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EVERTHORPE AND MANDRUP IN SHETLAND

GILLIAN FELLOWS-JENSEN

Well over a quarter of a century has passed by since Britta Orlík Frederiksen and I were both wrestling with knotty problems about place-names in *-þorp* in Institut for Navneforskning. In 1981 Britta produced a significant study of some Danish names entitled 'Navne på *-torp* i Ods herred' (*Namn och bygd* 69 (1981), 42–88), a study which is still very thought-provoking. I, for my part, have continued to study the occurrence of names in *-þorp* in the Danelaw and elsewhere. It was when I published my study of *Scandinavian Settlement Names in the East Midlands* that I first commented casually that there were a few *þorps* in Shetland (1978, 84) and it is more or less the same comment that I made both in *Scandinavian Settlement Names in the North-West* (1985, 47), and in an article in which I attempted to distinguish between place-names coined by the Danes and those coined by the Norwegians (*Nomina* 11: 48). It is first now that I have seen the need to throw more light on this casual comment.

The original source of my information was Jakob Jakobsen's note on the element *þorp* in Shetland. I quote from p. 110 of the English translation by Anna Horsbøl: *The Place-Names of Shetland* (London-Copenhagen 1936; reprinted Kirkwall 1993) of Jakobsen's original

paper ‘Shetlandsøernes Stednavne’ in *Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie* 16 (1901, 159). Jakobsen writes about the element O.N. *þorp*, n., farm “the farm-name *Everthrop* [evərþrǫp] W[alls]: *øfra þorp, as well as the name *Mandrup* (de green o’ M.) (Sandwick, Du.), *manna-þorp or *Manna-þorp (from the man’s name Manni; cf. Da. ‘Manderup’. *Woltrop* [wə’ltrop], or with dropped p: *Woltro* (Sandwick, Du); the first part is uncertain”. My immediate impression has always been that these three names were not much on which to base the existence of the element *þorp* in Shetland but I thought at the time that there must be other relevant names. Per Hovda would not seem to have been very impressed by Jakobsen’s note on these three names either. In *KLNM* 18 (1974), 500 he writes “Kor vidt dei høyrer til kolonisationstida, torer vera vandt å avgjera.” Jakobsen can hardly himself have been particularly convinced by his own original suggestion, for there is no mention of an element *þorp* in his *An Etymological Dictionary of the Norn Language in Shetland* (London–Copenhagen 1908–1921; reprinted Lerwick 1985). John Stewart would also seem to have been doubtful about the names, for he only notes one of them in his *Shetland Place-Names*, published posthumously in 1987. On p. 301 he writes, ‘EVERTHORP [evərþrǫp], Walls: [HU] 199505. Everthorpe 1890–1900, Everthorp 1952. From *øfri*, comp. Adj., upper. The th sound must be suspect”.

Since Stewart actually gives a map reference for this locality, it seemed to be the best place to start my investigations. The name was not mentioned on either the Ordnance Survey one-inch map or the Pathfinder 1:25 000 map but I located it on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880. Brian Smith from the Shetland Archives in Lerwick has kindly checked the name for me in the Ordnance Survey Book and found that the authority for that spelling is Thomas Fraser,

the then occupant, and Thomas Fraser, a neighbour at a place called Thistle (HU 2050). Smith also noted that the name did not appear in the valuation roll of 1855 and that it features simply as an ‘outset’, a technical term used in Shetland for settlements younger than c.1500 and hence outside the scope of the older scat-paying settlements. It thus seems very unlikely that it can have been an old Viking settlement.

With my background in the Danelaw I felt that the name Everthorp, which is sometimes written as Everthorpe, seemed most likely to be an English name. There is only one Everthorpe in England and this is a hamlet (SE 9031) in North Cave in the East Riding of Yorkshire. It stands on high ground in the Wolds and commands a good view of the River Humber. The earliest record of the name is as *Euertorp* in 1086 in the so-called summary of the Yorkshire survey in Greater Domesday Book on fol. 381c, where it has a quite respectable assessment for a thorp, namely 5 carucates. The specific of the name would seem to be Scandinavian *efri* ‘upper’, presumably referring to the elevation of the hamlet. Interestingly, however, most of the other early records of the English name have spellings beginning with *I-* or *Y-* and these suggest that the name was originally an English formation **yferraþorp* ‘upper thorp’. A. H. Smith has suggested that the later spellings in *Ever-* may represent Middle English lengthening of *y* to *e* in an open syllable (PNYE 225), although the Domesday form probably reflects Danish influence.

Assuming that the Yorkshire Everthorpe really does lie behind the one in Shetland, it is necessary to find a reason for this re-use of the name. The Yorkshire Everthorpe is not a particularly well-known place. Many references in Google now point to the site of the Wolds Jail but this was not constructed until after World War

II, while others are to the name of Brian Everthorpe, a rather vulgar minor character in David Lodge's satirical novels, *Nice Work* (1988) and *Paradise News* (1991), but this character cannot be responsible for the Shetland name. Brian Smith found the right answer for me. He pointed to the existence of a whaling ship from Hull known as the Everthorpe in the nineteenth century. A little more searching led me to John George Hall's book *A History of South Cave and of other parishes in the East Riding of the County of York* (Hull, 1892, 99). This reveals that in the early part of the nineteenth century Mr. Egginton, a Hull shipowner, lived in the hamlet of Everthorpe and that one of his whaling ships was named the "Everthorpe". I also found that at various times between 1811 and 1837 the captains of the Everthorpe had been called Trueman, Thomas Hawkins, Charles Kitchingman, James Hewitt, Ash, and John Johnstone. More excitingly I found via Google that James Nisbet of Laxfirth served on the Everthorpe in 1822. He could hardly have been the only Shetlander to do so. A local informant, Drewy Georgeson, whose information was kindly passed on to me via Iris Sandison and Brian Smith, had also come to the conclusion that it was just possible that Everthorpe was named after the Hull whaling ship because he knows of two Shetland men who served on that ship – a John Georgeson in 1822 and a Robert Twatt in 1823.

