

Preface

This small volume in the "occasional " series of the Scottish Society for Northern Studies (SSNS) was triggered by the very pleasant and rewarding four day conference held in Port Erin during April 2000. We are particularly grateful to Dr Andrew Foxon of Manx National Heritage for his assistance in organising the conference.

Though at the southern end of the SSNS conference range, Man's Norse connections are very well established through the Medieval History of Man and the Isles down to the modern bishopric of Sodor and Man. Completely encircled by, and easily accessible from Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland the history of Man was bound to be turbulent.

The twelve chapters of the volume can be roughly divided into three sections. The first chapter sets the geographical scene by considering in some depth the geological structure and history of the island. The second chapter gives a fairly detailed account of the quite remarkable array of Manx sculptured stones while the third chapter looks at Manx placenames from the slightly unusual view-point of Northern Ireland.

The next group of four chapters covers the history of Man. The first looks at the influence of Ireland on Man in the eleventh century. The next considers the promontory forts situated round the coasts of Man and speculates on an iron-age origin followed by a medieval re-use. There follows an extended discussion of the medieval history of Man in the light of recent archaeological excavations and finally we have an account of a brief but fairly recent (18th century) episode when Scotland again exerted an influence on Man in the person of the Duke of Atholl.

The final group of chapters discusses Farming, Folklore, Manx music and perhaps more controversially, the relation of Tynwald to Westminster. The final chapter gives an account of the quite remarkable recovery of Manx Gaelic from effectively zero to two percent participation of the Manx population. Scotland take heed!

While not one of our twelve authors is based in present-day Scotland, the Scots connection comes through strongly in almost every chapter. We are most grateful to them all for the time and effort expended in preparing and correcting the manuscripts.

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