

A Description of the Western Islands Of Scotland  
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Text

A B O U T a League further to the South on the same coast, lies the small Isles of *Jurah*, within which, there is a good Anchoring-Place; the South Entry is the best: Island *Nin Gowir* must be kept on the left hand; it is easily distinguis'd by its Bigness from the rest of the Isles. *Conney Isle* lies to the North of this Island. There are black and white spotted Serpents in this isle; their Head being apply'd to the Wound, is by the natives us'd as the best Remedy for their Poison. Within a Mile of the *Tarbat* there is a Stone erected about eight Foot high. *Loch-Tarbat* on the West side runs Easterly for about five miles, but is not a Harbour for Vessels, or lesser Boats, for it is altogether rocky.

T H E Shore on the West side affords Coral and Coraline. There is a fort of Dulse growing on this Coast, of a white Colour.

B E T W E E N the North End of *Jurah*, and the isle of *Scarba*, lies the famous and dangerous Gulph, call'd *Cory Vreckan*, about a Mile in breadth; it yields an impetuous current, not to be matched any where about the Isle of *Britain*. The Sea begins to boil and ferment with the Tide of Flood, and resembles the boiling of a Pot; and then increases gradually until it appear in many Whirlpools, which form themselves in sort of Pyramids, and immediately after spout up as high as the mast of a little vessel, and at the same time make a loud Report. These white Waves run Two Leagues with the Wind before they break: the Sea continues to repeat these various Motions from the beginning of the Tide of Flood, until it is more then half Flood, and then it decreases gradually until it hath ebb'd about half an hour, and continues to boil till it is within an hour of low Water. This boiling of the Sea is not above a Pistol-shot distant from the Coast of *Scarba Isle*, where the white Waves meet and spout up: they call it the *Kaillach*, i.e. an old Hag; and they say that when she puts on her *Kerchief*, i.e. the whitest Waves, it is then reckon'd fatal to approach her. Notwithstanding this great Ferment of the Sea, which brings up the least shell from the Ground, the smallest fisher-Boat may venture to cross this Gulph at the last hour of the Tide of Flood, and at the last hour of the Tide of Ebb.

T H I S Gulph hath its Name from *Breckan*, said to be Son to the king of *Denmark*, who was drowned here, cast ashore in the north of *Jurah* and buried in a Cave, as appears from the Tomb and Altar there.

T H E Natives told me, that about three Years ago an *English* Vessel happen'd inadvertently to pass through this Gulph at the time when the Sea began to boil: the Whitenss of the Waves, and their spouting up, was like the breaking of the sea upon a Rock; they found themselves attracted irresistibly to the white Rock, as they then supposed it to be: this quickly oblig'd them to consult their Safety, and so they betook themselves to the small Happiness to land safe in *Jurah*, committing the Vessel under all her Sails to the uncertain Conduct of Tide and Wind. She was driven to the opposite Continent of *Knapdale*, where she no sooner arriv'd, than the Tide and Wind became contrary to one another, and so the Vessel was cast into a Creek, where she was safe; and then the Master and Crew were by the Natives of this Isle conducted to her, where they found her as safe as they left her, tho all her Sails were still hoisted.

T H E Natives gave me an account, that some Years ago Vessel had brought some Rats hither, which increased so much, that they became very uneasy to the People, but on a sudden they all vanish'd; and now there is not one of them in the Isle.