was for short periods of time and the numbers and type of animals had changed.

At Block Eary and a number of other sites, it was noted by the author that a considerable number of the mounds appeared to have more stone on their surfaces and incorporated within them than had been suggested by Gelling. Where the outlines of the structures were clear, they indicated small huts, internally some 2m by 1m, in which it was only just possible for a small person to sleep. This suggested that either the structures served a function other than that of living quarters, or that the activity carried out at the site was different from that which is generally associated with the word 'shieling' or with 'seter'. One explanation could lie in the length of time a site was occupied, for example if only an over-night stay was involved, then the provision of a small roughly-built stone structure would be sufficient. The identification of a number of stone structures, and the traces of probable stone structures, on the surfaces of the mounds suggested a comparison with the evidence from the Uists, and hinted at a possible use of the sites within the last two centuries.

In the case of the small stone cells excavated by Gelling, two at Block Eary and one at Injebreck, it is impossible to see these as living quarters. Gelling suggested that these were 'goose houses' and there are similar structures to be found in Cornwall (Chapter 8). It has been postulated that they may have served a dairy function, being stone-lined and with flagged floors, but it seems much more likely that these cells, which were built into mounds of occupation material, belong to a different phase of use of the sites, perhaps a relatively modern one. One possibility is that they could have sheltered young lambs. The narrow entrances and low roofs would prevent use by larger animals or man.

To turn to a very different type of site, Glen Dhoo (M32), either

the activity carried out at the site was quite different from those at Block Eary, or it belongs to a different period than those represented at the latter site. The presence of a rectangular enclosure and a larger roughly circular one, suggests that the features of the site may not have been used contemporaneously, and it cannot be assumed that the mounds associated with the enclosures also belong to the same phase of use. The fact that the bank of the roughly circular structure appears to cut through two small mounds is perhaps significant (Fig.80), as is the presence of mounds within the enclosures. The Upper Sartfell site is a similar case. It is possible that the mounds represent an earlier phase of use than the enclosure, and that they, and not the enclosure, are associated with the short curving turf bank at the head of the valley. The shape and construction of the enclosure, with the inclusion of large blocks of stone, would suggest a much more recent date than the turf bank. The site of Druidale 1 (M1) is yet another example of a site with a number of different features which are generally considered to be contemporary. One of the most interesting is the small hut-circle-like feature adjoining mound E. Does this pre-date the mound, is it contemporary, or does it post-date it? Surface examination would suggest that it is contemporary with at least one phase of use of the mound, forming a unique structure.

Besides the creation of individual site chronologies, it is possible in some cases to draw distinctions between sites. The above sites of Glen Dhoo and Upper Sartfell are a good example. Both have enclosures, but that at Upper Sartfell is of turf and stone and survives to a much greater height than either of those at Glen Dhoo. It is also a more regular shape and has squarer corners than either of the enclosures at Glen Dhoo. The form of the structure suggests that it is much younger than those at Glen Dhoo, and is associated with a post-mediaeval use of the site, whilst those at the latter could be associated with a much earlier phase. Another good example is the sites in Upper Glen Rushen. It is clear from an examination of the dimensions of the mounds at Juan ny Clarys 1 (M14) that the site has been used for some considerable length of time. This is in sharp contrast to Juan ny Clarys 2 (M15), located slightly higher up the river, the mounds at

this site being low and in some cases barely perceptible. On the basis of the surface evidence, and the evidence of the sherd of pottery, it can be postulated that this site was established when the lower site was lost to cultivation, but that it did not remain in use for very long.

Also, besides distinctions, comparisons can be drawn between sites, for example between the turf banks forming the Glen Dhoo enclosures, the short bank at Upper Sartfell (M26), that belonging to Druidale 2 (M2), the two at Block Eary, and the four banks at Druidale 1. With the exception of the Block Eary banks, which are much larger than the others, they are all very similar in appearance, and would certainly appear to suggest an earlier date than that indicated by either the banks of the Upper Sartfell enclosure or those which form the enclosures at Druidale 5 (M5) and Lhergyrhenny (M25).

C. THE WORK OF ELEANOR MEGAW ON THE EARY SITES OF MAN

The research by Eleanor Megaw, published in the article 'The Manx 'Eary' And Its Significance' in 1978 (327-45), together with the conclusions of Peter Gelling outlined above, form the core around which the discussion of Part 2 is largely based. Here, her conclusions concerning the form of the sites, past and present, their distribution, and of greatest significance in this context, the dating of the un-named sites to the Norse period, are presented in detail.

(a) Initial identification of the 'eary sites'

The Manx *eary* sites first received attention from E. Davies (1956:97-116), in his study of the land system of the island. In a discussion of the distinctive names given to treens and quarterlands, he noted (1956:111) that the generic term *eary* was given to twelve quarterlands, lying generally along the borders of the intack land, or adjacent to the commons. He noted also that, although being quarterlands within treens, the *earys* were often physically separate from them. Where they were physically part of the treens, they were always located furthest upland. He found that the farmsteads which had *eary* in their names lay, with two exceptions, at 122m (400') and 152m (500'), and at a general height of some 198+/-15m (650+/-50'). Davies concluded that the holdings once formed the summer pastures or

shielings of particular treens, and believed that the evidence suggested that they were older than the intacks. The existence of only two large intacks in the mountains with names in *eary* appeared to support this.

(b) The word 'eary'

Megaw wrote (1978:327) that the word *eary*, which occurs in a number of Manx place-names, is equivalent to the Scottish Gaelic word *airigh*, and that both were derived from Old Irish *áirge* meaning a 'dairy'. She distinguished between this and the more modern use of the word as meaning a summer pasture, or shieling. She noted that in the 1770s, the Manx word *eree* was recorded as meaning 'the mountainous parts where cattle are sent to feed in the summer' and 'herd' (see J. Kelly 1866:74-5). She also pointed to the use of the present tense are, rather than were.

(c) Form and Distribution

Megaw's research produced a total of 40 *eary* names (Appendix 13), 24 being recorded on the 1867-69 6-inch Ordnance Survey maps of the Isle of Man. A further 6 names were obtained from records, and located approximately, and a further 10 were known but could not be located.

Eary as a place-name element

Megaw found that the *eary* names occurred in a Gaelic formation, usually anglicised. Some stood alone, and some were prefixed by the definite article, but most commonly, particularly in earlier records, *eary* was a first element, with an adjective or personal name as the suffix. The earliest forms of the word were to be found in the Limites of c.1280. These were Aryg(h)e-, and Ary-. The names which include the element were Hath Arygegormane, 'the ford of Gorman's Eary', and Aryeuzryn (possibly for Aryzeuryn, where the *z* would represent *gh*), both now lost. The latter name survived as that of a small treen in the Manorial Roll, 1511 - Arernan, now Moaney-moar, 'the big turbary'. Moaney-moar is a single quarterland farm in the parish of Malew. Megaw located the former name on the east side of Sulby Glen, possibly near the ford above the Cluggid waterfall, near the farm of Ballanea. There is, however, nothing in the document in which these two names appear, which gives any indication of the precise meaning of the word *eary* at

this time.

Distribution (Fig.106)

One of the main themes of Megaw's work was the distribution of the *eary* sites.

She stressed the importance of height, and emphasised the need to distinguish between these sites, usually located on enclosed land, and the nameless shieling mounds identified by Gelling, lying 'far out on the open moorland'. (1978:327-329). The upper farmland limit c.1500 A.D. was 183m (600') O.D., and Megaw noted that the shieling-mound zone lay largely above 274m (900') O.D.. Confusion surrounding the two types of site had arisen from the association of the farm name Block Eary, with the site excavated by Peter Gelling, further up the valley. Megaw felt that the *eary* sites, and those identified by Gelling, should be kept separate because of the real topographical difference between them, even if it did come to light that some of his sites had borne names in *eary*-.

Analysis (E. Davies 1956) had shown that three-quarters of the located *eary* sites lay below the 213m (700)' contour, and that 6 lay at, or near, 152m (500') a.s.l.. Almost all of the sites were on enclosed farm- or pasture-land, few were truly lowland in character (a possible exception is Eary Lhone, Andreas), and most were not located on the best quality farmland. The characteristic location of the sites was just within the upper limits of the old farmland, around 183m (600') a.s.l..

It was noted that several of the sites occurred in the upper parts of major valleys, and that although they were now marked by steadings from a farming phase, in many cases these probably occupied the sites of the original shielings. An examination of the local environments showed that the sites generally lay:

> 'on the plateau shelf where the steep sides of a narrow valley ease out to form a more gentle incline, and are always near a stream, - obviously suitable positions for summer grazings' (Megaw 1978:329).

The position of the existing steading was used for the purposes of site location, taking into account the fact that the farmland could

have spanned a rise of perhaps several hundred feet. It was suggested that the apparent lack of shieling sites in these locations was due to either building or ploughing, or the fact that they were yet to be identified.

On a larger scale, the *eary* sites were found to be located on the plateau flanking the hills, and a concentration in the Northside parishes was noted. Few names were to be found in the Southside parishes of Maughold, Lonan, Onchan and Santan. Megaw postulated that names in some of these parishes may have been lost in recent times. Notable groups of sites were identified: in German, running from above Little London farm along the south side of Glen Helen; Sulby Glen; the Baldwin valley; and around the slopes of the South Barrule Hills. The general, but not exclusive, inland distribution of the sites was noted, and Megaw suggested that as well as affording protection from the sea-winds, the 'relatively-secluded' locations might also have offered protection from raiding.

A feature of some of the *eary* sites was their link tenurially to specific lowland farms. Four of the *earys* were outlying, or detached portions of treens, for example. One of these was the farm Neary, above Glen Auldyn in the parish of Lezayre, which was a detached portion of the treen of Grest, about 4.8km away (3 miles). Megaw detected further links between specific *eary* sites and lowland farms, including the treen of Aryhorkell, which c.1500 belonged to a man named Reginald Wright, whose main holding was in the treen of Leyre, on the coast of the parish of Michael. Also, the use of personal names as specifics in a number of the names, suggested to Megaw that the shielings represented by these names, were individually, and not communally, owned and that the names may have indicated links with a specific occupation, for example, Eary Gau - 'shieling of the smith'.

One of the most interesting points to surface from the records, was that many of the *earys* had become heritable farms, occupied on a permanent basis, by c.1500. Megaw postulated that this could even have been the case with at least one of those in the c.1280 document. She pointed to evidence in North Wales of a similar situation (see Davies 1973:13). In the Manorial Rolls from c.1500, it appears that only

treens, not their component holdings, were generally recorded. Megaw noted that 5 (possibly 6) of the *earys* were recorded as if they were treens, albeit small ones. A further 10+ were identified as treen holdings, usually a quarterland farm in extent. Identification was done on the basis of the rents holdings paid, rather than by name, the rents having become fixed in 1505-6. Other *earys* were named by the seventeenth century, and took the form of 'intacks' enclosed from the common moorland. These land units did not become inheritable treen land. Megaw stressed, however, that although these and other sites may have developed from shieling sites, they too had a long history in many cases, having become permanent holdings of some status by c.1500 and, if the Limites evidence is taken into account, potentially by the thirteenth century.

Megaw postulated that the process by which the shieling sites became the permanent holdings, described above, was one in which both shieling and farm gradually moved up-slope. Clearance of trees and shrubs (Man probably being less denuded of woodland during the Norse period than it is now), and heather for making huts and for bedding, would have led to their replacement by grass. Megaw argued that these sites would have thus become suitable for permanent occupation, and that even relatively poor land could have become good pasture, and then arable land. The process was halted, for some reason, at the nameless shieling mounds. Megaw would have expected, had this been the pattern, that intermediate sites may have been found, but explained their apparent dearth as the consequence of cultivation or natural causes. Alternatively, she speculated that there could have been a system in which there were two shieling zones, one used for pasturing in the spring and autumn, and thus near the farmstead, and one used during the summer months in the higher pastures.

(d) Dating of the un-named sites to the Norse period

Megaw's earliest record of the word was the Limites of c.1280, and she suggested that certain ancient shieling sites had, by this time, become permanently occupied. Many of the sites had certainly become heritable farms by c.1500, being recorded in the Manorial Roll, and Megaw believed that it was likely that a considerable number of them

had a long history of settlement before this date. The recognition of the association of a number of sites with chapels, or keeills, suggested to Megaw that these holdings may have been permanently settled as early as the twelfth century. This led to the conclusion that a significant number of the *earys* may have belonged to the Norse, or even the pre-Norse period.

Megaw pointed to the fact that the Old Irish word *áirge* had clearly been adopted by Scandinavian-speakers at some point in its history, for it is common in north-west England, for example. Here, place-names containing the element have the characteristic Norse word-order, that is with the specific followed by the generic. An examination of the form of the Manx *eary* names, demonstrated that they were overwhelmingly Gaelic in formation, generally with *eary* as the generic, and an adjective or personal name as the specific. Looking at other Gaelic speaking areas, in which Norse speech had prevailed, Megaw noted that the Norse word-order was widespread (Fig.4). This pointed to the fact that the names were coined in Man by Gaelic speakers rather than Norse. Megaw believed that this was consistent with the absence of Norse *saetr* names on Man, *sáetr* being the Old Norse term for shieling. Names containing this element are to be found in both Scottish, with the exception of Galloway, and English areas (Fig.107). Megaw believed that the fact that 2 of the 5 treen names (Aryhorkell and Aresteyne) had Norse personal names as their specifics, did not alter the conclusion that they were given by Gaelic speakers, such names probably soon ceasing to have cultural connotations. Not so easily dismissed, however, was the fact that of the 10 *earys* which formed part of a treen, all but 2 had unmistakably Norse names. Those with Gaelic names were in *balla-*. Megaw very tentatively suggested the possibility that this might indicate that such *earys* changed from shieling to farm when a Norse settler occupied the adjoining lands.

Looking at *eary* in relation to its counterparts, thus *áirge* derivatives, in other areas, Megaw found that the closest parallel to the Manx situation appeared to be in Galloway, where the element was also used in Gaelic formations (Fig.107). The similarity in the topographical distribution of the sites in both areas suggested to

Megaw that they 'represented very similar cultural conditions'. For Galloway, the possibility of the word *airy* and the practice of shieling having been introduced by Norse settlers had to be ruled out, but it appeared likely that some of the sites had at least come into existence at this period. Megaw appeared to reject the theory that Gaelic *Bal-* representing the permanent farmstead, and *Airy-*, the summer settlement, may have been linked.

Considering the local, and regional evidence, Megaw concluded that the word *áirge*, in its various forms, was well-established before the end of the Norse period. However, the lack of Norse formations suggested that at least some of them may have had their origins in the pre-Norse period. Those which were particularly likely to have been shielings before the ninth century were those which subsequently developed into treens. She even went as far as to suggest that some of these sites may have become permanent farmsteads, with keeills and burial-grounds, at a time before the Norse settlement. These sites were located at relatively low altitudes, near the main zones of settled farmland, and suggested to Megaw comparison with the Scottish and Norwegian 'home shielings' utilised in spring and autumn, before and after the cattle returned from the more distant pastures, which could not be used for climatic reasons. From this, Megaw concluded that the more remote shielings on Man, represented the main summer shielings of the Dark Age and Norse period. The coin evidence from Block Eary fitted perfectly with this theory.

It should be pointed out, however, that Megaw felt that it would not be surprising if evidence, obtained in the future, was to demonstrate that the socio-economic pattern, of which the higher and lower shielings may have been a part, had prehistoric origins.

The end of the 'shieling system'

Megaw argued that the use of the Manx word *eary* in the eighteenth century indicated that the practice associated with it appeared to have survived into that period, and suggested that its demise could be explained in terms of a rapid expansion of sheep-farming, a situation similar to that in Wales. Sheep and dry cattle required less attention than milk cattle, and thus the need for a shieling, where the cows were

milked daily, and the cheese and butter prepared, disappeared. Megaw postulated that this demise began perhaps soon after monks of Furness Abbey founded Rushen Abbey in 1134-1135. The agricultural policies followed by the spiritual land-owners, namely sheep-rearing on a very large scale, could have been responsible, as in the Lake District, for the transformation of the hillsides. Megaw, however, pointed to the likelihood that famine, plague and warfare in the fourteenth century, may have reduced the effect of these changes, and been the cause of others. The lack of any documentary evidence suggesting that dairy produce was still of great significance in the following centuries, the fact that by 1580 over two thousand sheep were exported from the island, and the early nineteenth century claim by T. Quayle (1812:43) that the mountain land was over-grazed by sheep because the rights of common grazing were unstinted, all pointed to the end of the shieling.

10.2 PROBLEMS

A. PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE WORK OF PETER GELLING

The first problem to be tackled is clearly that of the coin. Gelling concluded that the siting of it was relatively unimportant. The level at which it was discovered is, however, vital in determining the scale of occupation pre- and post-deposition. Even if the coin was merely incorporated by chance, the conclusion must be that this particular mound was the centre of certain activities post 1135-1141. In stressing the possibility that the mound was not its primary context, Gelling should have recognised that it could have been incorporated at any time post minting date, and not just within the Norse period. Its apparent location at the lower end of the section, rather than in the body of Mound B, and the fact that at this end the turf lay immediately beneath the humus, points to its probable late inclusion, and to the fact that it may well have been intrusive. Further reference to the excavation of this mound and its structures (Fig.45:2) shows that Gelling (1963a:158) recorded that there was an unusually large number of stones in this mound, and that he concluded that at least some of them had been used to consolidate the turf platform on which probable huts were constructed. This proved not to be the case for the majority of mounds excavated by Gelling, and can

consequently be regarded as an unusual feature. In addition, no clear traces of any structures could be detected, although there was plentiful evidence of hearths, and there was a particularly large amount of soil in the upper levels. Gelling (1963a:158) postulated that this indicated that more soil was incorporated in the huts belonging to these levels, but as there appears to be little evidence of turf or ash, this seems unlikely. Clearly, then, this mound was not typical of those excavated by Gelling, and the use of the coin as dating evidence should be treated with extreme caution.

The second problem concerns the form of the excavated structures. In the context of dating, there are two areas which are problematic. The first concerns the practicalities of deciding upon the original shape of a structure, the walls of which were probably of turf or a combination of turf and soil, and of which few traces survive (see Part 2, 6.1). Frequently, Gelling encountered difficulties in following the excavated structures in plan, even in cases where the walls were relatively clear in section. The demolition of structures, as successive huts were placed on top, obscured the preceding huts, often totally. The plans which have been published highlight the problem of determining the original shape. In Mound A (Fig.45:1), the plan of one of the later huts is indicated by stippling. This would appear to be roughly circular in plan. The Period 3 building, indicated by its stone-footings is larger and more oval in shape, whilst Hut 1 is larger again and possibly circular, or oval. In rough outline, the Period 3 structure is similar to the hut at Injebreck, and the hut of Mound C, Block Eary has a conjectured plan more in common with the highest hut on the plan of Mound A. That Hut 1, Mound A, stands apart from the other structures is clear. However, it must be taken into account that as occupation material accumulated, forming mounds, the area available for the erection of a structure would have been diminished, and that its form would have been dictated by the nature of the space. Thus, the repeated construction of huts in identical size and shape to Hut 1, Mound A would not have been possible on one particular spot. An analysis of Gelling's plans, sections and report in Chapter 6, however, did lead to the conclusion that at least three distinct phases could be

recognised. These were: that represented by Hut 1, Mound A (and possibly the Period 3 structure); that represented by the smaller turf, and turf and earth, huts; and that represented by the stone structures inserted into some of the mounds.

The second problem area, and one which has already been touched upon, is in determining whether changes in the form of a structure indicate primarily chronological and cultural changes, rather than functional ones: in this case, whether the change from a roughly circular shape to a possible oblong form represents a change from Celtic to Norse traditions of building. It has been pointed out above that shape would have been dictated by the nature of the available space, but the possibility that a cultural change was responsible is explored more fully in Chapter 13.

The element *eary* is the third problem. There is some confusion in Gelling's papers concerning the origin of this word, and the likely source of its appearance. He concluded (1963a:167,169) that it was more likely that the word entered the Manx language from Gaelic, but this did not suggest to him that the sites may also have had a similar origin.

The conclusion that the sites were not in use in the seventeenth century, based on the negative evidence of their absence from William Blundell's account of the island is unsatisfactory, and suggests that an exploration of other sources may be worthwhile. Also unsatisfactory is the postulation that the sites were largely the product of the Norse period, and that they disappeared when Norse rule came to an end. An examination of the evidence of the settlement of Man during the Norse period may help to shed light upon this.

B. PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH SURVEY WORK BY THE AUTHOR

The examples presented in the earlier section indicated the complex nature and long history of use of many of the sites identified as shielings. In a number of cases, it would appear that the function of the sites changed through time. Although the identification of different phases is significant, together with the drawing of distinctions and comparisons between the sites, it is impossible to date the phases, and, in particular, to identify Norse phases on the

basis largely of surface analysis.

C. PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE RESEARCH OF ELEANOR MEGAW

The research on the *eary* sites of Man is fundamental to the understanding of the practice of shieling, and the process of permanent colonisation of the pasture grounds. The work of Eleanor Megaw produced much interesting material concerning the identification and distribution of sites, their links with other settlements, the appearance of the *earys* as heritable farms, and the dating of the sites. There are, however, a few problems concerning the interpretation of the material, and some points made by Megaw, which need to be emphasised, particularly with reference to conclusions drawn by Peter Gelling.

