

was hanged, and all his male children were emasculated upon this hill, which ever since hath been called Stony-hill.

They told us, there are several high great stones set up through the country and that ordinarily on hills, about which are the rubbish of other stones, which have served for some end there, and probably have been places of Pagan worship, as we observed upon Orkney in the parish of Bower, as we passed, we saw an artificial mount ditched about of a small circumference, it is like for the same purpose. They have likewise the tradition of some Picts houses, which have been here of old, the rubbish whereof is yet to be seen in the parish of Latheran, as a gentleman well acquainted with the country did inform me.

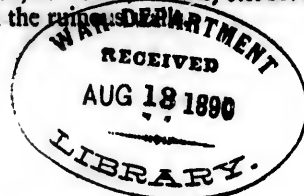
In the parish of Latheran we saw the foundation of a house said to be laid by a bastard son of the earl of Caithness, but never perfected: it is founded upon a rising ground nigh to the sea, where there is a fair prospect of Murray, where it is reported the gentleman had his mistress, who intended to build it there, that so she might have a view of the house from Murray, and he at the house might see Murray.

Dunnot Head stretching out into Pightland-Firth, is about a mile in breadth, and seven miles in circumference, in it are several lochs, and some good pasture for cattle, but no inhabitants; in it are to be had good mill-stones, and it is thought there is a lead-mine there. In several places in the parish of Dunnot there will no rats live, and if earth be brought out thence to other places molested by them, they will be quickly gone.

The Ord which divideth Caithness from Sutherland, is a high mountain, as the name Ord, which in Irish signifieth an height, doth imply; down which our way from Caithness to Sutherland doth lie, the road is but narrow, and the descent steep, and if any stumble thereupon, they are in hazard of falling down a precipice into the sea at the bottom of the rock, which is very terrible to behold, but who pass it, for the more security use to lead their horses to the foot of the hill, which is about a short mile in length; and no other way there is from Sutherland to Caithness, or from Caithness to Sutherland but this, except we go twelve miles about, but it might be made broader and safer with small expence.

It is observed in Caithness as an infallible sign almost when they see a mist or cloud lying down upon the foot of the hills, that then a drought will follow; but if such a mist or cloud be on top thereof, they thence certainly conclude there will be rain that day.

In the parish of Halkirk there is a loch [as there are several lochs in the country], within which loch are the ruins of an old house built, they say, by robbers, that they might be the more safe and secure from the fears of being apprehended. That which is most observable concerning this house, is, that there is not one foot of more ground, than what is within the circumference of the foundation, and upon which it standeth, hence either the water of the loch hath washed away the prominent rock, if there hath been any through wasting time, or, if there was no part of the rock without the circumference of the foundation, it is wonderful to consider, how so nigh to the water the foundation hath been got laid, the water about the house being of a considerable depth, and the extreme parts of the rock upon which the foundation standeth, not to give way and fall under the weight of the building, which those who have seen this house, are surprized at. Upon the loch they have boats which come close to the walls of the house, for the taking of fowls of divers kinds, as maws, herons, &c. several thousands of which do frequent it, having their nests in the ruins.



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