

Islands go back to the thirteenth century, if not earlier. It is a part of Mr. Fenton's stupendous achievement that beyond exploring in vivid detail how the islanders conducted their lives in the past, he has clearly demonstrated how their unique culture evolved over a long period. Excellent illustrations, supporting the verbal description, an extensive bibliography and an invaluable index, all combine to make this publication a most remarkable event.

It is pleasant to note that **The Northern Isles** came out just about the time when its author took up his appointment as Keeper of the National Museum. This auspicious coincidence augurs well for the future of archaeology and ethnology in Scotland.

Hermann Pálsson

SCOTS IN THE BALTIC

Report on a Conference, edited by A.M. Stewart available from the Centre for Nordic Studies, University of Aberdeen or from the Secretary, at 25 pence.

Yet another milestone in the development of inter-disciplinary co-operation between Nordic subjects was set up at Aberdeen on Saturday, 29th October, 1977 when the Centre for Nordic Studies hosted a seminar on 'Scots in the Baltic'. The report, unfortunately, does not include Professor J.K. Cameron's paper on Scots Lutherans in Denmark, but the other disciplines are amply represented: Literature by Professor Mennie; history by Dr. Manson and Dr. Dukes; economics by Professor Smout and Mr. Gray; and his historiography by Dr. Stewart.

Professor Mennie singles out James Ramsay (of Simplissimus fame), Robert Monro (Scott's Dugald Dalgetty), Malcolm Sinclair (Sinclairsvisan) and George Sinclair (Sinklarvisen) for special attention in this informative and stimulating paper. It left me wishing that my reading knowledge of the Scandinavian language were more perfect.

Professor Manson in his paper 'Bothwell Abroad' seeks to rehabilitate this controversial figure in Scottish history, representing him as a man more sinned against than sinning. His acceptance of Bothwell's own explanation of his 'flight' as a mission to seek aid for his Queen, however, will doubtless meet with scepticism from many.

Dr. Dukes paper 'Scots in Russia' is an erudite account of the influence of men like Alexander Gordon, Henry Farquharson and other Aberdonians on Peter the Great's Russia. He suggests that Aberdeen's contribution to the early Russian enlightenment was "both considerable and by no means accidental" extending from science through literature to commerce.

Commerce is the subject of Professor Smout's contribution in which he outlines briefly the character and extent of Scottish trade with the Baltic from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, emphasising the importance of Russian bar iron and flax to Scottish industry.

Malcolm Gray deals with the Scottish penetration of the Baltic herring trade in the nineteenth century, and shows that the Scots' success was largely due to new techniques of fishing and curing. The export trade, however, was controlled by German merchants, so that few Scots reached the Baltic through this trade.

On the other hand there was a great emigration of Scots to Poland from the second half of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century according to Dr. Stewart, whose paper is a survey of recent Polish research and a plea for an overall assessment of the role of Scots in the Baltic. His extensive bibliography is designed to further the conference's aim: co-ordination and co-operation between disciplines in the field of Scottish-Baltic studies. It is unfortunate, however, that so little is in English.

Dr. Stewart is to be commended on his editing of the conference material for this unique volume which is obtainable from the Centre for Nordic Studies at Aberdeen. The introduction by Miss Irene Scobbie is optimistic for the future of

the inter-disciplinary study of Nordic subjects, and the enthusiasm and erudition of the contributors to *Scots in the Baltic* certainly seem to justify this optimism.

Fiona Robertson

'The Vikings'. Proceedings of the Symposium of the Faculty of Arts of Uppsala University, June 6–9, 1977, edited by Thorsten Andersson and Karl Inge Sandred. Paperback, 176 pp.

This is a well-produced booklet containing the papers read at one of six symposia arranged by the Faculty of Arts of Uppsala University to mark the 500th Anniversary of the University. This particular symposium was an interdisciplinary one devoted to the Vikings.

After an introduction by the President of Iceland, Kristján Eldjárn, the papers are divided into three groups.

1. Scalds and Ships. Viking Seamanship in the Light of Literature and Archaeology.
2. Scandinavian Influence on Language and Place-Names in the British Isles.
3. Viking Society in Scandinavia. Evidence of Settlement and Administration.

All the papers, with one exception, are in English. Of particular interest, especially to your reviewer, is the second section, with papers by Kenneth Cameron, Margaret Gelling, Gilliam Fellows Jensen and our own Angus MacIntosh. These cover a wide range of studies, from 'Place-Name Evidence for Scandinavian Settlement in the Danelaw: A Re-assessment', by Dr. Fellows Jensen to 'Norse and Gaelic in Mediaeval Man: the Place-Name Evidence' by Dr. Gelling. In Section 1, well-known Scandinavian scholars like Professor Peter Foote, Peter Sawyer and Ole Crumlin-Pedersen have contributed papers on various aspects of the Scandinavian sea-culture, while Section 3 is devoted to a variety of topics such as 'Some Problems in the