The first point is one of the latter, and concerns the association between the un-named sites and the *earys*, the latter being used by Gelling as a site indicator. Megaw was at pains to emphasise that the two groups of sites should be kept separate, there being significant topographical differences between the two groups. Furthermore, there was a lack of features at *eary* sites which could be identified as being associated with the shieling practice.

Megaw was in no doubt, however, that many of the *eary* sites were located on former shieling grounds, particularly those in the upper parts of major valleys. She pointed out interesting facts concerning the distribution of sites, such as the concentration of names in Northside parishes and the lack of names in the Southside. The lack of names was explained in terms of the loss of names in recent times. However, this is clearly an area which requires further exploration. The arable land on the east coast of the island, particularly north of Douglas, is limited in extent, and there is a rapid transition from arable to rough grazing land. It might, thus, have been expected that expansion of settlement would have been dependent upon the colonisation of shieling sites.

The process by which this occurred, and the dating of it, can be questioned. Megaw suggested two alternative processes whereby shieling became farm. The first was seen as a wave-like movement up-slope, with old shieling grounds being swallowed up and new summer pastures being

found. The process was halted at the un-named sites for some reason. The second process involved the existence of two shieling zones, consisting of 'spring' shielings near the farmsteads, and distant pastures located far in the hills. In this theory, the 'spring' shielings would have become farmsteads, and the far-away shielings would have remained as pasture grounds. Megaw did not present any evidence to suggest which of the two theories was more likely, and this is clearly an area which requires further exploration. A glance at the distribution map of *eary* sites (Fig.106) shows that there is a clear correlation between *eary* sites, appearing in clusters, and the major river valleys. The theory of a wave-like movement of settlement and shieling up-slope, is, thus, possibly an over-simplification. Also, the sites appear to be located possibly too high up the river valleys to be home-shielings. These could be expected to have fringed the upland area.

As far as the dating of the *eary* sites is concerned, Megaw, considering the distribution of the `element, and its variants, within the west of Britain, was drawn to the Norse period. The lack of *saetr* names on Man was consistent with the conclusion that the *eary* names were overwhelmingly Gaelic in formation. However, the conclusion, on the basis of the lack of names of Norse formation, that some of the sites may have had their origins in the pre-Norse period, conflicts with the theories of Margaret Gelling concerning the dating of place-names on Man (see Chapter 3). Her research has found few place-names which can be dated to the pre-Norse period, and she has argued for a Gaelic resurgence in the post-Norse period. Thus, the lack of Norse forms of *eary* names could be indicative of post-Norse formation. The dated names in the Limites belong to the end of the Norse period, and the remaining names only appear in the sixteenth century. There is, thus, no place-name evidence to suggest that the process of settling shielings permanently, began before c.1280. The possibility, however, that *eary* was used instead of Norse *saetr* in the Norse period, to describe both shieling, and, potentially, the colonised shieling, does point to considerable Gaelic survival, and is of crucial importance in the debate concerning the destruction or

survival of a Gaelic population at this time. Shieling, as described in Part 1, would have been a fundamental part of the agricultural system of an island with limited areas suitable for cultivation, and large areas which could be utilised for pasture. Hence, dating of the 'shieling to farm' process is an area which has to be explored further, as does the question of the absence of the Norse names in *sáetr*.

The final problem area is the dating of the end of the shieling practice in Man. The persistence of the word *eree* into the eighteenth century (1770s), is not proof, in itself, that the practice of shieling also survived until this time. The traditional association with cattle and uplands is clear, but there is no indication, in the translation of the word, that residence at the pastures was involved. Unless this was the case, the practice cannot be regarded as shieling. Doubt about the validity of using the word as an indicator, is confirmed by the negative evidence of the contemporary descriptions of the island's agriculture in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and, in particular, by the lack of references in the reviews of agriculture of 1794 and 1812 (see Chapter 4).

10.3 METHODOLOGY

(a) The approach

Both Gelling and Megaw came to the conclusion that the un-named sites were to be dated to the Norse period, and that the sites indicated by the *eary* place-names were shieling sites of an earlier date than the un-named ones, which had been permanently settled. An alternative to the latter was suggested by Megaw, however, in which, rather than being earlier in date, the *eary* sites may have been the 'home', or 'spring', shielings.

The question of the Norse dating of Gelling's sites, and the possible Norse origin of the shieling practice on Man, could clearly not be explored to any great depth through the field-survey of sites identified by Gelling and by the author (Part 2), although it did prove possible to produce individual site chronologies in some cases. A study of the practice was impossible through documentary sources, the practice being unknown historically in Man, unlike in Wales and parts of England. It was believed, however, that progress could be made in

two areas. The first would be a new piece of research using the place-names as the basis of a geographical and archaeological survey of sites, to establish whether, for example, all the *eary* sites were likely to have been shielings, and whether it was possible that some could have been 'spring shielings' as suggested by Megaw. The absence of names in Norse *-sáetr* and the lack of names containing the Gaelic element, but betraying Norse coinage, hence in *-ary*, were also areas which were worth exploring, and by placing Man in a wider context, it was hoped that geographical and archaeological examination of sites containing these elements, may help to solve some of the problems surrounding the Manx evidence. The second approach was to examine the available evidence on sites with supposedly similar functions in areas of strong Norse influence, and those where the Celtic traditions are likely to have survived through the Norse period. For the former, Norway and the North Atlantic colonies were chosen, recent survey and excavation producing a very significant body of evidence with which to compare the Manx material, and for the latter, Wales and Ireland were selected, both having numerous remains, and in the case of Wales there being important information available concerning the relationship between shieling and farm.

(b) The choice of study area

For the consideration of the onomastic evidence, as in Part 2, it was believed that the placing of Man in a wider context, may help to solve some of the problems associated with the practice of shieling, and, in particular, the form it took during the Norse period. The Kingdom of Man and the Isles was chosen because of the historical connections between the islands, and for archaeological and ethnographic reasons. The choice, however, was also determined by the evidence of the place-names, Norse and Gaelic. Gaelic *eary* occurs frequently on Man, but Norse *sáetr*, as indicated by Megaw, is absent from the island. This absence would appear strange, given the potentially large Norse population on Man (see Part 1, Chapter 2), the possible dating of sites, such as Block Eary, to the Norse period, and the likelihood that shieling sites were being settled permanently by the end of the thirteenth century. The lack of *sáetr* names is clearly

of considerable significance, and it was believed that the presence of names containing this element in the Isles may help to throw light on the situation in Man. The work of Nicolaisen (1969b;1975b;1976a;1976b;1980a;1982;1986), and more recently Fraser (1969;1973;1974;1978a;1978b;1984;1988), in the identification and mapping of Norse names in the Hebrides, favoured this area for further research.

The choice of specific islands was also dictated, to some extent, by the place-name evidence. Islands with large concentrations of *sáetr* names were particularly sought after. An examination of the distribution map of names in *-sáetr* by Eleanor Megaw (Fig.4), showed concentrations in north Skye and in Lewis. This was confirmed by reference to the *setr/sáetr* distribution map by Nicolaisen (e.g.1969; see Fig.32) However, islands were also sought which had names containing the Gaelic element, but betraying Norse coinage, thus where *-ary* appears as a suffix . On Eleanor Megaw's map, concentrations were to be found in north Skye, Harris and the Uists. Thus, Skye and the Outer Hebridean islands possessed place-names containing the Gaelic element *áirigh*, used in the formation of place-names in the post-Norse period, the Norse element *sáetr*, and names in *-ary* demonstrating Norse coinage. Other islands in the Hebrides had examples of all three naming elements, such as Tiree and Islay, but not in sufficient numbers to provide a useful data-base. Eleanor Megaw compared the Manx *eary* sites with the *airy* sites of Galloway, and pointed to the fact that there were important similarities between the two areas. Galloway was, however, rejected for the purposes of this work, because of the apparent total lack of names in either *sáetr* or *-ary*.

The placing of Man in this wider context, meant that it was possible to explore the research and conclusions of Gillian Fellows Jensen, on the Gaelic and Norse elements apparently used to describe the shieling practice in the Norse period, in areas which were under Norse influence (see Chapter 11 for a review of this work). She had come to the conclusion that the different elements denoted different types of shielings, and postulated that perhaps the Gaelic word was used for the 'home' shieling, as Megaw did for the *eary* names, and that

the Norse word was used for the 'far-away', or 'distant', shieling. It was believed that the type of site survey that was envisaged would make it possible to test this, and other theories.

(c) Creating the database

Survey Strategies

Two areas, where it was believed that survey work could potentially provide useful information, were: (a) the examination of sites with place-names in *eary-*, for, either the remains of possible shielings, or, for indications that the sites may have been used as summer pastures, and (b) the examination of sites with names in *eary-/áirigh-*, *-sáetr*, and *-ary* to see if real differences could be distinguished between sites bearing these names. As in Part 2, two separate survey strategies had to be developed, for the Manx sites, and for those of Skye and the Outer Hebrides. In the case of Man, the small size of the island, the previous identification of sites by Eleanor Megaw, and the availability of information concerning the earlier forms of the names, from J.J. Kneen's survey of the place-names of the island (1925-29), meant that the vast majority of sites could be visited and features recorded, and that a considerable amount of information could be gathered regarding the names themselves. In the Isles, the majority of *sáetr* sites were visited, a large number with names in *áergi*, and a selection of sites with names in *-áirigh*. Details concerning the earlier forms of the names could not be given, partly because of the lack of documentary sources in the region, but due largely to the lack of work which has been carried out on the place-names. The accumulation of such data by an archaeologist was not considered to be a feasible option.

Site survey

It was important to establish, in the case of both Man and the Isles, whether there was any physical evidence of shieling at the sites indicated by place-names. Thus, sites were to be visited and field-walked for archaeological remains. It was important also, however, to examine the geography of the areas in which the sites were located, and to examine the relationships between these sites and others in the vicinity, particularly those with names containing Norse

elements and those which were known shieling sites. Aspects such as: location; altitude; present use; geology/soil; proximity to water etc. were to be examined. The possible use of the sites as shielings would point to their location in those areas not of primary arable importance, and beyond areas of outfield pasture. They may also have been situated at greater heights than other settlements, although it is important to remember that horizontal, rather than vertical movements to the shielings, were important in islands such as Lewis. Present use of the sites would be an indication of their favourability, for example distinctions could be drawn between those sites in the Hebrides, for example, which were large permanent settlements, and those which were topographical features, such as hills and rivers. An examination of the geology and soils could produce interesting distribution patterns for the sites. The latter approach was facilitated in the Isles, by the availability of detailed soil and land capability maps, produced by the Macaulay Institute for Soil Research (Bibby *et al* 1982; Hudson *et al* 1982).

The basic aim, however, besides the identification of possible shieling remains at the sites, was to be able to compare and contrast sites with names containing a particular element. In this way, an attempt culd be made to determine whether there were features associated with the different elements, which led to the use of a specific element for a particular type of site. For example, the *eary/áirigh/ary* names could have referred to sites which were 'spring' or 'home' shielings, and the *sáetr* names to far-away shielings. Alternatively, the reverse could have been true, or the distinctions between the sites could have been based on entirely different characteristics.

(d) Data processing

As in Part 2 (Chapter 6), of the available approaches, it was the use of the computer package dBaseII which appeared to offer greatest flexibility in the analysis of the data. The 'fields' created for the analysis of the material varied slightly for the two study areas to allow for variations in the nature of the data.

The following 'fields' were used in the analysis of the Manx

material:

(a) Site

(b) Catalogue Number

(c) Grid Reference

(d) Parish

(e) Land (treen, quarterland, intack etc.)

(f) Geology

(g) Height

(h) Slope

(i) Water

(j) Date (first record of the name)

(k) Shieling (to be entered)

The 'fields' created for the Hebridean material were:

(a) Site

(b) Type (name in *-sáetr, -gárðr,* -ary, áirigh-)

(c) Catalogue Number

(d) Grid Reference

(e) Island

(f) Land (croft, common, etc.)

(g) Soil

(h) Height

(i) Slope

(j) Water

(k) Shieling

(l) Land Capability

It was believed that the use of these fields would provide information concerning the types of site indicated by the place-names, allowing conclusions to be drawn about the sites in specific groups, such as the names in *-saetr,* and to facilitate comparisons between the different groups. It was hoped that such an approach would lead to the identification of specific features, which would help to explain the varying patterns of name use in the individual islands, during the Norse period.

10.4 CONCLUSIONS

The main problems identified concerning the unnamed sites were: the

use of the coin and the gaming board for dating Block Eary and other similar sites; the use of the form of the structures for dating, and as cultural indicators, and the use of the element *ary* as a shieling ground indicator. Clearly the relationship between the *ary* sites and the unnamed sites needed to be explored, as did the process by which the former were permanently settled. Particularly significant, however, was the distribution of the Gaelic and Norse words for shieling, *ary* and *sáetr*, and the lack of the latter from Man. This was an area which had to be examined in detail in the light of Peter Gelling's dating of the sites to the Norse period.

In approaching the question of dating, it was believed that an archaeological and geographical study of the sites with names containing Norse and Gaelic elements translated as 'shieling' may throw new light on this complex area, possibly indicating different types of site. In addition, information could be obtained through site survey, and through an examination of comparative material from both Norse and Insular contexts.

CHAPTER 11: SHIELING AND PLACE-NAME RESEARCH IN THE ISLES

INTRODUCTION

Little research has been carried out on shielings and place-names in the Isles, either generally or specifically. 'Generally or specifically' can be applied in two senses, there being a lack of research on shielings and place-names in both individual islands and in the Isles as a group, and there is a lack of studies on individual types of shieling place-names, and on shieling names generally. Individual names can be found in place-name volumes, such as those of Forbes (1923), W. Mackenzie (1931) and W.C. Mackenzie (1932), in papers such as that of Macbain (1894), and in general works, for example, that of Beveridge (1911) on North Uist. However, many of these works are now of considerable antiquity themselves, and cannot be relied upon. More information concerning shielings and place-names is to be derived from studies of the Norse names, and in particular settlement names, of the Isles, such as those of Nicolaisen (1969b; 1975b;1976a;1976b;1980a;1982;1986), Small (1976), and Oftedal (1962). The most useful publications, however, and the only ones which do tackle directly the question of shielings and place-names, are those of Gillian Fellows Jensen (1978a;1980; and sections in 1983 and 1984). The question is again approached from a Norse point of view, and although research and discussion are not confined to the Isles, Fellows Jensen, from a very broad survey, has been able to produce a number of important theories which relate directly to the shielings of the Isles, and to the Isle of Man. In this chapter, the research of Gillian Fellows Jensen, together with information which can be derived from other studies, is presented.

11.1 SHIELINGS AND PLACE-NAMES IN THE STUDY AREA

The Norse place-name element *-sáetr* (appearing in place-names in the Isles as *-shader*), has received more attention than the other elements translated as shieling. Interest in the distribution of the word in the Isles began with the work of Nicolaisen (1969; see also 1976b:Ch.6). Following the approach of Marwick for the Orkney farm names (1952), Nicolaisen selected three key Norse settlement name

elements: *-staðr*, *-bólstaðr* and *-setr*, and examined the distribution of each element (see also Chapter 2). In the case of names in *setr*, Nicolaisen encountered the problem of distinguishing between names containing Old Norse *setr*, generally meaning 'dwelling', and *sáetr*, translated as 'shieling', because of the spelling of the modern anglicised place-names. There was no way of distinguishing between them on purely phonological grounds. The two words are, however, cognate, and Nicolaisen pointed to the fact that both originally referred to pastoral and, possibly also both to temporary, dwellings and herding activities. Study of the use of the names in Norway, has suggested that both denoted shielings or outfields, survey indicating that farms with names in *-setr* were to be found on the outskirts of cultivated areas and gave the impression of being fairly young secondary settlements (Norsk Stadnamnleksikon). It seemed likely that these had developed from shielings, and that in some parts of Norway development may have occurred so often, that the element became associated with a particular type of farm, thus rendering it unsuitable in the formation of shieling names. The element *-sáetr* may then have taken over the function of *-setr*.

Nicolaisen (1976b:91) suggested that other factors could be used to differentiate between the words. The first was an examination of the element with which *setr/sáetr* was compounded, and the second an examination of the geographical position and the present status of the name in question. Thus, if the element was compounded with the name of an animal, such as a cow, sheep, or horse, and the name applied to a site which was 'far from the beaten track', the element used in the name was likely to be 'sáetr'. If, however, there was no reference in the name to domestic animals, and if the name belonged to a prosperous farm or village on alluvial land, and in a favourable position, then '*setr* was almost certainly the word involved'. A study of the names using these criteria has never been published.

Nicolaisen examined the distribution of the naming elements *-staðr*, *-bólstaðr*, and *-setr/-sáetr* from a chronological point of view, thus seeing the names as reflecting the expansion of Norse settlement. In this scheme, the *-setr/-sáetr* names came between *-staðr* and *-bólstaðr*,

and were dated to the second half of the ninth century.

Small (1976:33-35) also considered the names in *-setr/-sáetr* from the point of view of settlement history and chronology. He believed that in Skye, it was usually relatively easy for the geographer to distinguish between names in *-setr* and *-sáetr*, on the basis of the topography. A number of the names appeared to lie well outside the defined areas of good land, suggesting that they were derived from *-sáetr*, rather than *-setr*. The concentration of names in the Trotternish peninsula, suggested an extension of the original Norse settlement (indicated by names in *-staðr*) southwards, and Small postulated that the restriction of names to this northern part of Skye indicated that native Celtic agricultural practices still continued to be used over a large area of Skye.

Fellows Jensen's interest in the Gaelic and Norse terminology for the shieling, stemmed from an article by Christian Matras (1956), in which he pointed to the fact that 'the form erg, which English toponymists use for a so-called Norse loan-word in English, does not occur in any Old Scandinavian sources' (Fellows Jensen 1980:67). The article appeared too late for the information to be included in the volume English Place-Name Elements by Smith (1956), and, thus, the questions of the origin and the significance of the word were not brought to light until 1978, when Fellows Jensen's first paper on the subject was published.

Fellows Jensen was primarily interested in the English place-names containing the Old Norse loan-word *áergi* (1978a). These were to be found in areas known to have been settled by Scandinavians, and the majority of the specifics were Norse. A fairly comprehensive list of these names can be found in Ekwall (1918). However, an examination of the distribution of the element showed that it was not confined to England (Fig.4), and its appearance in areas settled by the Norse, suggested that they could have contributed considerably to the spread of the word as a place-name generic. In fact, Fellows Jensen (1980:70) went as far as to suggest that it was the Scandinavian settlers who contributed most to the establishment of the word as a fairly common place-names generic in northern Britain. It seemed likely that the

Vikings found the generic in use in the islands, that they 'adopted and adapted its form and then used it when coining names in the other areas in which they settled'. At the end of the Norse period, the element continued to be used, but in its original Gaelic form. The possibility, however, that some of the names were pre-Norse Gaelic survivals, could not be ruled out.

The adoption of the Gaelic word by the Norse settlers raised interesting questions, concerning its apparent use in some areas in preference to the existing Norse word *sáetr* (e.g. Man), and its use in other areas alongside *sáetr* and other Norse terms translated as 'shieling'(e.g. northern England). It was suggested that a possible reason for the adoption of the element, was that the Scandinavians were not familiar with the seter, (translated as shieling) practice in their homelands before the Viking period (Fellows Jensen 1980:71). Fellows Jensen rejected this, believing that it was unlikely that the seter was completely unknown at the beginning of the Viking period, and recent research in Norway confirms this conclusion (see Chapter 13). Instead, she suggested that there must have been something characteristic about the *áergi* in the British Isles, which led to its adoption. Eric Cregeen (reported in E. Megaw 1978:339) postulated that the adoption was related to the fact that women were responsible for the shieling work, and that, in the early stages of the Norse settlement, these would have been Gaelic-speaking women. Hence, the continuation of the Gaelic term for the shieling. Fellows Jensen, however, questioned this theory, on the grounds that although it might explain the adoption of the word, it did not explain the use of it in non-Gaelic-speaking areas, alongside Norse words apparently also used to denote shieling.

Fellows Jensen (1980:71), therefore, suggested that there must have been something characteristic about the location or the function of the *áergi*, which led to its adoption and use. An examination of the sites on Man, showed that they were generally lower, less remote and more fertile than the shieling sites identified by Peter Gelling. She also used evidence from the island of Bernera, Lewis. Here, it appeared that Gaelic *áirigh* was used for the 'half-way house' shielings, where the cattle were kept on their return from the summer pastures in the lig

hills, before they were sent to the village pastures for the winter. Fellows Jensen noted that there were numerous names on the mainland in *-sáetr*, but that there were only three on the island of Bernera (Macaulay 1972:335), and none on the other small islands in Loch Roag. On the basis of this information, she suggested that the Norse adopted the Gaelic word, as meaning the 'home' shieling (heimseter in Norway), used for short periods during the spring and the autumn, before and after the visit to the mountain or summer shieling, the *sáetr* (seter in Norway). The 'home' shielings were those which were most likely to have been turned into arable farms as pressure on land increased. This accounted for the number of sites with names in *-áergi* in England and Man which had developed into relatively prosperous settlement sites.