When I was first looking for Everthorp on the map, Brian Smith had said to me that the place was certainly out on a limb and I expected the worst. According to Drewy Georgeson, however, Everthorpe was originally known as 'Da Boddams', that is The Bottoms, but that must have been a long time ago. Georgeson describes the present building as "a beautifully built house, similar to the house

on Linga, which is also outstanding” so it seems that one Shetlander must have invested his whaling money in a well-built house.

I am now fully convinced that the Shetland place-name Everthorpe or Everthorpe has taken its name from the Yorkshire home of the shipowner, Mr Egginton. This is an interesting story but it certainly cannot be used as an argument for the presence of *þorp*-names in Shetland. The two other names mentioned by Jakobsen are hardly more likely to be old *þorp*-names. Jakobsen talks of Wolthrop or Woltro in Sandwick, but Brian Smith says that the location is actually Dunrossness and he calls the place Wiltrow. I should certainly be reluctant to link this name in any way with the element *-þorp*.

Jakobsen himself compared the third name Mandrup with the Danish place-name Manderup, of which there are at least three instances in Denmark, all containing the Danish personal name *Manni* as specific and *þorp* as generic (cf. Bent Jørgensen, *Stednavneordbog* (1994), p.192). The form *Mandrup*, on the other hand, which is the one noted by Jakobsen in ‘de green o’Mandrup’ and which is also that found for the topographical feature noted on the one-inch map as Seat of Mandrup (HU 3620) in Sandwick, where my colleague Peder Gammeltoft sat and gazed out upon the Atlantic earlier this year, is perhaps more likely to have originated as the aristocratic Danish surname Manderup, perhaps employed as a Christian name. The employment of a mother’s surname as a first forename among the Danish nobility can be traced back to about 1450 and the motivation for this was to prevent a surname from dying out (cf. Susanne Vogt, ‘Mødrene slægtsnavn brugt som første fornavn i dansk adel’, *Studia anthroponymica Scandinavica* 9 (1991), 61–99). It was in jest that Brian Smith asked me whether I was going to suggest that the Shetland place-name might derive from Manderup Parsberg, who was

one of the Danish ambassadors who went to Scotland in the summer of 1585 to try to retrieve Orkney and Shetland from James VI and I am afraid that I fell right into the trap that Brian laid for me. Manderup Parsberg is an excellent example of the employment of an aristocratic surname as a Christian name in order to keep the family name alive. He was born in 1546 and died in 1625. His mother was Anna Holck, daughter of Manderup Holck, who was born c. 1480 and died in 1546. Manderup Holck's mother, Anne Manderup, was the daughter of Niels Manderup, the last Manderup in the direct line of descent. Manderup Parsberg was not only of aristocratic family and an eminent man in his own right. He was also notorious for having cut off the tip of Tycho Brahe's nose in a duel in Rostock in 1566. His diplomatic mission to Scotland in 1585, however, was no less embarrassing. It has in fact been called a disaster, for the ambassadors were treated with gross discourtesy and at one point had to set out on foot to walk from Dunfermline to St Andrews, although they were finally reconciled with a gift of a gold chain and a promise of future diplomatic negotiations (cf. Brian Smith, 'When did Shetland become part of Scotland?: a contribution to the debate', forthcoming). Manderup Parsberg and his companions did not get as far as Shetland on their mission and he cannot have gazed out on the Atlantic from Seat of Mandrup in 1585. I wonder, however, whether an account of the diplomatic fracas might not have made its way to Shetland. That the affair gave rise to much discussion was demonstrated by Gilbert Goudie in a paper entitled 'The Danish claims upon Orkney and Shetland, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland* (1887), 236–251). Goudie quoted several accounts of the event that refer to Manderup Parsberg, for example those by the Danish historian Peder Hansen Resen (*Kong Frederich den Andens*

Krønike (Kiøbenhaffn, 1680), the Icelandic historiographer Torfæus (*Orcades seu Rerum Orcadensium Historiæ* (Havniæ, 1697, 217), the Scots notary David Moysie (*Memoirs of the Affairs of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1755), Sir James Melville of Halhill 1549–1593 (original manuscript of his memoirs, printed in Edinburgh 1827). Incidentally, Torfæus refers to Parsberg as *Mandrupus*, while Melville calls him *Manderupius*.

Unless a local informant has a better suggestion to offer, I still think that the Danish ambassador Manderup Parsberg is the most likely man to have given his name to Seat of Mandrup. At all events I would argue that Mandrup in Shetland originated from a personal name, probably a Christian name or surname of Danish descent. I am sure that it cannot be a place-name in *þorp* coined in Shetland in the Viking period and I think it is wisest not to reckon at all with the presence of the generic *þorp* in Shetland.