

Notes on Etymology of Kinttradwell, read at Field Club.  
Sept-7<sup>th</sup> 1880

In connexion with our recent excursion to the district lying between Lotts Station & Morro, during which a short visit was paid to the Pictish Burgh, Broch or Dun at Kinttradwell, some remarks were made as to the etymology of that name, and it seems not improper that a few notes on the same subject should be offered to the Club bringing together such information as is now available.

The late Dr. John Stuart in his valuable work on the 'Sculptured stones of Scotland' tells us in his 2<sup>nd</sup> vol: at p. 39 of his 'notices of the plates' that the Ancient parish of Loth extended only from the borders of Clyne to the river Helmsdale, the present extends to the hill of Ord, thus including a part of the old parish of Vildoman. At Kinttradwell in this parish there was a chapel dedicated to St. Tridman, as the name implies.

This saint, according to the tradition of the Scottish Church (Breviar. Aberdeen: Pars Estus. fol. 122) was a companion of St. Regulus in his mission. With two other virgins she led an eremitical life at Roscoly, but to escape from the evil intentions of a chief in the district who fell in love with her she removed to Dunfallandy in Athol. Thither the emissaries of the Chief followed her, and on learning from them that the lustre of her eyes had captivated their master

she plucked out her eyes & fixing them  
on a stick or thorn delivered the same  
to the messengers asking them to receive  
for their master that which he loved.

The fury of her admirer was now changed  
into respect, but meantime Tridiana  
died at Lestabryk in Lothian, where  
she was buried, and her memory held  
in great veneration, so that miraculous  
cures of blindness were attributed to  
a visit to her tomb.

The legend as given in the Aberdeen  
Breviary, pars estiva, fol CXXII, b, is as  
follows. The glorious virgin Tridiana  
of Colosia came with S. Regulus to Scotland.  
She lived as a recluse with his virgins  
Potentia & Emeria in a desert place at  
Roscob (Rescob in Forfarshire). The  
tyrant Nectanevus, prince of the  
neighbourhood pursued her with  
his impure love whereupon she  
fled to Dunfallad (Dunfallandy) in  
Athol. There his ministers coming  
to her she said "What desireth so great  
a prince of me, a poor virgin, dedicated  
to God?" to which they said "He desireth  
the most excellent beauty of thine eyes."



which if he obtain not he will die." Then the virgin in a kindly voice "What he seeketh of me that he shall have" and taking out her eyes in a more secret place and transfixing them with a stake, she gave it saying "Take that which your Prince loveth." The King, on being informed of this admired her Constancy. Meanwhile Friduana, devoting herself to prayers and fasting in Lestaryk in Landonia (Lothian) passed into the heavens. An English woman, who had lost her eyesight saw S. Friduana in a dream, who told her to go to Lestaryk and there she would recover her sight which accordingly took place, and a daughter of the same woman who lost her sight and was nearly crushed by a fall was cured at the intercession of the Saint.

The late Bishop Forbes of Brechin, an eminent Ecclesiologist, referring to the above legend in his collection of "Kalendars of Scottish Saints" p. 454. says the story has clearly some substance from the records of the Saint preserved at the different localities mentioned in it. At Rescobie is still S<sup>t</sup> Friduana's fair.

Then she is found at Tradlines (see New Stat. Account of Forfar p. 610). At Duffallandy there is one of the finely sculptured Stones which indicate an early ecclesiastical settlement. She was buried 'apud Capellam regiam de Restating' (Mart. Aberdeen) which was one of the first destroyed at the Reformation. On the 21<sup>st</sup> Dec: 1560, it was ordained that the Kirk of Restating, as a monument of idolatry, be razed & utterly cast down & destroyed. (Book of the Universal Kirk of Scotland 1.5.)

Sir David Lindsay (in the 'Monarchie' at p. 2 in Vol III of his Collected works, pub.<sup>d</sup> at London 1846) describing the images to be seen in certain Churches says 'Saint Fredwall, also, there may be seen  
In hills on ane prik he's baith his ene."