However, Fellows Jensen (1980:68; 1984:163) noted that the evidence from the Faroe Islands did not support this interpretation. Within the islands there are several place-names which could be best described as 'deriving from a word **áergi* n., with an irregular but not unprecedented nominative plural **áergir* (instead of *áergi*) and regular genitive singular and plural **áergis*, **áergja* and dative plural **áergjum*' (see also Matras 1956), but these tend to be some distance from the oldest farms (Dahl 1970a:71), suggesting that here the word did not appear to be used for the 'home shieling'. Further north, in Iceland, the Gaelic word is absent, and the shielings were referred to by the Norse word *sel* rather than *sáetr*.

11.2 RELEVANT RESEARCH OUTSIDE THE STUDY AREA

Detailed examination of the problems concerning the history and use of the Gaelic and Norse words has only been carried out in Northern England (Higham 1978b; 1978c; Whyte 1985). In Lancashire, Higham (1978c:8-9) found that of the 29 identified 'ergs', only 5 were in anything like 'true shieling locations, over 600' [183m] above sea-level'. 24 were below 107m (350'), and the majority of these were below 61m (200'). Examination of the location of 'ergs' in Cumberland, Westmorland and the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, demonstrated a similar patterning. Besides being low-lying, the sites also often showed a tendency to be located on the best soils in their areas, on pockets of light glacial till, on alluvium or on limestone, each of

which would have been capable of supporting permanent settlements and arable cultivation. This conclusion was confirmed by the status of the sites in the post-Conquest period: 12 of the 29 Lancashire 'ergs' became townships; 3 of the 15 in the West Riding; 5 of the 15 in Cumberland, and 2 of the 7 in the North Riding. Moreover, 4 of the Lancashire, 2 of the North Riding, 1 of the West Riding, and 1 of the Cumberland 'ergs' became Domesday vills. Higham emphasised that this was not the status expected to be achieved by hill-pastures and shielings.

Higham (1978c:10) concluded, however, that although the element did not appear to indicate hill-pastures or shielings, it did indicate that there was something characteristic about the settlements to which it was given. Examination of the Lancashire examples suggested that the key to this characteristic might lie in the mediaeval tenurial obligations which operated there. Large parts of the area were designated 'forest' or 'chase' in the post-Conquest period, and rather than indicating that this land was set aside for hunting, the evidence indicated that they were used for stock-rearing enterprises by the lords. The De Lacy family in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, for example, supplied draught oxen for demesne farms, meat and hides, and produced dairy products. Such cattle-rearing enterprises were known as vaccaries, and research has indicated that these could be the survivals of an older tradition, namely the Celtic system of stock-leasing - *Daer-rath*. In this system, the chieftain gave cattle, mainly draught animals, to his tenants in 'direct proportion to the honour price of the chief'.

Higham (1978c:11-12) has argued that the appearance of the term 'vaccary' in documents supports the conclusion that vaccaries were something special, as opposed to a means of exploiting upland or unsuitable areas, and that the Irish word *áirge* was used specifically for settlements in northern England which were operating under daer-stock tenancy. Correlations between forest areas, where such enterprises have been known to have operated in the mediaeval period, and 'erg' settlements, have been found not only in Lancashire and Bowland, but also in a number of other areas. As far as the adoption of

the Irish word and its Norse form are concerned, Higham (1978c:13) considered three possibilities: that Norse/Irish immigrants could have brought the system with them from Ireland; that the Norse/Irish immigrants took over as the minor aristocracy and used the word for units already operating under daer-stock tenancy; that the element 'erg' was a pre-Norse relic, surviving in northern England because of the conservative nature of the area. To support the latter argument, Higham pointed to the presence of a single example of 'erg' in Orkney, identified by Marwick as a pre-Norse relic (Marwick 1970:80). Higham (1978c:13-14) believed that the most likely explanation was the second, and that this would fit well with the number of Old Norse and Irish personal names which are associated with the 'ergs'. However, this is not true of all of the 'ergs', and the significance of the other words with which the element is compounded is not clear.

Whyte's study (1985) of shielings and the upland pastoral economy of the Lake District in the mediaeval period and modern times, involved an examination of the distribution patterns of Old Norse shieling names (*sáetr* and *skáli*), the Old Norse loan-word (*áirge*), and the Middle English versions (*skáling* and *schele*). The patterning confirmed Pearsall's earlier observations (1961:83-7) that the Old Norse loan-word had a lowland distribution, whilst the *sáetr* names had a more marked inland distribution within the mountain core. Pearsall (1961:84) had noted that the 'ergs' tended to be on marginal sites, and argued that they were residual settlements established in a largely settled arable land and they may have been established to exploit the summer pastures. The difference in the distribution suggested that Fellows Jensen's theory of the Gaelic word for the 'home shieling' and the Norse for the 'far' or 'mountain shieling' was clearly applicable in this area. Whyte found that the main difference in the location of names in *sáetr* and *skáli* occurred within the higher fells, with *sáetr* being dominant at lower levels within the main dales, and *skáli* being more frequent at a higher altitude, in small tributary valleys or on the slopes of the fells.

An examination of the land capability of areas containing shieling names indicated that there were very few on or near the limited areas

of highest quality land (Grade 2). Many of the former lowland shielings were found on the Grade 3 land, whilst moving towards the upland there was a tendency for them to be located on the Grade 3-4 boundary, and further into the mountains, on the Grade 4-5 boundary. Distributions suggested that sites were chosen not only for access to hill and mountain pastures, but also for proximity to the more fertile bottom land which may have provided hay for winter fodder and grass for spring and autumn. These sites were those which were likely to have been settled and cultivated at times of population pressure. Whyte also noted an association between the Norse elements and stream words - 'beck' and 'gill', and suggested that the association might be explained in terms of attempts to gather winter fodder from scattered patches of richer grass in streamside locations or flushes. Another factor in the valley location could have been the availability of leaves from the valley-side woodlands for fodder. Reference to Norway suggested to Whyte that the preferred trees may have included birch and alder, and there is considerable evidence to suggest that sizeable areas of woodland survived in the Lakes into the later Middle Ages. This is frequently indicated by the importance of swine in the economy, and Whyte has noted that this is the most common animal name compounded with *sáetr* and *skáli*, suggesting that the names may have been applied to sites associated with different types of pastoral activities.

Turning to the identification of archaeological remains of shielings, Whyte noted that four of the nine sites recorded by the Royal Commission are closely associated with names in *skáli* and one with a name in *sáetr*. The location and altitude of these sites within the central fells suggested that if they were shielings they were relatively late in date. Whyte has, however, questioned whether the remains are those of shielings, many of the sites having single and often substantial rectangular structures, which could possibly be interpreted as squatter homesteads of the sixteenth century.

As far as dating is concerned, Pearsall (1961:86-7) suggested that there was an early Norse occupation of High Furness and upland Westmorland, on the basis of the occurrence of names in *sáetr* compounded with personal names, and also a later phase indicated by

Goidelic Scandinavian names in lowland locations marginal to existing settlements. Whyte argued that this also appeared to be likely for the *skali* names, and that together they indicated a fairly early penetration of the main dales of the Lake District. An examination of the overall distribution patterns, suggested a 'broad evolutionary sequence' to Whyte in which shielings were pushed further into the mountains as the margins of permanent settlement moved out. From documentary sources it appeared that many of former shielings were permanently settled by the eleventh or early twelfth centuries. The shieling tradition still survived in the Kendal area in the thirteenth century, and in the more remote interior valleys of the eastern fells there were shielings in the late fourteenth century. The historical evidence suggested, however, that by this time, the use of shielings had become confined to the central mountain core, and that only vestiges of the practice continued into the sixteenth century.

Moving much further north, the *setr/sáetr* names have been examined by L. Macgregor (1986a;1986b) as part of a general study of the Norse settlement of Faroe and Shetland, and have received attention from both Marwick (1952) and W. Thomson (1987a:24-43) in Orkney. Macgregor (1986b:99) concluded, in the context of the absence of the three habitative elements - *staðir*, *bólstaðr* and *sáetr* from Faroe, that the three types of settlement which these elements represented are absent from this group of islands. As far as the status of the farms associated with these elements is concerned, the evidence from both Shetland and Orkney (Macgregor 1986a; 1986b; Marwick 1952; W. Thomson 1987a:24-43) points to the location of *staðir* farms on land which is good, but lacking a number of the advantages of the farms with topographical names. In the case of the *bólstaðr* farms of Shetland, Macgregor (1986b:96) has suggested that they may have begun as cultivated fields, either on a primary farm or at a distance from it, and that the naming element may have indicated 'farm established on a cultivated field'. Examination of the form of the documented *setter* names of Shetland, indicated that all but one had their origins in *sáetr*, and the location of the farms was inland, on hill-grazing land beyond the infield dyke (Macgregor 1986b:97-98). Examination of the

specifics in the names indicated that a large number were compounded with animal names, also suggesting that the element was applied to grazing areas or enclosures (Macgregor 1986:98). In Orkney, Thomson (1987a:31) has noted that over half of the *setter* names are compounded with elements suggesting a marginal location or pastoral land-use. Macgregor concluded for Shetland that the *setters* had developed either from shielings or from animal enclosures by particularly good pasture land. It was noted that many of the *setter* farms were located close to their nearest farms within the infield dyke, a pattern which is also to be found in Orkney (Marwick 1931:27). This proximity suggested to Marwick that the sites could not have been those of shielings, thus could not have involved the presence, over-night, of shieling personnel. However, the location of shieling sites in parts of Mainland Scotland within a mile of the parent settlements (see e.g. Miller 1967a) appeared to confirm Macgregor's conclusions (1986b:98). It is interesting to note that in Shetland, *setter* passed into dialect not as a shieling but as an improved pasture (Macgregor 1986b:98).

11.3 GÁRÐR

The above has been confined to a consideration of three elements - Norse *sáetr* and *skáli*, and the Norse loanword *áergi*. There is, however, another Norse element which is frequently associated with shielings in the Outer Hebrides. It survives as Gaelic *géarraidh* and is from the Old Norse *gárðr* 'enclosure' (Fraser 1984:36-7). Dwelly (1967) has given one of the meanings of the Gaelic word as 'Place where the shielings are built', and Thomas (1860a:130), Mitchell (1880:64) and Curwen (1938:273) noted bothies at sites with names incorporating this element. Thomas recorded that they were grassy spots to which the women brought the cattle, and that in Norse they were known as *setters*. Today the word is used for new or recent grazing enclosures, and is a general term which describes the area between the arable and the common land.

11.4 CONCLUSIONS

Recent research on the use of the Gaelic and Norse words translated as 'shieling' has suggested that the former was adopted by Norse speakers because it indicated a specific function or characteristic. Fellows Jensen suggested that it could have been used to denote the

'home shieling', whilst the Norse word was used of the 'far' or 'mountain shieling'. Although it appeared that the Manx and Hebridean evidence supported this conclusion, the evidence from Northern England, Orkney, Shetland and Faroe indicated that the use of the word may have varied from one area to another. Detailed research on this question in Northern England, has indicated that although the word *sáetr* appears to have denoted a 'mountain' or 'hill shieling', the loan-word *erg* does not appear to represent a shieling or hill pasture. It has been argued by Higham, however, that there was something characteristic about the settlements which had names incorporating the word, namely that they were vaccaries. In Orkney and Shetland the evidence points to the location of the *sáetr* farms in situations which suggest a 'home' rather than 'far-away shieling' interpretation. For Faroe, it was suggested that the type of settlement normally assoiated with the word *sáetr* was absent, and that the Gaelic term was used to denote the shieling.

CHAPTER 12: THE ONOMASTIC EVIDENCE

INTRODUCTION

The use of the onomastic evidence in the dating of the shieling practice in Man, and the conclusions which have been drawn concerning the practice in the Isles for the same period, have been outlined in the earlier chapters. The key place-name elements are Gaelic *eary* for Man, and Norse *sáetr* and the loan-word *ary* for the Isles. Other elements, however, are also of significance in this study, namely Norse *gárðr*, 'enclosure', and Gaelic *áirigh*, 'shieling', both found in the Isles. In studying the problem, it was believed that the first approach must be to examine the sites indicated as those of possible shielings by the place-names. This examination was to involve a study of location factors similar to those used in Part 2, hence, altitude, soil and vegetation patterns, shelter and aspect and proximity to water. Also, naturally, each site was scoured for the possible remains of shielings, of the types considered in Part 2, and the present use and status of the sites was noted. It was hoped that such an examination may point to any possible differences between the naming elements, as suggested by Fellows Jensen. This analysis forms the basis of the first part of this chapter. The second part looks in more detail at the names and their meanings, bearing in mind, particularly, the suggestion by Nicolaisen that the compounding of certain types of word with the elements may indicate their function. In the case of the Manx evidence, the appearance of a number of the names in pre-seventeenth century sources, permits of an interesting analysis of forms, and the use of the sites in question. The third part of the chapter is a discussion based on the evidence of the analysis in the earlier sections, and examines the conclusions drawn in a much wider context. Sites referred to in the text are to be found in Catalogues 3 and 4.

In the text, the sites are referred to by their place-names, and their catalogue number, for example, Thie Eary [E1], E representing *eary* for Man, and Elishader [N1], N representing *Names* for Skye and the Outer Hebrides. This was chosen as a general term for the Hebridean site catalogue, because of the variety of elements represented in the

data.

12.1 SITE MORPHOLOGY

It was suggested by Nicolaisen (1976b:91), in relation to the problem in distinguishing between the elements *setr* and *sáetr* in place-names, that an examination of the geographical position of the sites may indicate the element used. Hence, he suggested that if the sites were 'far from the beaten track', the element used in the name was likely to have been *sáetr*. If, on the other hand, the name was associated with a prosperous farm or village on alluvial land, and in a favourable position, then the element involved would have been *setr*. It was believed that this approach may help to identify possible shieling sites, not only in the context of Norse *setr/sáetr*, but also in the context of the other naming elements.

A total of 54 sites were catalogued on Man. Only 41 of these were examined, however, because of the problems of identifying the sites of the other 13. In the Isles, 50 sites were catalogued and examined, and of these, 27 contained the element *setr/sáetr*, 10 *ary*, 9 *gárðr*, and 4 *áirigh*. The number of names in *-setr/-sáetr* and in *-ary*, examined in each of the islands, reflects the general distribution of names containing these elements. Hence, the concentrations of names containing the former in Skye and Lewis, and the paucity of such names in the Uists and Barra. The situation is reversed for names in *-ary*. Site distributions can be found on Figures 108-111.

(a) Present Site Form

This section examines the present status of the sites, and their general location.

On Man, it was found that: 12 of the names belong to working farms and 5 to land units which contain working farms (e.g. Aryssynnok [E4]); 3 are the sites of a small settlement or group of houses (Tremsare [E16], Eairy [E9]), and Eary Phoyllwooar and Thie Eary [E22]); 1 is a house site (Eary Cushlin [E20]; 1 is a field name (Thie Eary [E1]); 2 are topographical names (Gredary Rivolett (E18) and Cronk Eairy [E19]); 12 are the sites of ruined farmhouses, or tholtans (e.g. Eairy ny Suie [E7]), and 5 are the names of holdings which no longer exist and are represented now by areas of grazing land (e.g. Eary Gowin [E38]). As

far as land units are concerned (see Chapter 4 and Appendix 4), 2 sites lie on what was once abbeyland, 7 were treens, 22 were quarterlands, and 10 intacks. Clearly a distinction can be drawn between those which became treens and those which are small parcels of intack, for example. As in the case of the *ergs* of Northern England, it is obvious that some of the sites gained considerable status.

The situation in Skye and the Outer Hebrides is rather different, in part reflecting the settlement history of the islands. Examining first the *setr/sáetr* names, 19 of these are associated with settlements. These vary in size from the sprawling Shader [N14] in Lewis, to the tiny, rather remote settlement of Geshader [N23], also in Lewis. Of the remaining 8 names: 4 are topographical (e.g. Ben Culeshader [N9]); three are located on open moorland, but would appear to be associated with small groups of structures (e.g. Caiashader [N20]), and one is associated with a dun (Dun Gerashader [N5]), which lies on croft land. Of the names in *-ary*: 2 are associated with groups of one or two crofts (Unasary [N42] and Horisary [N33]); 2 are the names of larger settlements, which, despite being larger than those above, are much smaller than many of those with names in *-setr/-sáetr* (Earsary [N44] and Skallary [N45]), and 6 are topographical names (e.g. Ben Vanisary [N34]). Turning to the names in *-gárðr* and *áirigh-*, all of those examined, belonging to the former group, are associated with settlements, whilst in the case of the latter group: 1 is the name of a croft (Arinambane [N50]); 2 are names on the outskirts of settlements and appear to be associated with them (Áirigh Linngail [N48] and Áirigh an Tuim [N47]), and 1 is the name given to an abandoned settlement, only surface remains of which survive. These few *áirigh-* names were selected for inclusion within the catalogue on the basis of the fact that they are, or appear to be, associated with permanent settlement. Names in *áirigh-* are to be found all over the islands, particularly in Lewis, but in the large majority of cases, these are associated with shieling remains. Those catalogued are, thus, important exceptions, and are of considerable significance in the question of the choice in use of the Norse and Gaelic terms.

As far as the topographical names are concerned, an interesting

distinction can be drawn between Man and the islands, the former having only 1 possible example, the Gredary Rivolett (E18), whilst in the latter, there are 2 names in *-setr/-sáetr* which are hill names, 1 the name of a promontory, and 1 a loch, and there are 5 names in *-ary* which are hill names, and 1 which is that of a loch. The lack of hill names on Man appears particularly interesting in this light.

None of the sites examined in Man appear to have any shieling remains. In Skye and the Outer Isles, 6 sites produced definite evidence of shielings, and 1 produced possible evidence. Of these, 4 have names in *-setr/-sáetr*, and 3 in *-ary*.

(b) General Distribution (Figs.108-111)

The main area of interest, in this section, is whether the sites have a coastal or inland distribution. Man and the Isles, in particular Lewis, provide an interesting contrast, the majority of *eary* sites on Man being found in upland, inland locations, whilst the majority of the *setr/sáetr* names in Skye, Lewis and Harris, have a very marked coastal distribution. Only two sites on Man can be described as coastal, Eary Cushlin [E20] and Eary Phoyllwooar and Thie Eary [E22], although it should be noted that the treen of Tremsare [E16] is a coastal one. In the Isles, however, distinctions can be drawn between the islands as far as the *setr/sáetr* names are concerned. Many of the sites in Skye lie in valley locations, and in the case of Loch Earshader [N27], North Uist, the loch is located some distance inland. The distribution of the names in *-ary* is rather different, in that, although the settlements with names in this element have a coastal location, a larger number of the names are associated with topographical features, namely hills, and have an inland distribution. The names in *-gárðr* and *áirigh-* have a coastal distribution.

(c) Height (see Figs.112 and 113)

This is one of the most significant location factors. It has been suggested by Fellows Jensen (see Chapter 4) that the difference in altitude between the *eary* sites of Man and those sites identified by Peter Gelling, suggested that the former may represent the 'home' shielings used in spring and autumn, and that the latter were the distant summer shielings. An examination of the height distributions,

however, points to the fact that this interpretation is incorrect, and that there are not two distinct levels of shielings. The sites are located at heights from 30m to 259m, and within this bracket, although there are concentrations at certain heights, there are no significant gaps in the data. The greatest concentration occurs around a height of 152m (500'), which is below all but one of the possible shieling sites (Mull Hill [M61] - 146m), but significant concentrations occur also around 183m (600'), 213m (700') and 244m (800'). These figures compare favourably with those for the possible shieling sites of the twelve combined parishes of Man examined in Chapter 9. Concentrations were found around 183m, and between 213m and 250m, and in the parishes of Marown, Maughold and Patrick, there are concentrations around 183m, 244m, and 213m respectively. This correlation indicates that the *eary* sites belong to the same group as the archaeologically-identified shielings, and that, as in the Isles, such pasture sites were to be found from near sea-level to heights of over 305m (1000').

The figures for the height of *setr/sáetr* sites would, also, appear to compare favourably with the heights for catalogued shieling heights. The distribution is from 10m to 300m, but as the latter is a spot height for a hill, the figure 155m is chosen as the upper limit of the range. Within the range, there are again no significant gaps suggesting specific concentrations. The greatest concentration is at 40m, but within this, there are only three out of a total of 27 sites. The large majority of the catalogued sites in the islands, lie between sea-level and 95m, with only 5 sites between 130m and 190m, and 1 over 250m (Chapter 9). The figures of John Love for Rum were used for the purpose of comparison with the Manx evidence, because of the biases in the evidence from the catalogued sites. He found that sites lay between sea-level and 450m, but that 90% lay between 50m and 350m. The greatest number were to be found between 100m and 133m. The *setr/sáetr* sites are, thus, lower than the majority of shieling sites in Rum, but this would not preclude them from being shielings, given the evidence that such pasture sites are to be found from sea-level.

