

and that there has been a tendency to antedate the development of Irish decorative art—Prof. A. Bugge elsewhere gives a seventh-century date to the Book of Kells—and consequently to antedate the monuments supposed to have been influenced from Ireland. The date of Torf-Einar's seizure of the odals cannot be much before the end of the ninth century, which would allow for two or three generations of settlers in Orkney after the period at which Dicuil indicates their arrival. And as Iceland was not colonised until 874, the earlier years of the ninth century are far enough back to explain archaic place-names in Shetland. Beyond that epoch there seems no need to go.

The true Viking Age began during the last years of the eighth century; and it began with raids on the coast nearest to Denmark. Lappenberg, in his *History of England under the Anglo-Saxon Kings* (Thorpe's tr., ii. p. 19), quotes an epistle of Bregowine to Lullus (who died in 786) mentioning "frequent attacks of wicked men on the provinces of the English or on the regions of Gaul." It is not clear that he meant Scandinavian pirates, but we are coming very near to the time and place where the earliest recorded attacks did occur; and when they once began they came thick and fast. However untrustworthy any given entry may be, Irish, English, and Frankish annals unite in asserting that Viking raids, outside the Baltic, began soon after this date, and continued from that time forward. Within the Baltic the Scandinavian tribes had been preying upon each other for