Among the Churches in Scotland dedicated to this Saint - there was one in the Island of Papa Westray which is described by Martin in his 'Western Islands', p. 366, as 'a ruinous Chappel called St. Fredwells at the door of which there's a heap of stones which was



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the superstition of the Common people who have such a veneration for this Chapel above any other that they never fail at their coming to it to throw a stone as an offering before the door, and this they reckon an indispensable duty enjoined by their ancestors!

The late Joseph Robertson, F.S.A.S. mentions a chapel or dedication to this saint at Nentradewell in Sutherland where the local designation is Trola or Trullen, the Trollhaena of the Norse Sagas.

This Norse reference brings us into contact with an episode in our early Diocesan history to which we may now advert in concluding these notes.

The Abbey of Scour appears in 1332 as proprietor of the Church of Kildarvan and the lands of Borebob. This was probably owing to the Commission established through St. Feigus patron of the Churches of Wick & Halkirk, one of the earliest Christian Missionaries to the North Eastern Pict. whose head was preserved at Scour and furnished with a silver shrine by James IV. as testified by his High Treasurer's Accounts. In 721 he appears as signatory to certain

at Rome

Canons passed by Pope Gregory II in Council with 22 Bishops 3 of whom were strangers and one of these Sergius Episcopus Scotiae Pictus, styled in the Martyrology of Dougal "Sergius Criminatus" or Sergius the Pict.

Between his presumed date & that of the first Bishop of our Northern Diocese of whom we have trustworthy record there intervenes a period of 400 yrs. In his time Earl Harold for the redemption of his sins granted to the Roman see a penny yearly (uncum denarium ex qualibet domo totius terre sue unde fenus exit) from ilka 'recking cum' or every inhabited house. It is not on record as to whether Bp. Andrew was very exacting in this matter but it is known that his successor Bp. John declined to exercise the right till compelled by the Pope (Innocent III) who summoned him to obedience, & even granted a Commission to the Bishops of Orkney & Rosemarky to compel him to levy the tax by the heavy censures of the Church. (Epistol. Inn. III. Lib. I. No. 218)

We may readily believe that the Bishop, who seems to have been a



wise & benevolent man, would find means to make the impact bear as lightly as possible upon the poor & oppressed people, but it is hard to credit, even allowing for the rudeness of his times, that the subsequent fate of such a man should have been what the Saga describes if it were not corroborated beyond question by a contemporary Roman record.

Earl Harald Madadson, who had been deprived of his Caithness possessions by King William, the Lion, resolved to recover them by force & crossed from Orkney to Thurso with a great fleet. There was no force fit to oppose him. The sequel may be told in the words of the Orkneyinga Saga as translated from the Icelandic by Hjaltalin & Gordon. 1873.

The Bishop was in the borg at Karabolstad, (Scrabster). When the Caithnessmen saw Earl Harald's army they perceived that it was so numerous that they had no chance to withstand them. They were told also that the Earl was in such an evil temper that there was no knowing what he might do. Then the Bishop took speech and said: 'If our dealings turn out well he will give you peace' advising the people to allow him speak first to the Earl

in the hope that he might be able to mollify him. They did as the Bishop told them. The Earl's men rushed from the ships up to the barge. The Bishop went to meet the Earl & saluted him with bland words, but their dealing turned out in this way that Earl Harald had the Bishop seized, his tongue cut out, & then he caused a knife to be thrust into his eyes & blinded him. Bishop Jøker prayed to the holy virgin Trolhaena during his torture & then he went on a certain bank. There was a woman on the bank & the Bishop asked her to help him. She saw that blood was flowing from his face & said "Be silent my Lord & I shall willingly help you." The Bishop was brought to the resting place of the holy Trolhaena & there he recovered both his speech & his sight.

The latter part of the story, says Cosmo Innes in his 'Two Ancient Records of Caithness' is not confirmed by good authority, but part of the barbarity of the Earl & the Bishop's sufferings is confirmed by a letter still extant addressed by Pope Innocent III to the Bp. of Orkney, & of date about 1202.

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