It was expected that an examination of the names in *-ary* might suggest that there was a significant difference between the sites with

Norse names and those incorporating the Norse loan-word. However, even though a much smaller number of sites were examined, the height evidence suggests a similar range, although there is a gap between 35m and 97m.

The numbers of sites examined with names in *-gárðr* and *árigh-* were very small, and although it is possible to conclude that in the case of the former, the sites lie, generally, at low altitudes, it is not possible to draw any conclusions concerning the latter in this section.

(d) Soil and Vegetation

As in the case of the shieling sites, the majority of the sites with names in *eary* in Man, lie in the area which forms the transitional zone between the upland and lowland. Reference should be made to Chapters 4 and 9. Examination of recent land-use could, perhaps, explain the dearth of names in the Southside parishes, as opposed to the Northside, a point noted by Megaw. E. Davies (see Chapter 4) noted that on the east side of the island, in contrast to the west, there is an intermediate belt of permanent pasture, which in some places replaces the arable land. It can be postulated that the need for shielings was not as great as on the west side, where cultivation has been possible to a height of over 183m (600'). Alternatively, if it is accepted that the Gaelic element represents the 'home shieling', it can be suggested that such sites were unnecessary in areas where there were extensive permanent lowland pastures.

In Skye and the Outer Hebrides, for the first time, a small distinction can be drawn between the sites in *-setr/-sáetr* and those in *-ary*. The former are to be found on 14 soil map units, 1 of which is entirely cultivated, 4 are used largely for grazing purposes but are cultivated in some areas, 6 are used for rough grazing, and 3 provide only very poor rough grazing. Concentrations of sites are found on Map Units 394, 395 and 483, and there are two sites on both Map Units 4 and 390. Three of these represent poor rough grazing, one grazing, and one permanent pasture with some cultivation. The difference between this distribution and that for the *-ary* sites, is the range of soil map units. The sites of the latter group are found on only five of the units, four of which represent poor rough grazing, and one grazing.

Like the *setr/sáetr* distribution, however, there are concentrations on Map Unit 395, but also on 392 and 548. The names in *áirigh-* have a similar distribution. In contrast, the names in *-gárðr* are located on land which is generally used as common grazing, but which is also used for cultivation in some areas. Only one was examined which lies on poor rough grazing.

(e) Shelter and Aspect

An examination of aspect for the sites in Man, shows a very similar distribution to that for the catalogued shieling sites (Catalogue 1), thus, the majority of sites are on slopes facing in a southerly direction (S, SE, SW etc.), and there are a larger number facing in a northerly direction than either east or west. The situation in the Isles is very different from that in Man, and from the evidence of the catalogued shieling sites. In the case of the *setr/sáetr* names, the vast majority are to be found on slopes facing in a northerly direction, and only 2 are on slopes facing south. This is in contrast to the evidence from the catalogued shieling sites, the majority lying on slopes facing in a southerly direction, although a much larger number were found to face north, than either east or west. The evidence of the *-ary* names is difficult to assess because of the small number which can be used in this section. Of these, 3 face south, 2 north and 1 west. The distribution of the *gárðr* names points to a connection with south facing slopes, whilst there are equal numbers of names in *áirigh-* facing south and north.

Examination of the sites suggested that shelter was an important factor in the location of many, a large number, particularly in Man and Skye, being located on the sides of large and small valleys. Others, for example in Lewis, were found to have houses nestling into the hillsides, or are afforded some protection by groups of small islands off the coast. The need to find a sheltered location might explain the lack of south facing slopes for sites in *-setr/-sáetr* in Skye, Lewis and Harris.

(f) Proximity to water

Proximity to a source of fresh water was identified as having an important locational pull on shieling sites, water not only important

for human and animal consumption, but also for the dairying activities which were carried out at the sites. This is an interesting aspect in the study of the locations of the sites indicated by place-names, but it is difficult to assess in many cases. This is true not only of the topographical features, but also many of the settlements which are linear in form. Furthermore, the site on which a farm or croft has been placed, or a settlement has grown up, is not necessarily that of the original shieling. In fact, it is very unlikely that this would have been the case, the immediate areas of the shielings being those which were most fertile and would have been used for cultivation. However, as a general rule, the centre point of a settlement was selected, and where the sites are single farms and crofts, distances were measured from the houses.

On Man, analysis of the distances for the *eary* sites indicated that the relationship between the sites and water was less clear than that for the archaeologically-attested shielings. Only 7 of the sites are within 30m of fresh water, pointing to the fact that, in the majority of cases, there is not a correlation. This would appear to be the case also in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, with the majority of sites, in each of the name categories, being over 100m from water. 4 of the *setr/sáetr* sites, 3 of the *ary*, 1 of the *gárðr* and 1 of the *áirigh*, are within 30m.

(g) Relationship with specific farms or land units

On Man, there are only four cases where it is possible to link with confidence *eary* sites and specific farms or land units. These are:

NEARY (quarterland) - outlying portion of the treen of GRESY, Lezayre. Distance - 6.4km (4 miles).

EARY NY KIONE (quarterland) - outlying portion of the treen of BALLASKYR, Michael. Distance - 1.8km (1.1 miles).

EARY CUSHLIN (quarterland) - outlying portion of the treen of ALLA DALBY, Patrick. Distance - 2.2km (1.4 miles).

ARYHORKELL (treen) - c.1500 belonged to Reginald Wright whose main holding was in the treen of LEYRE, Michael. Distance - 6.4km (4 miles).

The distances given here would argue against the interpretation of all the *ary* sites as 'home shielings', few of the un-named sites being

more than 6.4km from coastal settlements within specific parishes.

Little research has been carried out in this field in the Isles. Macsween (1959a:Fig.20) was able to link with confidence a number of settlement sites and shielings in the Trotternish peninsula, and postulated other connections. However, in this case, *setr/sáetr* sites are amongst the settlements which are linked with certain shieling groups. This does not, then, throw any light on the relationship between the *setr/sáetr* sites and their home-farms. One area where a relationship has been suggested is that of Great Bernera and the adjacent mainland in Lewis. Fellows Jensen (see Chapter 11) suggested that the sites with names in *-setr/sáetr* on the mainland were the mountain or summer shielings of the Great Bernera settlements. Reference, however, to Chapter 5 indicates that pre-1872, the crofters of Bernera had much more distant pastures stretching from the Uig Road to Loch Bruiche Breiavat, Loch Langabhat and Loch Coirgerod, between 10 and 33km from Breaclete on Great Bernera. In this context, the *setr/sáetr* seem less like 'mountain' or 'far-away' shielings, and more like 'home shielings'.

Only three of the *setr/sáetr* sites examined had shieling remains. In the case of those in north Lewis, it was clear that they were linked with the townships of Ness and both are within 3.25km (2 miles) of Skigersta. It was not possible to point to a link for Armishader in Trotternish, Skye. In the case of the *ary* names, these were not associated with specific groups of shielings but with settlements or topographical features, which made the establishment of links impossible.

In the general context of distances to shieling sites in the Hebrides, reference to Chapter 5 indicates that frequently sites between 4 and 6km were considered to be near shielings and that there was contact between shieling and farm everyday. Far-away shielings were over 10km from the farms. It should be noted, however, that information concerning distance is largely from Lewis, an island in which horizontal rather than vertical movement to the shielings predominates. In areas where the movement is vertical, the distance travelled to the nearer shielings can be expected to be shorter. In Trotternish, Skye,

using Macsween's (1959a:Fig.20) map of farms and shielings, on which known, fairly certain and postulated movements are recorded, the distances travelled would appear to vary between 1.3km (0.8 miles) and 4.3km (2.7 miles). Most shielings, however, lie between 1.6 and 3.2km (1-2 miles) from the farms.

12.2 THE NAMES

Man and the Hebridean islands provide an interesting contrast as far as the origins of the words are concerned, the majority of the *eary* names of Man being compounded with Gaelic words and having a Gaelic word order, whilst the names in *-setr/-sáetr* and *-ary* are compounded with Norse words and have the characteristic Norse word order. On Man, there are only 5 cases in which the element follows the word with which it is compounded, and there are only two examples of Norse personal names, Aresteyne and Aryhorkell, which are both, however, Gaelic formations.

In Chapter 4, Nicolaisen's theory to test whether place-names contained either the element *-setr* or *-sáetr* was outlined, and the first part of this theory will be used to test whether the sites containing the other elements are also likely to have been related to shieling activities. The theory was that if the element compounded with *-setr/sáetr* was the name of an animal, then it was likely that the word involved was *-sáetr*.

An examination, first, of the names in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, indicated that there were possibly eight names which contained words relating to domestic animals. All but one of these (Earsary) are *setr/sáetr* names and the animals are: ewes, goats, mares, lambs, and cattle (cattle-fold). In the case of the ewes, however, it is possible that the word is the personal name Aevarr instead. In Man, there is only one name which possibly contains an animal word and that is Aryssynok, but the animals in this case are foxes, and are hardly to be associated with shieling activities.

Of the remaining names, the majority, in both the islands and Man, contain elements which describe either the shieling itself, or its location. However, only a little less frequent are names containing elements which point to ownership by an individual person or family, for example, 'Thorkell's shieling' and 'Kari's shieling', 'shieling of

the Sayles'', and the 'lord's shieling'. In the case of the individual groups of names in the islands, of the catalogued *setr/sáetr* names, there are 9 words which describe either the shieling or its location, and 8 which indicate possession by individuals, 2 of which could also be translated as 'ewes' shieling'. For the names in *ary*, 2 are descriptive and 6 indicate possession by individuals. There are no examples of possession in the *gárðr* category, and it is not possible to draw conclusions about the *árigh* names on the basis of the four names included in the catalogue. The remaining types of name are the simplex 'shieling', and the 'house of the shieling'. There are 2 examples of the former in the *setr/sáetr* group, and in Man, there are 5 examples of the former and three of the latter.

For Man, information concerning the dates at which the names in *eary-* first appear in the sources was readily available (Kneen 1925-9). The earliest names are those which appear in the Limites: Aryeuzryn [E5] and Arygegormane [E47]. In the case of the former, the name is that of an estate in the south of the island, whilst in the latter, it is only clear that there was a bridge at this site (Hath Arygegormane). This site is, however, important for a number of reasons. In Chapter 3, the importance of the Abbey Bounds document in the Norse versus Gaelic debate was outlined. This particular name is associated with the northern unit of abbey land, that of Myroscough, and it has been noted that the place-names used in this section, to describe the boundaries of the monks' land, are largely Gaelic as opposed to Norse. Kneen (1925-29:529; see Catalogue 1) suggested that the place-name referred to a shieling, which belonged to a certain Gormand, probably the vicar of Kirk Christ Lezayre, and that the site lay somewhere on the Block Eary stream. It has also been suggested that the stream may have been that at Ballaneary (E. Megaw 1978:331). If the former is the case, however, this has important implications for the form of the large shieling sites, and also points to the use, at least in this case, of a shieling as a boundary marker. It was suggested in Chapter 9 that the large sites in the headwaters of rivers, may be communal rather than under individual ownership. The evidence of the name 'Gorman's shieling' may suggest that this was not actually the case.

The next group of names appear in the Manorial Roll of 1511-1515, and with the exception of Eary Gowin, these are all treen names. This name and the majority of those found in the 1643 Manorial Roll are quarterlands. This is in contrast to the names in the 1703 Manorial Roll, most of which belong to intacks. It is interesting to note that, in the case of Aryhimyn [E31] and Aregau [E38], the farms first appear under the names of their owners, Jenken Symyn and Henry McGawne.

It was hoped that an examination of the heights of the sites in relation to the dates may produce some interesting results. Of the earliest names, those of c.1280 and 1511-1515 (Group 1), where the location is known, 3 lie at a height at which there are a considerable number of archaeologically-attested shieling sites, 2 lie 30.5m (100') below the shieling level, and 2 lie at a height of under 100m (328'). Of those which appear in the 1643 Manorial Roll (Group 2), 3 are within the shieling site range, and the other 3 are within 30.5m (100') of it, and for the 1703 Manorial Roll (Group 3), 3 of the sites are over 200m (656'), and the rest are located at a height around 152m (500') O.D., thus just below the shieling site range. The highest sites in each group are 220m, 244m and 259m respectively. However, although there is evidence to suggest that there was a colonisation of shieling sites post 1511-1515 at a higher level than earlier, there would not appear to be a very significant difference. An examination of the sites recorded after 1703, shows a similar height range to that for the above groups combined. There are 2 at 61m, the lowest height in the earliest group, and an even lower site, Eary Lhone, at 30m. The highest site is found at 244m, that is at the same height as the highest *eary* in Group 2, but lower than the highest in Group 3.

An examination of the sites within specific parishes also failed, in most cases, to produce evidence suggesting that there was an outward movement of the *eary* sites through time. The figures for German and Lezayre, for example, are:

GERMAN		LEZAYRE	
1515	- 213m	1643	- 177m
1643	- 183m	1703	- 152m
1643	- 183m	1703	- 259m

1703	- 152m	post 1703	- 244m
1703	- 213m	"	- 207m
post 1703	- 183m		
"	- 244m		

Parishes where there is a possible outward movement are: Marown (post 1703) and Onchan, but the numbers in each case are so small, that it is not really possible to draw any conclusions from this data.

12.3 DISTRIBUTION OF OTHER NORSE NAMING ELEMENTS

It was believed that an examination of certain locational aspects of other Old Norse settlement names, may produce some interesting results. The elements of particular interest in this study are *staðir* and *bólstaðr*, although the evidence of settlements with topographical names is also included, and Skye, Lewis and Harris are the most useful study areas. An examination of the general distribution of the sites with these naming elements, suggested that this was not very dissimilar from that for *setr/sætr* (see Fig.32). Closer examination of certain areas also suggested a correlation, for example, that around Loch Erisort and Loch Leurbost in the southern part of Lewis (Fig.114). Here, there are settlements with Norse topographical names (Laxay), and names in *-staðir* (Caversta), *-bólstaðr* (Habost, Crossbost, Leurbost) and *setr/sætr* (Kershader, Grimshader). The smallest of these settlements today is Cavertsa, and the largest is Leurbost. All are in similar locations, and there is no evidence, at first glance, to suggest that the *setr/sætr* sites are in inferior locations. An examination of the coast, however, does suggest that Laxay and Leurbost would have been particularly favoured sites in this area, having quite extensive shingly shores, and being afforded shelter from the small islands Eilean Mor Laxay and Eilean Orasaigh respectively. The land at these sites also slopes more gently than at the others. A study of the soil units, also, points to significant differences between the sites. Four are located on Map Unit 386: Laxay, Leurbost, Crossbost, and Caversta. The soils associated with this unit are brown forest soils, humus-iron podzols, some non-calcareous gleys, peaty gleys and rankers. The landforms are valley sides and undulating lowlands with gentle and strong slopes, and the land is slightly rocky. The land is used for

arable purposes, and there are permanent pastures. Two of the sites lie on Map Unit 388: Habost and Kershader. The soils, in this case, are humus-iron podzols, noncalcareous gleys, humic gleys, some peaty gleys and peaty podzols; the landforms are hummocky moraines which are often bouldery, and the land is used for arable purposes and provides permanent pastures. The remaining site, Grimshader, is found on Map Unit 394, a unit upon which *setr/sáetr* sites and known shieling sites are found. The examination of this small area of Lewis, led to an examination of the other areas of Map Unit 386 in Lewis and Harris, and it was found that in virtually every case, there was a correlation between this soil unit and settlements with Norse topographical names, or names in *-staðir* and *-bólstaðr*. None of the *setr/sáetr* names are to be found on this unit.

One area, however, where the situation is rather different is that of Great Bernera and the adjacent mainland. This is an important area, the evidence of the place-names being used by Fellows Jensen to support the theory that the Gaelic word represented the 'home shieling'. There are only two areas of Soil Map Unit 386, and these are both on the island. The settlement names are Hacklete and Kirkibost. There are, however, at least two names in *-staðr* on the mainland, and a number of names in *-setr/sáetr* in the immediate vicinity and further to the west. An examination of the place-names shows that the names in *-setr/-sáetr* are associated with settlements of varying size, and that those in *-staðr*, are a hill name and one associated with a tiny group of crofts. The latter are located on Map Unit 394, and the former, with the exception of Geshader, on 395. There is little difference between these units, 395 being rockier than 394, and thus slightly less favourable. Geshader is the important *setr/sáetr* exception in Lewis, being located on a small pocket of 386. This particular evidence would point to the fact that there is very little difference, at least in this area, in the location of settlements with names in *setr/sáetr* and in *-staðir*. The conclusion that the former are 'mountain shielings' cannot be supported on this basis.

It was believed that an examination of Skye, and in particular the Trotternish peninsula, where there are a considerable number of each of

the above types of name, might also produce some interesting results, and this proved to be the case. Here, settlements with Norse topographical names, and the majority of names in *-staðir* and *bólstaðr* are located on Map Unit 158, the most important economic unit on Skye today. The soils are largely freely-drained and are of importance agriculturally. In those areas where the soils are shallow, the surfaces are seeded and provide good grazing. In contrast, only one of the *setr/sáetr* names is associated with this unit (Dun Gerashader [N5]), but a number do lie on the edge of it, suggesting that it is unlikely that they were the 'far-away shielings'.

12.4 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The main conclusion to be drawn from this survey of sites, is that there is no clear difference between those places with names in *-setr/-sáetr* and those which incorporate the Gaelic word *ary*. It is not possible, on the basis of the geographical location of the sites, and on the names themselves, to support the theory that the Gaelic word was used for the home shieling, and the Norse for the mountain or summer shieling. In fact, from the location evidence of the *setr/sáetr* names in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, and, in particular, the relationship between these names and others indicating Norse settlement, it would seem more likely that these were the home shielings. Few are any great distance from the coast, only a tiny number can be described as being in mountain locations, and many have developed into settlements of some size. There are few names incorporating the Gaelic word which are located in similar positions, and which have developed in the same way. However, despite the location and development of the *setr/sáetr* names, it is important to remember that the majority lie on what is now rough grazing land, pointing to the fact that the sites are definitely secondary in character.

It was in the context of soils and vegetation, that a small distinction was drawn bewteen the *setr/sáetr* and *ary* names of the islands, the majority of the latter being found on poor rough grazing, whilst there was considerably more variation in the location of the former, with a number lying on land which had some cultivation capability, particularly in Skye.

The conclusion that the Gaelic word was adopted by the Norse to indicate a 'home shieling' rested largely upon the Manx evidence. An examination of the sites, particularly in relation to the identified summer pasture sites, indicated that the *eary* sites were merely the lower shielings, and did not serve the specific function of the 'home shieling'. Two levels of sites were not distinguishable in the data.

As far as the relationship with other names indicating Norse settlement is concerned, the soil unit evidence suggests the establishment of *staðir* and *bólstaðr* farms largely on areas of cultivable land, and farms in *-setr/-sætr* on the fringe of these areas.

An examination of the words with which the various elements were compounded, suggested that names which may have provided a clue as to the function of the sites were generally lacking. Only in the case of the *setr/sætr* names did the names of animals occur as the specifics, but these were not sufficiently certain, nor frequent, to indicate that the generic was *sætr*, as opposed to *setr*. This situation should be compared with that for Orkney and Shetland, many of the *sætr* names being compounded with animal names. In the majority of cases, the elements were compounded with adjectives either describing the sites or their locations, but a large proportion incorporated the names of individuals or families. This appeared to indicate that if the sites were shielings, they were under individual as opposed to communal ownership.

It is important to examine this evidence in a wider context, and a starting point is L. Macgregor's (1986b:99) conclusions concerning the presence and absence of the three habitative elements - *staðir*, *bólstaðr* and *sætr*, from Shetland and Faroe respectively. In the case of the Isles, at least one of the names occurs on the majority of islands: they are only absent from the smaller islands and Arran. Examination of the numbers on Man, indicates that although there are no examples of names in *setr/sætr*, and one doubtful case of a *bólstaðr* (Bravost), there are twelve names in *-staðir* recorded by Fellows Jensen (1983:40), a larger number than on any of the Hebridean islands, with the exception of Lewis. In fact, the evidence suggests that this

particular naming element was only important in Lewis/Harris, Skye and Man. *Bólstaðr* names, however, occur on all of the larger Hebridean islands, with the exception of Arran, and also on a number of the smaller islands. The evidence from Shetland and Orkney (Macgregor 1986b; Marwick 1952; W.Thomson 1987a:24-43) points to the location of *staðir* farms on land which is good, but lacking a number of the advantages of the farms with topographical names. An examination of the location of *staðir* sites in the Isles would suggest a correlation with cultivable soils in a number of areas, and this would also appear to be the case for the *staðir* names in the north of Man, and for that in the south of the island. There are a significant number of names, however, which are not associated with good secondary locations, and would appear to have been of low status, for example in Lewis and on the east coast of Man. In the case of the *bólstaðr* farms of Shetland, it was suggested by Macgregor (1986b:96) that they may have begun as cultivated fields, either on a primary farm or at a distance from it, and that the naming element may have indicated 'farm established on a cultivated field'. This would certainly appear to have been the case in the Isles, on the basis of the correlation between the names and the better, or best, soil units.

The analysis of the locations of the *setr/sáetr* names in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, suggested that if the element involved was *sáetr*, then the sites would appear, in a large number of cases, to have been located near home-farms. This conclusion would appear to be in agreement with the evidence from Shetland and from Orkney, the farms, in both island groups, being located close to their nearest farms within the infield dyke.

This still leaves the question of Gaelic *ary*, and the reason for its adoption by the Norse. If it is argued that the Norse word was used instead for the 'home shieling', it can be postulated that the *ary* was the more remote site. The analysis of various location factors, however, suggested that there was little difference between the sites, although it should be noted that a significant number of the names are associated with hills, that few appear to have developed into permanent settlements, and that there does not appear to be a relationship

between the names and other Norse habitative names. Possibly of greatest significance, is the fact that, in many areas, Norse *sáetr* and the loanword *ary* appear to exclude each other (see Fig.4 and 111).

Examining the distribution of the word elsewhere, it appears that south of the Solway lowlands, particularly in areas of pre-Norse Anglian settlement, names derived from the Norse loanword *er(gh)* are to be found on land which was either residual or exposed, whilst the *sáetr* names were to be found within the massif, usually at higher altitudes (Pearsall 1961). This would certainly suggest a 'far-away' or 'mountain' shieling interpretation of the *sáetr* names in this case. In her examination of the location of the Lancashire *ergs*, Higham (1978b;1978c) found that many of the sites were well below the altitude for summer hill grazings. An analysis of the *ergs* in Cumberland, Westmorland and the North and West Ridings showed a similar pattern. The evidence, rather than supporting the theory that these sites were originally those of shielings, pointed to the fact that many were located on the best soils of the area, capable of supporting permanent settlement and arable cultivation, and the status of the sites in the Post-Conquest period confirmed this. Higham (1978c:10) concluded that the term *erg* was, in fact, used to describe cattle-rearing enterprises, held under daer-stock tenancy, and postulated a pre-Norse and possibly also a pre-Anglian origin.

The implications of this research for the Gaelic and Norse naming elements of Man and the Isles, would appear to be that the Gaelic *ary* did not have a specific meaning, as suggested by Fellows Jensen, whilst Norse *sáetr* did. L. Macgregor (1986b:92) concluded that the Norse elements did have very specific meanings, for example, *skáli*, *hús*, *toft*, *gárðr* and *gerði*, associated with architectural styles and settlement sites. She suggested that *sáetr* would have had a specific meaning, and that this perhaps precluded its use in the Faroe Islands. It is possible also that the type of settlement indicated by the element did not apppear on Man, perhaps because this already existed or a Gaelic term was considered more appropriate. As far as Gaelic *ary* is concerned, it may be that the virtue of the word was in its generality, and that it was adopted and used merely to describe sites to which

cattle were taken or at which they were kept. It can be postulated that the word, rather than referring to shieling specifically, was used of pastures, generally hill pastures, and that in the case of the names in Northern England the link was cattle rather than shieling. The association of the word with hill pastures and cattle on Man may explain the difference in status between those names belonging to treens and those to small, upland farms.

It has been suggested above that the settlement types which would have acquired names in *sáetr* were in existence by the time of the Norse settlement. The Limites would indicate that at least two hill pastures had been turned into estates by the thirteenth century, and Lowe's model for the origin and distribution of keeills (1987:230-4) suggests a permanent settling of the *ary* treens between the ninth and eleventh centuries. If these lands were indeed permanently settled during the Norse period, it is then of considerable significance that in each instance, the element is compounded with a Gaelic word and that the word order is also Gaelic rather than Norse. In two cases, the specifics are Norse personal names (Aresteyne and Aryhorkell), but as these are Gaelic formations and the names do not necessarily indicate nationality, it is unwise to use this as evidence to support a Norse origin of the estates. There seems reason to believe, therefore, that either the estates were pre-Norse creations, or that the Norse influence at the time of their creation was weak.

CHAPTER 13 COMPARATIVE MATERIAL

INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to analyse the dating of the Manx sites to the Norse period using comparative material. The sites were placed in this context by Peter Gelling, and he suggested that the use of the shieling owed its main development on the island to the Norse settlers. Thus, the first part of the chapter is an examination of the evidence which is now available for 'seter' sites of the Viking and Mediaeval periods in Norway and the North Atlantic colonies. The problems associated with the use of this material for comparative purposes were outlined in Chapter 10. However, it was concluded that as Peter Gelling had specifically suggested a Norse origin for many of the sites, it was legitimate to examine the Manx sites in this context. The second part of the chapter presents the insular evidence, that is evidence of the mediaeval and historical use of the shieling in Wales and Ireland. In each half of the chapter the implications for the study of the Manx sites are considered.

13.1 THE NORSE EVIDENCE

A. THE SETER OF NORWAY (Figs.115,116; Pls.55b-61a)

Detailed descriptions of the practice of saetring in Norway do not appear until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, the use of seters is mentioned by Adam of Bremen about 1075 and appears in several of the old Norwegian provincial laws, for example Gulatingslóv, first written down in the twelfth century. The use of the seter in the mediaeval and Viking periods is confirmed by the archaeological evidence of house sites and graves in mountain areas which would have been uninhabitable in the winter (Hougen 1947:107ff), and it is possible that it has an even longer history than this (e.g. Magnus 1986). Hougen (1947) saw the seters as the last remains of a cattle nomadism, dating to the Bronze Age, or even the Neolithic. More recently, however, researchers such as Albrethsen and Keller (1986) have argued that the origins of the seter lie in the exploitation of accessible fodder supplies. The exploitation of remote pastures, or those with difficult access, meant that the infield could be preserved,

and used for the production of fodder to keep the stock alive during the winter months. For climatic and geographical reasons, the livestock of Norway, in many areas, has to be kept indoors and fed for the greater part of the year (Borchgrevink 1980:4), and as the infield of the farms has traditionally been limited, the exploitation of the available resources has been vital. However, Borchgrevink (1980:5) noted that on the small infield areas, the farmers primarily grew corn, while the grass for hay or grazing was found in narrow strips between fields, along brooks and rivers, and on the poorer marshy ground not suited to corn growing. The utmark areas outside the infield fence, were, thus, essential if the necessary fodder was to be provided.

In Norway, three different types of historical seter have been identified, based on functional classifications (Reinton 1969:28ff). These are as follows:

Fullseterbruk (full seter) - characterised by the residence of the seter personnel throughout the summer. The milk is treated and stored at the seter, the residents having all the necessary equipment for milking, making butter, cheese and other milk products. These products are only taken down to the farm in the late summer. The seter is usually called the long-distance or summer seter, and there are a number of structures, for example, living quarters, storage room for the milk products, dairy pens and also possibly barns for the storage of winter fodder.

Mjølkeseterbruk (dairy seter) - milking is done at the seter, but most of it is transported immediately to the farm, and is processed there. The distance between the two is, thus, not very great. The seter is not occupied for long periods of time, except by the small number of herders who look after the animals. The structures are restricted to a dairy pen, small living quarters, and barns for the storage of winter fodder.

Slatteseterbruk (haymaking seter) - here the collection of winter fodder is essential. It is occupied for only the short periods of hay-making. Only barns exist at the sites. Generally the seters are placed in less accessible areas, for example those with small amounts of pasture or on islands, and frequently individual farms have more

than one.

A further type of seter is described by Borchgrevink (1980:20), the 'winter seter', where the animals stay from November until February, being fed indoors on the fodder collected in the area during the summer. This seter is well-equipped with solidly built houses, and is more like the permanent farms.

An area where these various types of historical seter can be found is the Flåm Valley (Indrelid, privately distributed paper). In principle, each farm possessed its own share of the mountain plateau. Traditional boundaries existed between the farms but these were not always well-defined, resulting in disputes. Each farm, and each of the holdings within the farm, had a seter. Each family had its own house, called a sel at the seter, and these were usually grouped together. The majority of farms in the valley had two different seters, and some had three. The first lay just above or just below the edge of the mountain plateau, between one and three walking hours from the farm. It was occupied for two or three weeks in June and July, and one or two weeks in August. The 'real summer farm' was located further in the mountains, sometimes eight to ten miles walking distance from the farm. The cattle were kept here during the midsummer months, July and August. These farms usually had the best pastures and were very well-suited to butter production.

There is evidence, however, that the mountain pastures were used in earlier periods. In Friksdal (Magnus 1986), the valley was used for pasture, at a height of some 800m a.s.l., from the late Bronze Age into the eleventh century, and then, after a period when the valley lay deserted, there was the site of the historic seter Heimste Friksdal, in use from the seventeenth century until 1950. Phases 1 (late Bronze Age) and 2 (660B.C.-A.D.385) are characterised by charcoal pits, but Phase 3 (A.D.550+/-90 to A.D.870+/-140) by house-grounds at Svolset and Heimste Friksdal. Magnus (1986:49) has connected this phase with the establishment of permanent farm settlements by the fjord, and has suggested a date within the bracket Late Roman period to Early Mediaeval period. She compared the shape and size of the houses with those from the Viking period site at Ytre Moa in Ardal, Sognefjord.

Twenty house-grounds were found at Svolset (Magnus 1986:46). These were all rectangular and lay at the foot of a gravel ridge. They varied in size between 4-9m in length and 3-4m in width, and had low, broad stone walls on three sides. It was found that sixteen of the houses formed pairs, sharing one long wall in common. Excavation, test pits and trial trenches showed that the houses were constructed of wooden planks set on edge in a narrow ditch. Around the wooden structures, the low stone walls were erected for insulation. Three or four pairs of wooden posts carried the roofs. In the centre lay long, bipartite hearths. The entrance faced south to catch as much of the sunlight as possible. Magnus suggested that in the case of the double houses, these obviously served different purposes, some being living-quarters and others outhouses. Few finds were recovered, but included soapstone spindlewhorls, loom-weights, glass beads, two small iron knives, an iron celt, small whetstones, needles, and fragments of iron nails and rivets. The only vessel evidence was a sherd of pottery from the Migration Period.

Magnus concluded, however, that the interpretation of the sites in Friksdal as seters was open to re-interpretation. She noted that recent work in the area of the Nyset-Steggje watercourse of the Årdal mountains had produced a much more varied picture of the exploitation of high mountain resources, and she suggested that the Friksdal type sites, ever-increasing numbers of which are being identifed, should not be categorised as seters on the basis of the location and 'a superficial inventorization'.

One of the two research aims behind the Nyset-Steggje project, was an investigation into the way in which the area had been exploited for pasture purposes. The ruins of log or stone seter houses are common in the mountains, dating from the last two centuries, and it was hoped to trace back seasonal settlement, and permanent if it existed (Bjørgo 1986:122). In all, 134 new sites were located, pre-Viking in date, including 40 house remains from the period A.D. 300-1000, and sixty-seven sites representing lithic period technology from the period 8000-2200 B.P. (Bjørgo 1986:124). Other sites include burial mounds, iron production sites, charcoal pits and reindeer pitfalls. 40 sites

were excavated, and the main emphasis was placed on the investigation of Iron Age house remains (14). Walls were built of stone, turf and earth, and in some case there was a panel of wood inside. The roofs were supported by pairs of posts, and the roofing material was birch bark. In size, the houses were some 10 by 6m externally, and 8 by 4m internally. They had central fire-places. Again, one of the best lowland parallels was found to be the structures at Ytre Moa. Finds and radiocarbon dating indicated intensive exploitation at the end of the Late Roman period, and most of the house remains belonged to the Merovingian period. The finds indicated the presence of both men and women, and indicated that a range of activities were carried out besides hunting. Palaeontological investigations indicated grazing activities, and at one site experimental cereal cultivation (Bjørgo 1986:126). Bjørgo was uncertain as to whether the same activities were performed in all of the houses. Many indicated the exploitation of summer pastures, as did investigations further out along the Sognefjord by Kvamme and Randers (1982), dated to the Late Iron Age. However, others suggested a more permanent use of the mountains, with animal husbandry, hunting and trapping as the economic base.

B. THE ÁERGI OF FAROE

Following the linguistic studies of Christian Matras in the 1950s (Matras 1956), Sverri Dahl identified eighteen sites on the Faroe islands where place-names indicated the existence of a 'shieling' site (names incorporating *ergi-/argi-* from the Old Irish *áirge*, for example, Árgir, Árgisá, Árgifossur, Eyrgibyrgi and Ergidalur). He suggested a Viking period date for these (Dahl 1970a;1970b). All were situated some distance from the supposed oldest farms, or from the villages to which they belonged, and some were high in the mountains. Plotting the sites, Dahl found that they corresponded to farmsteads named in the saga, and a few to farms which have been examined. In 1965, he carried out a small excavation at the site of Ergidalur on Suðuroy, which lay at a height of 200m a.s.l., in an inland location. It belonged to the Viking period settlement at Hofi. The excavated structure was of stone, 5.5 by 3.5m, with a fire-place built of flat stones above the floor level. In the fireplace and floor, there were sherds of large bowl-shaped

pottery, which were dated to the Viking period.

More recently, another of these eighteen sites has been excavated, Argisbrekka on the island of Esturoy (Mahler 1989; forthcoming). The site lay on the edge of a large meadow at the east end of Eidisvatn, a large freshwater lake, an area which has now been flooded as part of a hydroelectricity scheme. Attention was first directed towards the site in 1982, when Føroya Fornminnissavn noted the presence of two geologically unexplained barrows, which proved to consist of superimposed structures. Excavations produced evidence of eighteen buildings, seventeen dated to the Viking period, and one likely to be of fairly recent date (within the last 100 years) (Fig.117). Several animal pens and light storage structures for the storage of peat (*krair*), were also found at the site, and there was evidence of a 'field system', dated geologically as contemporary with, or slightly younger than, the Viking settlements. Pollen analysis has, so far, only produced evidence of grasses.

The seventeen house structures were divided, on the whole, into two large settlement areas, Eastern and Western, containing seven and ten houses respectively. These areas can be further sub-divided into smaller units containing a dwelling house and one or two outhouses. All the structures were constructed of the same materials, with walls of turf, sand, clay and gravel. Stones appeared here and there within the walls, giving them further stability. To date, this is the only site in the Faroe Islands which has produced evidence of this building technique, the general form being walls of an inner and outer shell of stones containing packed earth and turf (e.g. Kvívík, Dahl 1970a). All the houses were orientated east-west, and there was an entrance through the western gable or placed near a corner. There were two rows of roof-bearing posts, stone-built fireplaces, smaller pits and one or two turf-built benches. The cultural layers were often fairly thick. The dimensions varied, but the houses were generally 7-8m by 3.5m wide. In two cases, they were no longer than 3.5 to 4m. The smaller structures lacked the thick cultural deposits, and could be divided into two types, work-houses and storage buildings. Both were small, but the former had fireplaces and a bench, whereas the latter lacked fireplaces

and had almost no floor deposits. Both types were some 3 by 2-2.5m, with roof bearing posts either in each corner of the room, or one at each gable. In a number of cases, dwelling houses and storage huts were built as a pair, joined by a common wall. Interesting features associated with certain structures included air channels, paved entrances, and evidence of stone-built cattle stalls.

Although much organic material was found, such as wood and leather, there were very few other artifacts. Mahler (1989; forthcoming) contrasted the number of finds with those from the Viking period house sites at Kvívík (Dahl 1971) and Toftanes (Hansen 1988). It was found, however, that there was a cross-section of the usual objects found at Faeroese Viking Age sites, including whetstones, steatite bowls, spindlewhorls of steatite and local tuff, round-bottomed clay vessels, and various metal objects such as knives, locks and slags. Several glass beads and some metal ornaments such as rings of silver and bronze, a circular brooch and a bronze ringed pin were also recovered. The small number of finds did not 'suggest a lower status for the site to Mahler (forthcoming a), but appeared to be related to its function. The location was atypical of the known Faeroese Viking period house sites, sited near the coast. The building construction, size of the dwellings and location of entrances also differed. Mahler (forthcoming a) has, however, found parallels for these features among 'seters' and smaller dwellings in Norway (e.g. Hougen 1944, 1947; Martens and Hagen 1961; Martens 1973; Magnus 1983:93, 1986:44; Petersen 1936:71-78 and Myhre 1980), and in Iceland (P. Magnusson 1983:18; Hermansdóttir 1982:83; Stenberger 1943:145). He concluded that they 'fitted well within the frame of the Viking period'.

Mahler (forthcoming a) argued that 'the most logical interpretation of Argisbrekka then - where brekka means slope - is as a saeter or a shieling', and using Reinton's classification (1957:28ff; see beginning of chapter), he interpreted it as a 'full-seter', but noted that it lay in a location which would generally be interpreted as that of a 'heim-seter'. Today Argisbrekka lies in the outfields belonging to Eiði bygd, 3km from the settlement, and this would appear to be have been the case from 1584, the date of the oldest land register. Excavation

has indicated a Viking period date for Eiði (Andreassen 1980:28). Mahler has suggested that the use of the Gaelic word rather than the Norse for this site may be related to the contradiction indicated by its function and location.

When Dahl mapped the sites with names containing the Gaelic element, he noted that there were structures at seven of the eighteen sites. Mahler (forthcoming b) has examined a number of these sites, and has carried out field-work in other areas which might be expected to produce similar sites. So far ten sites have been examined, and he has divided these into two groups: simple and complex. The simple group consists of small house structures, 4-5.5 by 3m internally, with walls of turf, for example those at Árgisá on Skúvoy. At Ergibyrge the houses are stone-built. Mahler noted a similarity between these structures and the the minor dwelling houses at Argisbrekka. The complex group contains structures which are divided into two or three rooms, as at Havnarbo. The average internal length of such structures is 9m, and Mahler has not ruled out the possibility that they were permanent rather than seasonal dwellings. There are, however, parallels for such structures amongst the shielings of Iceland. All of these sites are un-dated, but Mahler (forthcoming b) suggests that they are all of considerable age.

C. THE SEL OF ICELAND

The basic meaning of *sel* was a small hut used for temporary dwelling, but at a later stage it came to include the pasture around the hut (Harstrup 1989:73). It was more than a grazing-field, being a place where people could reside with a proportion of their livestock, and is translated into English as 'shieling'. Although referred to as *saeters* in the literature, Harstrup (1989:73) noted that Jónsbók (the Icelandic lawbook of 1281) contained the sole occurrence of the Norwegian word *saetr*, and related this to the fact that the lawbook was made on behalf of a Norwegian ruler. A *sel* has yet to be excavated in Iceland, but information can be drawn from written sources, and more recently (Sveinbjarnardóttir forthcoming) survey information has become available, gathered during the period 1979 - 1985 as part of an intensive study of settlement in three areas of Iceland.

Albrethsen and Keller (1986:93) wrote that it is generally accepted that the seter system in Iceland originated with the first settlers. References to sites occur not only in the literature, but also in Landnámabók and in the Icelandic laws. In Landnámabók seters connected with specific farms are mentioned. It is assumed that the seter was, at first, a full- or a dairy seter, and that only at a later stage did the collection of winter fodder assume any importance. The lack of evidence of early seters, however, has made it difficult to determine the distribution of sites and validate this assertion. Hitzler (1979:227) argued that the seters of the first period were located on the 'heimaland', land belonging to the farm, but that as the farms were divided up and expanded through generations, the seters were placed further away on 'foreign land', often a great distance from the parent farms. Examples exist, as in other countries, of seasonal sites that have become separate farms or those of cottars.

It appears that the main animals involved in the practice were sheep, although cattle were also sometimes taken to the summer pasture sites (Harstrup 1989:74; Sveinbjarnardóttir forthcoming). The number of animals kept at the sites and the people required to milk them is indicated in the old Búalog (tarrif lists used in early Iceland), which stated that three women and a cook were needed to milk 80 sheep and 12 cows. However, reference to the early literature, suggests that sometimes an entire household would move to the summer pastures (Laxdaela saga - Magnusson and Pálsson 1969:127). The Búalog also gives an indication of the distance of the sites from the home-farms, three of the women being required to return to the farm by mid-day. This would suggest a relatively short distance was involved (Harstrup 1989:34; Sveinbjarnardóttir forthcoming). One thing which the Icelandic evidence does make clear, is that the *sel* was private property, was part of the farm land, and was bought and sold with it. Such information is derived from early inventories made for the churches, in which the summer pasture sites were listed as part of the property (Harstrup 1989:73). Sometimes there were disputes concerning the boundaries of the *sel*. One of the most important features of the *sel* is indicated in the general body of laws, it being 'rigorously

distinguished from the commons, *almenningar*, and the common pastures of a local community, *afréttir*' (Harstrup 1989:73). According to both Grágás (the mediaeval Icelandic lawbook) and Jónsbók, the establishment of a *sel* within a common pasture was strictly forbidden. However, despite the fact that these sites were privately owned, it would appear that the farmers could not use them as they wished, but were instead bound by a number of rules and regulations. It was stated in Jónsbók, that the livestock was to be brought to the sel when two months of the summer had passed, and they were to return to the home-fields before the month of *tvímánuður* (Harstrup 1989:73). This would indicate a period of two months at the sel, mid-June to mid-August. It has been suggested, however, that the length of time actually spent at the *sel* may have been shorter (Harstrup 1989:73).

The evidence in Iceland suggests that the number of summer pasture sites fell during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with some becoming permanent dwellings for an emerging cottar class. Harstrup (1989.74) saw both the disappearance of the *sel* and the emergence of the cottar as results of the breaking up of the larger farms into smaller units during the Middle Ages. She noted that *sel* had completely vanished in the eighteenth century, but Sveinbjarnardóttir (forthcoming) noted that the practice of keeping domestic animals at the sites persisted, in some parts of Iceland, until the turn of the century.

SAGA EVIDENCE

Two sagas have particularly useful and interesting information concerning both the nature of the buildings at the seter sites and the activities that were carried out at them. In the translations used here the sites have been referred to as shielings. The first is Hrafnkel's Saga, dating from the thirteenth century, a story 'set in the pastoral society of native Iceland (Pálsson 1970; Helgason 1950).

(a) 'I'll make you a quick offer,' said Hrafnkel. 'You're to herd fifty milch ewes at my shieling, and gather in all the firewood for the summer as well...' (Pálsson 1970:39).

(b) 'Soon afterwards it was time to drive the ewes up to Grjotteigs Shieling in the upper reaches of Hrafnkelsdale...Grjotteigs River which

flows past the shieling.' (Pálsson 1970:40).

(c) '...and rode up along Grjotargill, south to the glacier and then west along the edge of the ice to the source of Jokuls River. From there he followed the river down to Reykja Shieling. He inquired at all the shielings whether any of the shepherds had seen his ewes, but no-one had.' (Pálsson 1970:41).

(d) 'Einar had just driven the ewes into the fold and was lying on the wall, counting them. The women were milking.' (Pálsson 1970:42).

The line quoted in (a) emphasizes not only the importance of sheep in the mediaeval Icelandic economy, but also the collection of firewood. The number of sheep mentioned is significant in the light of calculations used by Albrethsen and Keller (1986:103) concerning the numbers of animals that a relatively large farm could be expected to have in Greenland. Fifty sheep was reckoned as being the norm. The following sections point to a site high up in the valley, situated on the bank of the river and consisting not only of sleeping quarters but also a pen for the animals. Milking was one of the major activities, the women carrying out this task rather than the shepherd. Two of the main determinants of site location appear to have been water and wood. The mediaeval sel were frequently located near, or even in, the forests (Albrethsen 1986:160). The collection and consumption of firewood at these sites were major contributary factors to deforestation. In those areas where wood was lacking, peat was burned instead and where this was in short supply, sheep droppings were used. Hitzler (1979:125ff) cited the lack of both wood and peat for fuel as being one of the reasons responsible for the disappearance of the sel as part of the Icelandic farming system. The proximity to water would have been of vital importance in milking and the processing of the dairy products, it being essential that the utensils were kept clean.

More details about the structures at the sites are to be found in Laxdaela Saga, written c.1245 (Magnusson and Pálsson 1969; Sveinsson 1935). Mention of shielings occurs first in relation to a sale of land:

(a) '...So the outcome was that Osvif bought from Thorarin all the land he owned on both sides of the valley from Gnupaskard to Stakkagill; the land there is rich and fertile. Osvif ran a shieling

for grazing live-stock there.' (Pálsson 1969:118).

(b) 'In those days there were thick woods in the valley. Bolli was staying at the shieling there, as Halldor had been told; the shieling stood near the river at a place now called Bollatoptir. There is a long ridge of high ground stretching from above the shieling down to Stakkagill; between this ridge and the mountainside is a large meadow, called Barm, where Bolli's farmhands were working.'(Pálsson 1969:185).

(c) 'Then they rode over to the shieling; it consisted of two huts, the sleeping-quarters and the dairy.' (Pálsson 1969:186).

One of the most interesting aspects of the description of this shieling, is the number of people who appear to be employed at the site. There are not only a shepherd and presumably women to perform the dairying tasks, but also a number of farmhands, who would appear to be gathering hay from the meadow. Bolli had risen early in the morning to arrange the day's work for the farmhands, and had gone back to bed once they had left. It seems that these extra workers were staying at the shieling, with Bolli, Gudrun and the shepherd, suggesting that the sleeping-quarters were of some considerable size.

More detail about the type of structure found at the shieling grounds appears in the description of the death of Helgi Hardbeinsson. Early on the morning of the massacre that was to take place at his shieling site, 'Helgi told his shepherd to search the woods near the shieling...' Again in this saga, there is evidence that the sites were placed near the tree-line. The shieling itself is described as being built:

> 'with one main roof-beam whose ends rested on the two gable-walls and projected out beyond them. The turf on the roof was only a year old and had not grown together yet. Thorgils now told some of his men to take hold of the ends of the roof-beam and put all their weight on them, so that the beam itself would cave in; and he told the others to guard the door, in case those inside tried to break out.....the rest of them tried to tear the roof of the shieling.....; Hunbogi the Strong and the Armodssons took one end of the roof-beam, and Thorgils, Lambi and the Bollasons took the other. They all

heaved hard at the beam, and it snapped in the middle.'

SURVEY EVIDENCE

As far as the form and location of structures is concerned, there are now, as well as the descriptions in the documentary sources and the limited field-work of Hitzler (1979), a number of useful plans of sites acquired through recent survey work. Sveinbjarnardóttir's survey (forthcoming) has produced evidence of summering activity from an early period, but the majority of the remains found on the ground and described in the report are of later date. The number of structures found at sites was generally one or two, but the average number of rooms in each structure was three to four. Only two sites had a single structure. Only one site produced a large number of structures, namely ten. The sites varied considerably in lay-out from single rooms to complexes of varying numbers of rooms, placed at right angles, end to end, side by side and in two rows. The rooms were relatively small, and ranged in length from 2-9m, with an average of 4-5m. It was found that the sites were characterised by a lack of enclosure walls, this feature generally being associated with farming activity. There was also little evidence of pens, although these did appear at some of the sites.

As far as location is concerned, height above sea-level was found to vary. However, the distance between the home-farm and the sel was found to be relatively short, allowing easy access between permanent and summer dwellings. Sveinbjarnardóttir (forthcoming) concluded that the three types of seter identified by Reinton in Norway were not to be found in Iceland. It appeared that most of the low-lying sites were early, and that the later sites were placed in the higher-lying inland. In some cases, it also appeared that the step between a small farm and a shieling was very short, for example, several sites in Austurdalur changed from shielings to farms and then shielings again, probably depending upon the climate and the general prosperity.

D. THE SITES OF GREENLAND

Sites were identfified and surveyed as part of an intensive field-survey of mediaeval Norse ruins in the Qordlortoq Valley by Albrethsen and Keller from 1974-79 (1986). This valley connects Tunugdliarrfik Fjord (Eiriksfjord in the Mediaeval Period) and Nordre

Sermilik in the northern, and most productive, part of the so-called 'Eastern Settlement'. The sites were found in the high country north and south of the valley, thus in marginal locations, and this, together with the fact that the remains indicated that they could not be full-scale farms, suggested that these were seter sites. This type of site was previously unknown in Greenland.

The production of winter fodder today is very difficult, and Albrethsen and Keller (1986:95) concluded that this must also have been true in the Norse period. The full exploitation of pastures is reduced to four or five months by the Greenlandic climate, and for the rest of the year animals have to be provided with varying amounts of collected fodder. Sheep, goats and horses are able to stay outside during the colder periods with a limited amount of fodder. Cattle, however, are a problem, having little resistance to the cold and needing to be byred for at least half of the year. The amount of winter fodder required by the Norse farms must have been very considerable, particularly considering that cattle breeding appears to have played an important role as far as the larger farms were concerned. Its collection would, thus, have been vital.

The ruins in the Qordlortoq valley were found at heights between 200m and 400m a.s.l.. Albrethsen and Keller (1986:96), on the basis of Reinton's seter classification, constructed a model of how the different types of seter ruins should appear:

Full seter: the group should consist of living quarters and pens, possibly with byres and barns, and be located where permanent settlement was unlikely. Elevation was probably important. However, other conditions were also important, for example local weather which could make certain areas of lowland unsuitable for year-round settlement but usable during the summer months.

Dairy seter: the group should consist of pens and possibly byres and barns. It should be in a location which was easily accessible, and be relatively close to the farm.

Haymaking seter: the group should consist of one or more barns in areas where access is difficult and/or in places with good but limited grass areas.

Using this model, the function of each of the ruin groups was evaluated. There was, however, a problem in distinguishing between small farms at high elevations and actual full seters without excavation.

It was noted that the sites were found from 200m to 400m a.s.l.. The latter height appears to have been the elevation which the ruins never exceed (Albrethsen and Keller 1986:100). Albrethesen and Keller pointed to those located on the north side of the valley as having typical positions. They are situated on the valley edge, exactly at the point where the hillside converges with the mountain plateau. Today this elevation marks an ecological border between herbs and shrubbery on the lower side and sedge grass on the upper. From the valley north towards the Inland Ice, good grazing areas can be found to a height of 800m, but no groups of ruins were found. The reason for this could be that there was sufficient grass near the permanent dwellings so that the more remote pastures did not have to be used. However, it also seemed likely to Albrethsen and Keller (1986:101) that these higher areas did not offer possibilities for firewood and were therefore useless for seters. As well as proximity to fuel sources, it was found that water was an important location factor, only two groups being without water today. The majority were associated with lakes, while others were associated with brooks and rivers.

Of secondary structures found at the sites, it was found that pens were an important feature, used not only for confining animals but also in the collection of manure. There were also storage houses, usually constructed of dry-stone masonry, which may have been used for the storage of milk and its associated vessels, or the storage of hay, wood and manure. A third type of structure was a small stone one with a clear connection with water: a number have suffered from erosion because of their streamside locations. It was suggested that these might have been well houses or washing houses, used to wash the dairy equipment, or that they may have acted as coolers.

Albrethsen and Keller (1986:101-105), besides being interested in the ruin groups, also wished to estimate the resources that the settlers had available in this valley. This was done by vegetation

mapping. The result of this inquiry confirmed that the infield area of the farms could not cover the demands of winter fodder, even for a small number of cattle. Thus, it was essential that a strategy be developed to meet the extra fodder demands. The natural reaction would have been to collect the additional fodder from the meadows of the valley bed where the grass was good and the distance to the permanent farm was short. One prerequisite was that the animals should be removed from the valley during the summer months. The establishment of seters meant that the animals were away from the valley, and that the dairy products could be processed without them having to return to the permanent dwellings. There were also the possibilities of collecting hay and fertilising the ground for future crops. The seter was, thus, 'a natural adaptation to the environmental conditions' (Albrethsen and Keller 1986:105).

13.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF SHIELINGS ON MAN

It is clear from an examination of the archaeological evidence that the historical seter can be identified in Viking period Norway. However, it is also clear that there are dangers in identifying this practice in earlier periods, there being considerable evidence for the use of the mountains for purposes other than pasture, for example permanent settlement, iron production and hunting. The form which the seter practice took during the Viking period has yet to be elucidated. Frequently, Reinton's seter definitions are used as a basis for a study of sites, but it should be noted that these classifications are based on the study of modern material and cannot necessarily be applied to older sites.

This is one of the main problems concerning the research in the North Atlantic colonies, and particularly in Greenland. The sites are examined in the context of the historical Norwegian practice, and little allowance is made for the fact that both the form of sites and the way in which they were used would have been influenced by climate and topography, for example. The development of the 'seter', although viewed in a wider context, must be examined in the local context, and the likelihood of variation from one area to another must be expected.

In this way, as far as Man is concerned, it can hardly be expected,

given the climatic conditions and the nature of the land, that an agricultural system such as operated in Norway or Greenland should appear on this small island. However, it is clear that the North Atlantic settlers were acquainted with the use of the mountain areas for pasture, and particularly with the use of the seter. Also, given the fact that rectangular structures with certain features such as a long-fire and benches are generally assumed to be Norse in Celtic areas settled by Norsemen, it does not seem unreasonable to postulate that similar structures or features to those identified in Norway and the North Atlantic colonies may be present on Man.

Gelling suggested that at Block Eary it was possible to see a change from an Iron Age use of the site to a Norse period one, on the basis of the superimposition of roughly rectangular huts of turf on the circular structure of stone in Mound A at Block Eary. These rectangular huts, however, are considerably smaller than those excavated at Argisbrekka, for example, and at the Norwegian sites. In the context of Argisbrekka, the excavated Manx huts, and those deduced from surface outlines, would be seen as work-huts, some 3 by 2-2.5m, with roof-bearing posts restricted to either a post in each corner of the room or to a single post at each gable end. Mahler's dwelling houses were considerably larger, 7-8m long and 3.5m wide, similar in size to those found at the Norwegian sites, but differed in having walls entirely of turf, sand, clay and gravel, and did not have open gable ends. However, there are a number of large mounds at the Manx sites, although the circular shape of the majority would suggest that they have not been formed by the superimposition of large rectangular structures. Within the minority group of catalogued sites, there is only one elongated mound which would appear to have the clear outline of a large rectangular structure on its surface, although there are other possible examples in the vicinity of this site now coming to light. The site is Sartfell 2 (M34), and the rectangular depression on the mound is some 6.4 by 2.4m. The shape of the mound clearly indicates that it has been formed by the repeated building of rectangular as opposed to circular structures. There are six other mounds at the Sartfell site, of which only two are elongated and neither has the

outline of a structure on the surface.

Other mounds which can be included within this minority group are F and I at Druidale 1 (M1). It is possible that these were formed by the build-up of occupation material from adjacent structures, but examination of their surfaces suggests that a difference in the form of the structures may be indicated. At Glen Dhoo there is a clear example of the former process, and here the surface of the mounded area is uneven, making it possible to identify separate mounds by height changes. The excessive length of the Druidale mounds, 23m and 22m respectively, argues against single structures, but the shape could still indicate the superimposition of huts of a different form from those suggested by the circular mounds.

The most interesting parallel, however, is that for the small rectangular structure of turf at Injebreck. This is a house at Argisa on Skuvoy, also small, rectangular and of turf. Besides being similar in appearance, the location of the structures is also comparable, both utilising a slope as a long-wall, and located in a small area between the slope and stream.

Dykes and banks are features of some of the seter sites in Norway and the North Atlantic islands. However, as in many areas of Britain (e.g. Ramm *et al* 1970 for England), the presence of such features is frequently used to distinguish between upland farms and the seasonal shieling sites. Pens also appear at a number of sites but there are no clear parallels for the few Manx examples.

It is, thus, clear that despite the fact that there are certain similarities between the sites of Norway and the North Atlantic colonies and those of Man, examination of the structural evidence indicates there is little to uphold the view that shieling in Man owed its main development to the Norse period and that the practice may have been introduced by Norse settlers. The only evidence which points to the use of the sites during this period is the coin of Stephen, and the merels board would also appear to indicate a presence at this site in the Norse or Mediaeval period.

13.3 THE INSULAR CELTIC EVIDENCE

It was believed that, having demonstrated that there is little to

suggest that the sites belong to the Norse period, it was important to consider the shieling evidence from the Irish Sea area. The reasons behind the selection of the Kingdom rather than the Irish Sea region for the basis of this study are explained in Chapter 1.

A. THE HAFOD OF WALES

E. Davies (1985:76) wrote that the 'general concept of the agrarian scene in hill country and on the skirts of high moorland in medieval Wales is of primary settlement, the *hendre* (lit. the old homestead) and an accessory station, the *hafoty* (lit. the house on, at, or of, the *hafod*, which was then the name of the summer grazing area.' The *hendre* was the family settlement, occupied and farmed by a kindred group. It consisted of two, three or possibly more dwelling houses placed beside the tilled land, and this was handed down from one generation to the next. The settlements generally occupied the better soils and positions, and the holdings were divided into scattered plots, strips and quillets to ensure an equitable division of the varying types of land. Besides having a share of the tilled land, the families also enjoyed the right to an undivided share of the meadowland in proportion to their arable holding, and to common of pasture on the waste.

In areas of small arable holdings, both the wood and the waste were of considerable importance, the former providing fuel, building materials and pannage, and the latter providing turbary and pasture. In spring the stock - horned cattle, sheep and goats - were driven to the upland pastures, and either part, or all, of the family moved with them. The traditional date for moving was May Day, and for the return was All Saint's Day (Davies 1985:76-77; Sayce 1956:135). At the pastures, butter and cheese were produced. Other activities, however, were also carried out, for example hay was cut for the winter fodder supply.

The summer structures (*hafotai* in north Wales and *hafodydd*) would appear to have been lightly-built. Although the mediaeval Welsh Laws itemise and value the components of the winter house (Davies 1985:77-78), this is not the case for the summer dwellings, it merely being noted that the fork was one penny in value and that the whole building was worth forty pence. Davies (1985:78) concluded that it

seemed likely that the dwellings were built of poles and wattles, as did Sayce (1957:37), who emphasised, however, that there were likely to have been considerable local variations in the form of the structures, related to the nature and availability of timber. There is, however, no archaeological evidence to support this conclusion, the houses at sites with *hafod* names being largely structures of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and being either of stone or having stone foundations (see Crampton 1966, 1968; Miller 1967b). It has been suggested by the Royal Commission (1956, 1960, 1964) that a number of circular and rectangular structures of stone, found at altitudes from 183m (600') to 534m (1,750') a.s.l., in Caenarvonshire, may be the remains of *hafotai*. A similar conclusion has been reached, for example, by Crampton (1966, 1968) and Miller (1967b) for sites in the Black Mountain of Carmarthenshire and the Brecon Beacons. It was found that the circular huts were generally 3.1-6.1m (10-20') in diameter, and that the rectangular ones, with rubble-filled stone walls, were 3.7-12.2m (12-40') in length and 2.7-5.5m (9-18') in width. Davies (1985:78) compared these with the shiels of Scotland and the booleys of Ireland. Sayce (1957:41-42) quoted Pennant's description of the rectangular stone huts, some of which he had visited near Llanberis. These consisted of a long low room, with a hole at one end to let out the smoke from the fire which lay beneath, and the beds, of hay, were along one side. He also referred to E. Owens, however, who found eight ruined *hafotai* in Llanllechid. These structures were small, but divided into two or three rooms. Davies (1985:82) suggested that in its simplest form the *hafoty* was likely to have consisted of a single cottage, with one or two enclosures. Miller (1967b) found that many of the huts in the Brecon Beacons were associated with pens, 1.8m by 3.7m to 5.5m by 6.5m in diameter.

As far as distance of the summer sites from the home-farms is concerned, Sayce (1956:141) noted that this would have depended on the topography, as well as upon rights and ownership. Where the relief was gentle a much longer distance could have been necessary than where the land was steep, for example. Davies (1985:82) wrote that the summer dwellings were, in the Middle Ages, some distance from the farms. If

they had been near the farms, then a summer migration would have been unnecessary. He pointed to the comment of Giraldus Cambrensis that the Welsh lived in small huts on the border of woods, suggesting that they established their summer sites at the upper edge of the treeline bordering on the mountain moorlands. It appears that as late as the nineteenth century, some *hafodydd* were still at considerable distances from the farms, folk evidence suggesting in one case a distance of 4.8-6.4km (3-4 miles) to the hafod. Other examples suggest steep climbs of over 2.4km (1.5 miles). Examining the distribution of farms with names in *hafod* and *hafoty*, Davies (1985:90) found that they were to be found in all locations from sea-level to heights of 457m (1,500') or more. He suggested that some of those at lower levels were related to the summer grazing of the wetlands, but concluded that further research was necessary to elucidate this. The majority of farms were found to lie between about 152m (500') and 335m (1,100'). The *hendrefi* were generally along the outer fringes of the upland at heights from about 183m (600') to 244m (800'), and the *hafodydd* were generally either along, or a short distance behind, the waste. They tended to lie upslope from the farms with *hendre* names, usually at heights of 244-274m (800-900') in the west and 305-381m (1000-1,250') elsewhere.

The use of the pastures for the purpose of shieling appears to have continued from the mediaeval period to at least the end of the eighteenth century (Davies 1985:79). The old land system, described above, crumbled following the Norman Conquest of 1066, as the growth of individual personal ownership was fostered. This led to the consolidation of former sharelands into farms and small holdings, and a number of substantial estates. In western areas this was accompanied by the construction of walls and hedges. These developments did not in the early stages affect the upland areas. However, by the sixteenth century, with the Act of Union and the breaking up of the monastic estates, the land around the summer dwellings was subject to considerable appropriation. Traditional use of the same grazings led to the belief in personal ownership of the summer sites, and many freeholders enclosed parts of the lord's wastes and attached it to their freehold land. Davies (1985:84), thus, described the *hafod/hafoty*

as becoming a growth point. The enclosures at the site, for example the milking fold and the calf pen were improved by dunging and trampling by the animals, and became worth tilling. - Davies found that it was characteristic of the *hafod* settlements to have a clutch of small fields immediately around the dwelling, larger fields around these and then even larger enclosures of rough pasture. Often after the creation of this separate farm, a new summer site would be established on the edge of the waste and further expansion outwards of permanent settlement would ensue. This process continued as long as land was easily accessible, of sufficient quality and climatic conditions were favourable. Davies (1985:86) found that it was not uncommon on hill farms to find fields named after a *hafod* or *hafoty* indicating the location of summer pastures which had been overtaken by the spread of enclosure. There was a limit, however, on the outward and upward movement of settlement, in that in a largely cattle economy, an independent farm could only grow if it had sufficient winter fodder to maintain or increase the numbers of animals. Sayce (1957:83) related the decay in the shieling practice to the large increase in the numbers of sheep in Wales. Davies (1985:87), however, has suggested that this growth in sheep numbers may be related to the obsolescence of the *hafod* economy, as farms began to move into areas which could not support the numbers of stock. Sheep required less attention, did not require to be stall-fed, and could be sent to more distant and rougher land. A simpler pattern of settlement was associated with sheep farming, a single shepherd's hut - *llwest*-, with one or two small enclosures for lambing and shearing, and possibly also for a cow and a pony, sufficed. The growth of winter fodder was not possible, the land being too poor and the length of the growing season being too short. These seem to have developed into farms in a similar way to the *hafodydd*, but very much slower.

It appears that the *hafod* settlements reached their upper limit by the mid-nineteenth century (Davies 1985:88). The tithe survey and estate maps indicate that the characteristic location was at the upland end of the farm, at or near the mountain wall which marked the boundary between upland fields and the enclosed rough grazing and the open

moorland. The animals could be pastured on the moorland, and the farmer's interest in that part of the common grazing was protected. In 1773, it appears from Pennant's description (quoted by Sayce 1956:119 and Davies 1985:88) of the seasonal movement of animals and people to the summer pastures, that the practice of shieling, thus involving the production of butter and cheese, still occurred in Wales. However, it would seem from accounts as little as twenty years later that the practice had disappeared from many areas, or that its character had changed, visits to the *hafotai* being for a single day. The most recent record of a movement to the *hafod* is of 1862.

B. THE BOOLEY OF IRELAND

The word *booley* is the anglicised Irish *búaile*, the meanings of which include 'a cattle-fold' and a 'cattle-herd', and it is generally used of the practice of summer grazing, the place at which this occurred, and the dwellings to be found there (Graham [nee Sidebotham] 1954:6-7). An examination of the living traditions of booleying in Ireland by Graham (1954:14) showed that the practice was little remembered. Only in a few areas was there any tradition, for example the western parts of Donegal, Mayo and Galway. Outside these, there appeared to be a few isolated areas - the Galtee Mountains, Mourne Mountains, Bann valley, Antrim Glens and a few valleys in the Sperrins and Wicklow Mountains. The evidence indicated that the practice had not generally survived beyond the mid-nineteenth century, and further examination suggested that by the seventeenth century, it was restricted to the poorer districts of the country (Graham 1954:152).

Booleying was an integral part of the rundale system of clachans and open-field cultivation. Farmers of a townland shared the common grazing in *sums*, each farmer holding a number which varied according to the amount of arable land he held (Graham 1953:74). The basic unit of the *sum* was a full grown cow. The movement to the pastures was usually made in May, and the cattle and herders usually returned at the end of October. This removal from the old residence to the summer pastures about May Day, and the return about November Day is referred to in the Brehon Laws, and suggests that this type of transhumance can be dated at least as far back as the early Christian period. The laws were

compiled between the sixth and the fourteenth centuries, and it has been argued by O'Moghráin (1944:45) that those concerning the above may date to the earlier period. Graham (1954:181,214) has argued that some of the summer pastures were originally made within the old Irish land units - the ballybetagh (*baile biataigh*) and its quarter (*ceathramhadh*), or twelve ploughlands (*seisreach*). The latter they held separately, and the former in common. O'Corráin (1972:54) noted that transhumance was practised before the Normans, but that its scale was limited by the extent of the Irish petty kingdom, and the nature of the landscape (proximity to the moorland etc.). He pointed to the fact that there are references to women going to the herds in the mountains where they were engaged in butter-making, references also to the *macha samraid* 'the summer milking place in the hills', and in the life of St. Columb there is an account of a journey into the mountain by the monks where they found youths herding their cattle. Graham argued (1954:181) that the practice was very much a Celtic tradition and expected very similar land use patterns in Wales, Scotland and the Isle of Man. The summer pastures, she believed, were never very distant, although they may, in some cases, have been 8 or 9.6km (5-6 miles) from the home farms. While the populations remained relatively small, communities which had extensive summer pastures were able to have several summer settlements and move from one to another during the summer season. Graham also believed (1954:217) that the more widespread unreclaimed lowland bogs, and the uncolonised mountain ranges, meant that the conditions for transhumance were much more widespread. As the population increased and new lowland communities were established, however, they claimed parts of the grazing grounds, until eventually each had only one summer pasture.

For booleying to survive, there needed to be an excess of summer pasturage over settled farmland (Graham 1954:97), as transhumance was the only way of using the moorland distant from the main farms. Graham (1954:215-216) has related its decline directly to population increase and the resultant colonisation of marginal land, formerly summer pasture. Transhumance was an uneconomic method of using land which could be improved and cultivated. Other factors, however, appear to

have contributed to this decline: the Plantations of the seventeenth century; the decline of livestock from the wars of the seventeenth century and the government policy of the repression of the Irish; the availability of the potato suited to cultivation on marginal land; the institution of charges by some landlords for stock on the mountain pastures; the seasonal emigration of young women, and changes in the livestock marketing methods. The practice also underwent changes, for example, in Achill Parish, Co. Mayo, earlier this century, girls, instead of staying at the pastures, cycled up during the day, watched the cattle, milked them, shut them in *bóthógs* at night, and went home (Graham 1954:49). Changes of this type occurred in other areas at a much earlier period. For example, in Co. Kerry, there is a suggestion in local tradition that in the latest stages of the use of the booleys, the herdsmen were in daily communication with their homes and only the livestock stayed the night at the *búaile* (Aalen 1964:41).

THE FORM AND LOCATION OF THE STRUCTURES

Some of the booley huts are well preserved, notably the rectangular ones (Evans 1939:221) and the clochans in Co. Kerry (Aalen 1964). Others take the form of low spreading mounds of grass with occasional boulders showing through, or small piles of stones under rocky outcrops (Evans 1957:36). In shape, the structures are most frequently circular, oval or rectangular. They can be single structures, be divided into two rooms, or can have small annexes, for example a smaller circular structure attached to one end of a rectangular one (see Sidebotham 1950:44-46; Williams and Robinson 1983:35). Folk tradition in County Antrim and Londonderry indicated that the huts, circular and oblong in shape, were built of sods upon a foundation of earth and stones, that the roof was constructed of bog timbers covered by long strips of sod and that they were thatched with heather secured by ropes (Evans 1979:35-37; see also Evans 1939:221; O'Dubhthaigh 1984:43). On Achill Island, Piggott (1954:23) found that all the huts were uniform in plan, that is externally oval in shape, but internally rectangular with dimensions of 4.9m and 2.4m (16' and 8'). In the Errigal district of Donegal, Evans found square booleys, some 3m by 3m (10' by 10'), but this shape does not appear to have been common. The internal features

and arrangements seem to have varied little. Some of the structures were partitioned into two rooms (Wiliams and Robinson 1983:35), for example on Achill Island (Piggott 1954:23). The fire-place was commonly against the west gable, and directly above it was a smoke-hole (O'Dubhthaigh 1984:44). Evans (1939:221) noted that, in Donegal, the fire was made outside except in wet weather. The floor was of shale and of clay. In some of the huts there were 'keeping-holes' or cuphoards (Piggot 1954:23; Aalen 1964:44). Most of the structures appear to have had a single entrance, facing south if possible (O'Duhthaigh 1984:43), although opposing doorways are to be found in some of the rectangular structures (Williams 1983:35). The doorways would have been closed by a gorse cover (Evans 1939:221).

Other structures have been discovered at the booleys which are worth noting. These are smaller than the houses, and are usually located underground or under a large bank. O'Dubhthaigh (1984:46) recorded that a hole was dug out and lined with flagstones above, below, and on the sides. This was then used for the storing of the dairy products. It is interesting to note that there is no folk record or archaeological evidence to suggest that cultivation was carried out at the booley (Graham 1954:38), and there are few references to the association of banks, related to stock control or acting as boundaries, and enclosures. Exceptions include the site at Sruthan Burn on Achill Island, which has evidence of a large stone-built enclosure with a narrow entrance (Piggott 1954:19, fig.1), and that of Auchnabrack, Ballyutoag, which lies within curvilinear enclosures (Williams 1984) (Figs.118,119).

The huts are generally to be found in groups, ranging from five to twenty, and are either clustered or spaced within calling distance of each other (Evans 1979:36). As far as the location of the huts is concerned, they are generally to be found in the hills, in sheltered hollows in the valleys, by the banks of streams. Evans (1979:36) noted that the huts were nearly always located near running water, usually near the headwaters of mountain steams, where there were patches of bright green grass. On Achill Island the huts were frequently built into a sloping bank of peat or gravel (Piggott 1954:23; Evans 1979:37).

This would also appear to have been the case in north-west Donegal, Niall O'Dubhthaigh (1984:43) recording that the men sought a small slope or height of gravel in a dry place, the side of which they cut away and levelled until they had a large wide space. In this way, only three side of the hut had to be constructed, one long wall and two gables. As far as height is concerned, there is little information available, but Williams recorded that the Crocknaboley huts lay at some 213m (700') a.s.l., the Glenmakeeren huts are at some 168m (550') (Williams and Robinson 1983:30, fig.1), and Sidebotham (1950:44) wrote that the Goodland huts occupied a narrow outcrop of chalk between 213m and 274m (700-900') a.s.l.. Turning to the distance of the summer settlements from the home farms, this is found to vary according to the topography. For example, few of the valleys in the Dingle peninsula are more than 3.2-4.8km (2-3 miles) away from human habitations (Aalen 1964:41), whereas for Donegal O'Dubhthaigh (1984:48) indicates a distance of some 9.6-11.2km (6-7 miles) to the booley houses. O'Danachair (1984:36) in his overview of the evidence of summer pasture in Ireland, wrote that the booleys were any distance up to 16km (10 miles) from the home farm, but that the average distance was 6.4-8km (4-5 miles).

SURVEY AND EXCAVATION

Survey at Goodland, Co. Antrim, by Sidebotham (1950) produced evidence of 129 hut sites in an area of thirty acres. Most of the huts were single-celled, and round, oblong or rectangular structures with sod walls. There were, however, a small number which were sub-rectangular with small annexes attached. In most cases, the long axes of the huts were at ninety degrees to the slope. In 1949, Sidebotham excavated three of the huts: a larger sub-rectangular hut with two circular annexes of a group clustering in a hollow; an example of a small oval hut; and a larger oval one. Of these two oval huts, the smaller had dimensions of 2.4m and 1.5m internally, and walls 1-1.5m thick, and the larger was 3.5m by 2.3m internally, and had walls of similar thickness. The sub-rectangular hut consisted of an oblong compartment 4.5m by 2.1m internally, with opposing doorways in the long walls. The sod walls were 2.1m thick, and attached to one end was an

annexe 2.1m in diameter with a narrow external door. A further smaller cell was attached to this compartment, and had its own external doorway. Excavation and surface examination indicated that the mud and sod buildings had been frequently rebuilt and repaired, not always on the same site. In 1952, three or four more huts were excavated at this site by H.J. Case, of the Ashmolean Museum (Graham 1954:41; Williams and Robinson 1983:36). One was sub- rectangular with an annexe, and the others oval. All were constructed of sods with incorporated boulders and sub-soil clay. The only published parallels for the annexes which Williams and Robinson (1983:38) could find outside North Antrim, were in the Mournes. Here, they were assumed to be stores for milk products. Williams interpreted the annexe at Glenmakeeran as being an outbuilding rather than separate living quarters, and pointed to the fact that there was no internal door between it and the house. The size of the rooms precluded their use for the housing of cattle. Outside Ireland, Williams and Robinson pointed to similar structures in Northern England and in Scotland, which in the latter case were also interpreted as dairy stores.

Nearly ten years later, a booley house was excavated by Evans and Proudfoot (1958), in 1957, at the Deer's Meadow in the Mourne Mountains. The hut formed part of a group of structures and small mounds lying on the gravel margins of a small stream. The hut was some 4m by 4m internally and was partly paved. The walls were constructed of sod, there was a single entrance on the north-east side, and a central hearth. Two other groups were located and surveyed in the area, consisting of similar features.

More recently, one of three similar booley houses has been excavated at Glenmakeeran in Co. Antrim by Williams and Robinson (1983). The house was sub-rectangular in plan, consisted of two rooms aligned north-west to south-east along the crest of a hill, and had external dimensions of 10.2m and 5.2m. The main room was indicated by the base of a sod wall 0.8-1.4m thick. There were two narrow, opposing entrances, centrally placed in the side walls, marked by one or two schist slabs on their south-east sides. No post-holes were found to indicate fixed wooden door frames. The floor was crudely cobbled, and

there was evidence of a hearth, offset towards the lower gable of the hut. There was a second compartment at the south-east end, which was square in plan with similar sod walls, enclosing an area 1.8m by 1.7m. There was an entrance in the south-east wall, 0.8m wide, flanked by a few schist slabs. The floor was natural gravel. The sod walls did not have a continuous stone facing or a dry-stone footing, which made it difficult for the excavator to distinguish slumped sod walling from that in its original position. Evidence suggested that the walls were constructed of sods cut from the site of the intended house, and there was no indication of successive habitation layers. The lack of post-holes suggested that these walls were either load-bearing in terms of roof-support, or that cruck-trusses were used to support the roof independently of the walls. Williams and Robinson (1983:37) believed that the latter was more likely, sod only providing a load-bearing wall for a limited period of time before the cohesive strength of the incorporated vegetation breaks down. A similar shaped structure has been found at Crocknaboley, Coolnagoppoge townland, in Ulster. Survey, here, indicated the remains of at least ten small rectangular houses (Williams and Robinson 1983:35), most some 5m by 3m, with sod wall footings. One is sub-rectangular with a circular annexe at its lower end.

Williams followed the above excavations with the examination and excavation of of a site which he postulated was a 'transhumance village' (1984:37). This was Ballyutoag on the north-west margins of the Belfast Mountains (1984), and he and Yates examined another very similar site at Killylane (1984). At the former site, four large sub-rectangular enclosures were identified by means of aerial photography. Associated with these was a complex settlement, a site with enclosed house platforms and field system. The group of curvilinear enclosures at Aughnabrack, are located on good land at a height of 274m (900') a.s.l., and comprise a series of curvilinear fields, approximately 10 ha. (24 acres) in extent. Associated with these are three smaller curvilinear enclosures, the first (1) roughly oval in shape and delineated by a low earth bank. There is a clear entrance to the south-west. Within this enclosure, eleven low,

circular, flat-topped mounds were identified, lying just within the perimeter of the bank. The adjoining enclosure (2), marked also by an earthern bank, has an entrance to the north-east. Seven low mounds were identified just within the bank, and three more, and a low sub-rectangular one, lay in a more central position. The third enclosure (3), some 150m to the north, is almost circular in shape, and is again delineated by a low earth bank. This enclosure has, however, been damaged considerably and only two hut circles were visible. To the west of Enclosures 1 and 2 are fields formed by very similar low earth banks, and there are clear signs of cultivation within.

The disposition of huts within Enclosure 1 suggested to Williams that the features were contemporary. Excavation of the enclosure demonstrated that it consisted of a well-defined dump of compacted brown earth containing old sods. It was 2m broad and 0.5m high. On both the sides and the flat top, stones were found. Outside the north side there was a shallow ditch, 2m wide and 0.1m deep, filled with a rich, dark soil. Within the enclosure, Williams excavated two huts.

House platform A proved to have had four main phases, followed by a squatter phase. The first phase consisted of a round-house. A ditch marked the entrance to the structure, and within a gap in this two post-holes were located. The outline and construction of the house was indicated by a series of pits and post-holes dispersed irregularly. There was a central hearth with a spread of charcoal in which four small stones were set. The hearth, however, lacked an enclosing stone structure. A post-hole to the south, and a group of stake-holes to the north-west, were associated with the hearth on the west side. A second group of stake-holes were found to the south of the hearth. There was also a shallow drain in the interior of the house. In Phase 2, there was little alteration, the main new feature being a pavement of stone flags in the doorway and extending south of the related hearth. In Phase 3, two shaped basalt pillars replaced the post-holes marking the entrance. In the interior, there was a grey clay floor in the west area. There was no evidence of a hearth. In this phase, the perimeter of the structure on the east side was marked by a scatter of small stones, and on the west by a clay bank. Phase 4 contained the best

preserved house. Basalt stone wall footings indicated a round-house 4m in diameter. The wall survived for the most part in two courses, but to the south-east there was an area where it survived in three courses. In this phase the ditch was obsolete. The entrance portals were still in position, and there was a central hearth. A single stake-hole was found on the south side, and could have supported a fire-side crane. Above this phase was the sqatter phase, comprising a number of hearths located on and outside the obsolete structure. The excavation of House B failed to produce the detailed structural evidence obtained for A. It was a low grassy mound, 6.5m by 4m, 5m to the south-east of A. The trial trench did, however, produce evidence of a hearth.

Within Enclosure 2, House C was excavated, again by trial trench. This was a low, grassy, sub-rectangular mound before excavation. No trace of an occupation surface was found.

The curvilinear enclosures with their house platforms and related fields found at Aughnabrack were a previously unrecognised type of site in Ireland (Figs.118,119). Comparable sites in upland locations have, however, been found at Browndod, Tildary, Killylane (already mentioned, and of particular significance because it is the only other one to have traces of cultivation), and at Buckua in County Antrim (Williams 1984:47). Clearly pastoral activities play an important role in the economy of these sites. Williams identified a total of twenty-three house platforms at Auchnabrack, suggesting to him the presence of some hundred people at the site, if the structures are contemporary. Williams believed that it was unclear whether the settlement was permanent or seasonal in character, the cropping evidence indicating that there must have been a milder climate, but not necessarily indicating permanent occupation. The height of the site, and the fact that it is surrounded by fertile lowlands, seemed to add weight to a seasonal interpretation.

DATING

There is, on the whole, little dating evidence available for the booley huts. The excavation by Evans and Proudfoot (1958:129) produced one struck flake of flint, and a small piece of charred pine bark. The excavators postulated a mid-eighteenth century date (1958:130).

Sidebotham's excavations in 1949 (1950:46) produced sherds of pottery of indeterminate age. The excavation of three huts by H.J. Case in 1952 produced more finds - a sixteenth century silver annular brooch, seventeenth century glazed pottery, fragments of clay pipes and a glass bead. There is, however, archaeological evidence of earlier use of the booley. Williams and Robinson (1983) dated the excavated booley house at Glenmakeeran to the mediaeval period. The finds from the hut were six sherds of everted-rim ware and two iron fragments, the pottery suggesting a broadly mediaeval context. The association with Goodland appeared to strengthen the case for a late mediaeval date. The use of summer pasture sites in the Early Christian period has been suggested by the excavations at Auchnabrack. The finds obtained from the successive occupation layers were: sherds of plain and grass-tempered souterrain ware; flint nodules and fragments, some probably strike-a lights; flint blades and scrapers; a hammer stone; the stem of a bronze pin, and the broken fragment of a D-sectioned lignite bracelet. The radiocarbon dates, as well as the finds, indicated an Early Christian period date. These were 580+/-80 a.d. for Phase 3 of House A, 720+/-70 a.d. for Phase 4, and c.710 a.d. for the squatter phase. The dates from Phases 1 and 2 were anomalous, the former being c.945 a.d., and the latter c.665 a.d.. The hearth in House B produced a date of c.775 a.d..

13.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE STUDY OF SHIELINGS ON MAN

This cursory survey of the evidence of transhumance in both Wales and Ireland indicates that there is considerable reason to believe that the practices indicated by the sites in Man have their origins in Celtic rather than Norse traditions. This conclusion is based on the evidence of the land systems, the similarity of which has been commented upon by Graham, the location and general form of the sites, and particularly on the evidence obtained from the recent excavations of Mediaeval and possibly Early Christian booley houses in Northern Ireland by Williams. These excavations have indicated that, certainly in the former period, the structures were sub-rectangular in shape and had walls of sods rather than stone. Clearly, these are important parallels for the Manx huts, and there is no reason to postulate a Norse origin to explain the existence of sub-rectangular structures of

sods at Block Eary and Injebreck.

In the case of the Early Christian period, the evidence is more problematic. Williams has interpreted the site at Auchnabrack as a transhumance village, although he did not rule out the possibility that it could have been permanently settled, particularly given the evidence of the associated field-system. This site, however, has features which can be paralleled in Man, namely at the site of Glen Dhoo (M32). Here, there are two enclosures, delimited by low earth banks, and evidence of mounds in the interiors. In the case of the larger, roughly circular enclosure, there is considerable similarity between this and the Auchnabrack enclosures. There is no evidence of a field system at Glen Dhoo, indicating that its function was a purely pastoral one.

Other sites on Man also demonstrate similarities, namely Druidale 1 and 2 (M1 and M2). Both sites have evidence of low earth banks, in the case of the former creating both a large enclosure and stock-controls, and the other sides of the enclosures are formed by streams. The excavation of House A at the Irish site is particularly significant in relation to the evidence from Block Eary on Man, the structures of Phases 1 to 4 being round-houses, and that of the latest phase having a stone foundation. This house had an internal diameter of 4m, and was, thus, slightly smaller than Hut 1 of Mound A at Block Eary (roughly 6m). Features such as the paved entrance of Phase 2, the central hearths, and the Phase 1 stake-holes around the hearth area, can be directly paralleled. Hut 1 is the only round-house to have been excavated at Block Eary by Gelling, but it is not unlikely that there are similar structures in the other large mounds at this site and others. It has been noted by Morris (1983), for example, that the circular structure beneath the keeill at Keeill Vael in Druidale is very similar to the Block Eary hut. However, given the possibility that the Irish evidence does indicate permanent settlement at such a height, and in such a location, then the possibility also that some of the Manx sites could have been those of permanent rather than seasonal settlement should be considered.

The location of mounds within large enclosures is not a feature common to shieling sites either in Britain or further afield, and even

if it does not indicate permanent settlement, it would certainly appear to indicate a different form of transhumance from that which is understood by the word 'shieling'. The lack of animal pens in Man is particularly interesting, these being common at both the Welsh and Irish sites, as is the presence of banks related to the herding of animals on Man, but not in either of the two other areas.

Parallels for other structures found on Man are also to be found in Ireland, for example, the small rectangular structure of turf at Injebreck (M17), a parallel for which has already been noted in Faroe. The location and the form of this hut is very similar to those described by O'Dubhthaigh in Donegal, and the siting of mounds at Block Eary, for example, against a slope, would suggest a similar construction technique. The Welsh stuctural evidence is less useful, the identified structures being of stone rather than turf, and there being little comprehensive published survey material available. However, it is clear that rectangular structures have also been common features at the sites, and that these were frequently flimsily built. As far as roofing is concerned, Williams' investigations have produced important evidence concerning small structures of turf. One feature noted by Gelling which can be paralleled in Donegal, for example, is the use of external rather than internal fires.

The general location of sites in Ireland and Wales also compares favourably with that of Man, valleys sides, mountain streams, hollows, and other features, being important location factors.

As in the case of the Norwegian evidence, however, there is still the problem of projecting an essentially mediaeval and historical practice back into earlier periods. This is emphasised by the interpretation of Auchnabrack as a booley, which has features suggesting a more permanent use of the site. Prehistorians are now moving away from the assumption that all structures found in marginal localities are automatically to be associated with transhumance (see Spratt and Burgess 1985). In the case of Wales, Briggs (1985:305) has pointed to the evidence from Cefn Graenog in Gwynedd (White 1976), which has indicated that the uplands were well able to support mixed farming during prehistoric and historic times. Clearly such evidence

indicates that transhumance, of which 'shieling' is just one form, was only one element in a complex picture of the use of the uplands.

The implications of such conclusions are considerable for Man. Gelling interpreted the hut-circle remains found in the uplands as Iron-Age shielings, and contrasted the small number of huts with the large number of mounds. The natural conclusion was that, although shieling was practised in the pre-Norse period, it owed its main development to the Norse period. The recent studies of the uplands, however, indicate that the hut-circles may not be associated with transhumance and that a permanent rather than seasonal function may be indicated. The possibility that Hut 1, Mound A, at Block Eary represents permanent settlement at this site has already been postulated, and a similar interpretation has been suggested for the structure excavated by Morris at Keeil Vael. Recent research also confirms the author's conclusions that the sites which have hitherto been classified as 'shielings' on Man, may, in fact, have had very different functions.

Besides the implications of the the Irish and Welsh evidence for Man, there are important points concerning links between the former and the Hebrides. The similarity between many of the Irish structures and those of the Hebrides is striking, for example the beehives and the rectangular structures with opposing doorways, and there are a number of works concentrating on the links between the two areas (e.g. Campbell 1944). Williams and Robinson (1983:38), for example, have argued that there was a possible direct historical link between transhumance traditions of the Ballycastle district of northern Ireland and those of western Scotland, particularly Kintyre in the late mediaeval period, north-east Antrim becoming the heartland of a Scottish colony in Ulster at this time. By 1600, most of the Ballycastle area had been settled by a branch of the Clan Donald of Islay.

As far as colonisation of the upland pastures is concerned, the evidence from Wales is particularly important in understanding the process in Man. The possibility that the growth in sheep numbers was related to a decline in the practice of summering the milk-cattle,

rather than the former being the cause of the latter, is especially significant. The halting of the process of colonisation at the un-named sites on Man can, perhaps, be explained in terms of an inability to support the numbers of stock. The survival of the practice in both Ireland and Wales into at least the eighteenth century, together with the evidence for a late survival in the Hebrides, suggests that a continuation beyond the Norse period (Gelling postulated a decline at this time) on Man can be expected, but it may be that it did not survive in the same form beyond the sixteenth century. Appendix 15 contains an account of the duties of the Forester recorded in the Statutes (Mills 1821:34) for 1504. The ride to Snaefell on St. Collumes Eve (June 8th) to 'blow his Horne thrice' is perhaps a remnant of the shieling practice, Sayce (1957:55-58) noting examples of the use of horns for signalling purposes both in Britain and Scandinavia, and the period around this date is commonly associated with the move to the shielings. The duty of the Forester was to seek unshorn sheep in the forest, also called the Commons, and to clip them for his own use. This indicates that the sheep were kept on the open upland pastures in the sixteenth century, a practice which is recorded by Thomas Quayle (1812:43) at the beginning of the nineteenth century. During the latter period, sheep were kept on the pastures during the summer months and were only brought down to the lower land in winter. The rights of common grazing were unstinted and the mountain land was over-grazed. Quayle noted that a few colts and young cattle were grazed on the unenclosed pastures during the summer, but makes no mention of the practice of shieling. It can be suggested, on the basis of the Statutes, that the shieling practice had almost disappeared by the sixteenth century (a time in Wales when the land of the summer dwellings was particularly under pressure), and this would account for the lack of references to the practice in the contemporary descriptions of the island, and more significantly, in the Agricultural Reports of Basil and Thomas Quayle in the following centuries. Mahler (forthcoming) has argued that the agricultural system of which shieling formed a part was incompatible with a broader exploitation of the area by common sheep-grazing for example, unless there was strict herding of

the animals. This would suggest that if the practice did continue in some areas it was in a vestigial form. An examination of folk accounts of the use of the hills would appear to support this (Radcliffe pers.comm.).

CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

A. CONCLUSIONS

The most startling observation made during fieldwork in Man and the Isles, and particularly in the case of the former, was the range of sites classified as 'shielings'. In the Isles, variations between the structures of different islands are especially noticeable. On Man, however, there are variations not only in the mounds and structures found at the sites, but also in their general form and in the features associated with them. This was surprising, the indications from Gelling's research being that the sites merely consisted of 'groups of mounds', formed by the superimposition of huts of turf. Detailed examination of these sites permitted of a rudimentary classification of the mounds and the identification of a range of sites from simple to complex. It was also possible to draw general conclusions about the location and distribution of the sites in Man and the Isles.

The variations in the sites suggested either that they were created to serve different purposes, perhaps at different periods, or that not all the features were contemporary, and thus, that the function of some individual sites changed through time. Gelling had assumed that all of the features at sites such as Block Eary and Injebreck were contemporary. Examination of the sites indicated a long history of use and complex chronology, particularly in the case of Block Eary. The range of structural forms, from the large circular Hut 1 of Mound A to the small rectangular stone structures on the summits of some of the mounds, and the small stone cells inserted into others, suggested activity from the Iron Age to a relatively modern period.

The nature of this activity, however, is difficult to assess. It was postulated that Hut 1 at Block Eary could represent a phase of permanent settlement at the site, and such a use of the uplands could be indicated in other areas by the presence of groups of hut circles and single structures, such as that discovered beneath Keeil Vael. There is no evidence, as yet, to indicate that the historic shieling practice can be shown to have its roots in prehistory, although it is frequently argued that this type of transhumance was a natural response

to specific geographical conditions, and Gelling himself argued that the hut-circles represented Iron-Age shieling. The site at Auchnabrack in Co. Antrim has been interpreted as an Early Christian transhumance village. However, on the basis of the available evidence, and particularly the field-system, it would appear more likely that this was a site occupied on a more permanent basis than is suggested by 'shieling'. It was suggested by Gelling that cultivation was carried out at one of the Manx sites, namely Juan ny Clarys 1. Examination of the ridge and furrow at the site, however, suggested that this was evidence of a later use of the site and that it was a good example of the gradual colonisation of shieling sites.

The similarity between the enclosures and mounds at the Auchnabrack site and that at Glen Dhoo is particularly interesting, and although there is nothing to suggest a permanent occupation of the latter, the similarity could indicate that it is one of the earlier sites of the group on Man. It is also clear that the activity carried out at this site differed from that at Injebreck, Laxey or Juan ny Clarys 1 for example, but could have been similar to that at Druidale 1 and 2 and Upper Sartfell, and possibly also to one of the phases of use of Block Eary. The presence of enclosures was not found to be a common feature of sites in the Hebrides, and where they do occur there was little similarity between these and the Manx examples. This was true of the other comparative material drawn upon, both Insular and Scandinavian. One possibility was that the enclosures demarcated the territory of individual groups, as in Perthshire for example (Bil 1983). Examination of the form of the enclosures, however, suggested that this was unlikely, and that they were related to stock-control rather than boundary demarcation. It can instead be postulated that the differences reflect the situation before and after the extermination of the wolf on Man: with the removal of this predator, the need for such enclosures was no longer essential.

In assessing the nature of the activity at the sites, there is also the problem of deciding what exactly can be termed 'shieling'. It was suggested that the small rectangular stone structures located at a number of sites, on the summits of mounds, may represent a fairly

recent phase of activity (perhaps eighteenth century), and that this may have been a vestigial form of 'shieling', thus, involving overnight stays at the pasture sites rather than prolonged periods, and not being associated with the processing of dairy products. Such a use of the sites would not necessitate the range of structures which might be expected at a true 'shieling' site, nor would the living-quarters need be anything more than a humble shelter. There is also the question of the animals using the pastures. Generally the practice is associated with the pasturing of cattle, although in both the O.E.D. and the S.N.D. there are references to sheep and shepherds. The care of the animals, however, is quite different and the shepherd tending the sheep on the mountains cannot be regarded as practising 'shieling'. The Manx Statutes indicate that sheep were freely roaming on the King's Forest in the sixteenth century: such a practice is incompatible with the controlled grazing involved in 'shieling' and suggests that if the practice did continue beyond this period, then it was only in a vestigial form.

No mention has been made yet of the possible Norse origins of the practice. Examination of the sites, the place-name evidence and the comparative material indicates clearly that there is nothing to suggest that the practice owed its origins in Man to the Norse, although the Scandinavian and North Atlantic evidence indicates that the settlers were familiar with the use of the *seter*. In fact there is little evidence, other than that of the coin and gaming board found at Block Eary, and the outline of a rectangular structure at Sartfell 2, to suggest that any of the nameless sites were in use at this period. The place-name evidence, however, certainly indicates that one of the hill pastures, recorded as the estate Aryeuzryn, had been settled by the end of the thirteenth century (Limites). This was a treen and therefore a land unit of status, suggesting that it had long since cast off its possible shieling origins. The majority of names recorded in the Manorial Roll of 1511-1515 also belong to treens, indicating a potentially long history of permanent as opposed to seasonal settlement for these too, and the association of keeills with them indicates a colonisation date between the ninth and eleventh centuries on the basis

of Lowe's model (1980:230-4). Examination of the climatic evidence suggests that the colonisation may have been slightly later, there being a warm epoch between 1150 and 1250. The fact, however, that these names are Gaelic formations and that, with the exception of two which contain Norse personal names, they contain Gaelic specifics, suggests that if they were settled in the Norse period the names were given by Gaelic speakers or by very Gaelicised Norsemen. The Norse personal names should not be used as a nationality indicator, the sculptural evidence on Man clearly demonstrating that Norse names were adopted by the Gaelic population and vice versa, but they do indicate that these particular treen names are not pre-Norse. Given this evidence, although there is reason to believe that Megaw was correct in postulating a pre-Norse origin for the word *eary* on Man, it would appear that the *eary* treens were more likely to have been created in the later part of the Norse period, when it can be postulated there was a much more mixed population and Gaelic was re-establishing itself. What is certainly clear, however, is that the word was not brought to Man by the Norse, as was the case in other areas.

Having covered this problem, another arises. What did the word *eary* denote and why did the Norse settlers adopt and use it apparently in preference to the Old Norse word *sáetr* in certain areas? Archaeological and geographical examination of sites bearing names containing these generics in the Kingdom indicated that there was no evidence to support Fellows Jensen's conclusion that the Gaelic word was used of the 'home-shieling' and the Norse of the 'far-away' or 'mountain shieling'. In fact, it can be argued on the basis of the location evidence, and in particular the relationship between the *setr/sáetr* names and those containing other Norse habitative generics, that the Norse word was used of the 'home-shieling' in the Kingdom. The location of the sites appeared to be similar to that of *setters* in Shetland and those of Orkney, many of which are located close to their nearest farms within the infield dyke. It also appeared to explain the absence of names containing the generic in Faroe, this type of settlement not being possible in this group of islands because of the topography. The examination of the Manx *eary* sites was especially significant in the

context of this problem, it having been suggested that these were the 'home-shielings' and the nameless mound sites the 'far-away' ones. The location evidence suggested that no such distinction could be drawn, and that if the *eary* sites were shielings, they were merely the lower and possibly earlier ones which were colonised. It was concluded that the element was possibly adopted because of its generality rather than the fact that there was something characteristic about the location or form of the settlement associated with it. The Common Gaelic form *áirge* had the meanings: (a) a place for milking cows, byre, cowshed; (b) herd of cattle; (c) troop (band of soldiers): it can be postulated that it was the cattle association which was important and that the use of the word was not confined to the shieling. This would certainly fit in well with Higham's interpretation of the *erg* sites of Northern England as vaccaries, and a pre-Norse origin for these would support the conclusion that *ary* appeared in Man also before the arrival of the Norse. It can be argued that, at this stage, the word was perhaps associated with general pasturing activities and had not yet become specifically associated with 'shieling'. This would be in agreement with the fact that there is no evidence to indicate the use of the 'shieling' before the medieaval period. It appears likely that the Norse encountered the word in Man and the Isles when they settled, adopted and adapted it, and used it in those areas where Old Norse *sáetr* was inappropriate, perhaps because of the nature of the existing settlement pattern or the topography, for example.

Megaw suggested that, given that the *earys* were likely to have been colonised in the Norse period, the nameless sites were, thus, the shielings of the Norse and Mediaeval periods. Examination of the sites has indicated that they were likely to have been used in earlier periods, but as their function was perhaps not that of the 'shieling', Megaw's conclusion could still stand. It has already been stated that there is no evidence to suggest that the sites were established by Norsemen. As it stands, the evidence indicates an insular tradition, and if the sites are to be seen in the context of the Norse period then it would support those theories which see a substantial Gaelic survival and a Norse take-over at the upper end of society, thus of working

estates for example. The question does have to be asked, however, whether it would be possible to identify Norse 'shieling' sites on Man. The problems involved in transplanting the historical *seter* practice in Norway to the North Atlantic colonies was stressed in Chapter 13. Clearly the topography, settlement patterns, the Norse-Gaelic relationship and the previous use of the uplands for example, would have had some effect on the types of site established.

A similar situation to that in Man can be postulated for the Argyll islands, with their similar historical background. The situation in North Skye, and the Outer Hebrides, however, was clearly quite different, and that of Skye, Lewis and Harris is best compared with that in Shetland and Orkney. Field-work has yet to produce evidence of Norse shielings but these islands must offer the best opportunities, and given the results of the excavations of the *áergi* site at Argisbrekka in the Faroe Islands, the examination of sites in the Uists and Barra could prove rewarding.

B. FUTURE RESEARCH

The first obvious step on from this research is the need to carry out further field-work in the uplands in Man and the Isles, and although seeking similar sites, to be constantly aware of variations in type. In the past, particularly in the case of Man, it has been the practice to record merely the number of mounds at sites, and to fail to identify other potentially related features in the immediate vicinity. In the case of the Isles, only a very small proportion of shieling sites have been recorded, and although many are of recent origin, there is still a need to record the standing remains associated with a practice which has now completely disappeared. The variations in the construction of huts, and the lay-out and location of sites examined by the author, for example, within and between islands, indicated that further field-work would produce interesting data.

Clearly, besides field-analysis, there is a need for excavation: the excavations on Man and Skye were carried out in the 1960s, since when there have been very significant advances in excavation

techniques, particularly those associated with dating and the analysis of environmental remains. If excavation is to take place, however, it is essential that a site is explored totally. Many of the problems encountered by the author in the analysis of the results of Peter Gelling's excavations at Block Eary and Injebreck would be avoided if total rather than partial excavation were carried out. Finding suitable sites on Man and in the Isles would not be a problem, many consisting of only a few features and covering a small area. Others, although larger, have low mounds indicating less activity at the sites, and would, therefore, be less complex stratigraphically.

On a more general level, the review of the existing state of research on the shieling indicated that there is a great deal of confusion and uncertainty as regards the use of this term, and the identification of sites associated with the practice. The solution to this problem must lie in the study of sites on a local and regional level, taking into account variations in the landscape and land tenure, for example, and being aware, in particular, of variations in the terminology associated with the practice. Only after such detailed research has been carried out, will it be possible to tackle more general questions concerning the use of the uplands for summer pasture, for example whether 'shieling' is a practice which appeared in the mediaeval period, or whether it had its origins in earlier periods. This is, at present, impossible to tackle simply because of the lack of a clear definition of 'shieling'.

The third part of this thesis tackled the complex area of shielings and place-name research, and although there are many problems and pitfalls for an archaeologist working with such material, the results are such that it is an area worth pursuing. Study of an archaeological landscape is infinitely enriched by a study of the names associated with it, and a study of the archaeology can help to explain the presence of certain names. In the case of shieling research, the names are an invaluable source of information, not only as regards the identification and location of sites, but also, for example, the possible owners and the way in which the practice operated. One of the most interesting aspects of this thesis was an analysis of the

relationship between certain naming elements and soil map units, and this is an area which offers many further possibilities for the geographer and place-name specialist, as well as the archaeologist.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acta. Arch.	Acta Archaeologica
Ams-Skrifter.	Arkeologiske Museum i Stavanger Skrifter
Antiq. J.	Antiquaries Journal
Arch. Camb.	Archaeologia Cambrensis
Arch. J.	Archaeological Journal
B.A.R. (Brit.Ser.)	British Archaeological Reports (British Series), Oxford
B.A.R. (Int.Ser.)	British Archaeological Reports (International Series), Oxford
C.B.A.	The Council for British Archaeology
E.H.R.	English Historical Review
E.P.N.S.	English Place-Name Society
G.J.A.	Glasgow Journal of Archaeology
J.B.A.A.	Journal of the British Archaeological Association
J.E.P.N.S.	Journal of the English Place-Name Society
J. Hist. Geogr.	Journal of Historical Geography
J. Roy. Inst. Cornwall	Journal of the Royal Institute of Cornwall
J.R.S.A.I.	Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland
MM.MS.	Manx Museum Manuscript
Manx Soc.	Manx Society
Med. Arch.	Medieval Archaeology
N.A.R.	Norwegian Archaeological Review
N.T.F.S.	Norsk Tidsskrift for Sprogvidenskap
Northern Hist.	Northern History
Northern Scot.	Northern Scotland
Northern Stud.	Northern Studies
Num. Chron.	Numismatic Chronicle
Post-Med. Arch.	Post-Medieval Archaeology
Proc. Brit. Acad.	Proceedings of the British Academy
Proc. Camb. Antiq. Soc.	Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society
Proc. I.O.M.N.H.A.S.	Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society
P.O.A.S.	Proceedings of the Orkney Antiquarian Society
P.P.S.	Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society

P.R.I.A.	Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy
P.S.A.S.	Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
R.C.H.M.Eng.	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
R.C.A.H.M.S.	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland
Sagabook	Sagabook of the Viking Society for Northern Research
S.A.F.	Scottish Archaeological Forum
S.A.R.	Scottish Archaeological Review
S.G.M.	Scottish Geographical Magazine
S.H.R.	Scottish Historical Review
Scot. Stud.	Scottish Studies
Trans. Brit.Geogr.	Transactions and Papers of the Institute of British Geographers
Trans. Bute N.H.S.	Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society
Trans. Caerns. Hist. Soc.	Transactions of the Caernarvonshire Historical Society
Trans. C.W.A.A.S.	Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society
Trans. Den. Hist. Soc.	Transactions of the Denbighshire Historical Society
T.D.G.A.S.	Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society
T.G.A.S.	Transactions of the Glasgow Archaeological Society
T.G.S.I.	Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness Trans. Hist. Soc.
Lancashire Cheshire	Transactions of the Historical Society of Lancashire and Cheshire
T.R.H.S.	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society
Trans. Roy. Hist Soc. Edinburgh	Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh
U.J.A.	Ulster Journal of Archaeology
World Arch.	World Archaeology
Y.L.M.	Yn Lioar Manninagh

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