

# *Frobisher's Eskimos in England*

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Eschatology is, no doubt, a melancholy subject at the best of times. And yet, both for the historian and for the medical man, a study of 'the last things' can prove a unique source of illumination. So it is in the case of Frobisher's Eskimos: especially in the case of the trio he brought back from his 1577 expedition, and to some extent also in that of the isolated man who was captured on the previous voyage of 1576.

It had always been known, in a general way, that these Eskimos did not survive long on English soil. Yet, the story may now be amplified by presenting a detailed account of their last days, the attention they received and their final resting-places. This might be thought mere morbid obsessionality were it not for the fact that a principal source of these *funebria*, as we may call them, is a lengthy *post mortem* report on the Eskimo man, as to the course of his fatal illness and the cause of his death, which has not been closely studied hitherto; it was written in Latin by the medical doctor who had attended him. The translation provided here is a revision of an earlier version (also by Neil Cheshire), which was the first complete translation to be produced<sup>1</sup>, and to this an historico-medical commentary has been added. Two other much shorter 'funeral' records, one of them a previously unnoticed manuscript, are also discussed.

Since, however, these documents can be fully understood only in the light of the Eskimos' previous histories and the circumstances of Frobisher's voyage (so far as they are known), and since some of this information is dispersed among relatively obscure and inaccessible contemporary sources (though some other is oft-reprinted), there is virtue in bringing together as much of it as is practicable and relevant. There is a further and special reason for sketching in an account of the Eskimos' short-lived contact with the English: namely, that they were the subjects of unique pictorial documentation. At least two well-known artists of the day drew and painted them, some of one man's work having survived; and, colourful though this is in itself, there is now the further possibility of comparison between these pictures and the verbal descriptions of physical characteristics which the medical author of the *post mortem* report naturally provides. The report even contains new observations about the Eskimo woman.

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<sup>1</sup> Neil Cheshire, "Postmortem report by Dr. Edward Dodding". In David B. Quinn, ed., *New American World*, 5 vols. (New York and London, 1979), vol. iv, pp. 216-218.

## CAPTURE AND NEGOTIATIONS

When Martin Frobisher returned to Bristol, in the autumn of 1577, after his second expedition to discover a 'north-west passage' linking the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, he brought back with him what looked like a miniature Eskimo family. It consisted of a man, a woman and a baby-in-arms; yet, the adults had been captured separately and the man was not the baby's father. Frobisher had made a similar attempt on the previous year's voyage to provide his countrymen, and especially his Queen, with live anthropological evidence about the strange lands and peoples he had encountered. That lone male Eskimo, however, had survived for only a few weeks in England; he had indeed reached London, but had died (as it was said at the time) "of colde which he had taken at sea".<sup>2</sup> Although he was not granted as much historical, pictorial and medical documentation as were his successors, he did nevertheless receive the attention of both artist and surgeon. He was certainly painted,<sup>3</sup> and other attempts were made to record his features in wax and clay. He was even embalmed, with a view to sending the body back to his own country: "... preservid to have bin sent back againe in to his countrye".<sup>4</sup>

The practitioner who performed this dismal office (for which he was paid £5) was one "Master Crowe the surgyon", and he can almost surely be identified as that William Crow who was at the time a Warden of the Company of Barber Surgeons and became Master in 1585. Thus, Crow was clearly a prestigious London man in his profession<sup>5</sup>, and his connections reflect this. At some time during the 1550s and early 1560s, he had attended Sir William Petre of Ingatestone in Essex: that learned, flexible and enormously successful courtier who served four monarchs in high ministries of state, who converted to the benefaction of Oxford University some of the vast wealth he had acquired from the dissolution of the monasteries, and who died in 1571-2. In addition, Crow was later (1580) to attest the successful examination of perhaps the most eminent of all Elizabethan surgeons, William Clowes. Contrary to Swain's account,<sup>6</sup> the contemporary record shows that he was not in fact one of the examiners himself.<sup>7</sup> Clowes gained wide experience as a military surgeon, practised for a time at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and eventually rose to be surgeon to the Queen herself. His five books have been described as "the best surgical writings of the Elizabethan age."<sup>8</sup>

Be that as it may, either the handiwork of his attestor, Dr. Crow, was not a success on this particular occasion, or else the Cathay Company thought better of their original plan; because the Eskimo's body was eventually buried in St. Olave's churchyard, according to the expedition's financial records which

2 George Best, *A True Discourse of the late voyages... of Martin Frobisher Generall*:... (London, 1578), p. 218. As reprinted in Viljhalmar Stefansson, ed., *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher*, (London, 1938), vol. I, pp. 1-129.

3 See text at notes 40 ff.

4 Michael Lok, "Financial records of the Cathay Company, London", f.15v.. *MS* in Public Record Office, London: PRO E 164/35. Reprinted in W.B. Rye, *England as Seen by Foreigners in the Days of Elizabeth and James the First* (London, 1865), p. 206.

5 Cp. note 3 in the commentary below.

6 V.A.J. Swain, "Medical expenses in Tudor England...", *Annals of the Royal College of Surgeons, England* 15 (1954): 193-199, p. 198.

7 J.H. Bloom & R.R. James, *Medical Practitioners in the Diocese of London*... (Cambridge, 1935), pp. 15-16 and 76.

8 N. Moore, "Clowes"; in *Dictionary of National Biography*, (London, 1887), vol. II.

Michael Lok compiled as Warden of the promoting Company. It may be assumed that he is referring to the substantial St. Olave's church in Hart Street, rather than the much poorer one of the same name in Silver Street, for it is the former which these records also designate (specifying the location) as the last resting-place of the infant of our trio. In neither case, however, does the extant and unimpaired parish register confirm the burial.<sup>9</sup>

Frobisher's financial backers, the sponsors of the newly chartered Cathay Company, would have been more interested, no doubt, in the samples of apparently precious metal which formed by far the greater part of the cargo on his second return voyage. For George Best, who had sailed as Frobisher's lieutenant on the *Ayde*, tells us that on this voyage his Captain had been "more specially directed by comission for the searching more of this golde Ore than for the searching any further discoverie of the passage".<sup>10</sup> Dionyse Settle records that, on leaving North America, Frobisher loaded his three ships with enough "Stone or Gold mineral" as he judged would cover the cost of this and the previous voyage "with sufficient interest to the venturers" to satisfy them and to encourage them to support further enterprises.<sup>11</sup> The two smaller ships which had accompanied the *Ayde* were the *Gabriel* captained by Edward Fenton<sup>12</sup> and the *Michael* in the charge of Gilbert York. Their mineral cargo turned out, of course, to be very much less valuable than expected.<sup>13</sup>

Even these mineral-minded "venturers", however, would not have been entirely indifferent to the human cargo. For the Eskimos were regarded also as a potential source of commercially useful intelligence on such matters as the location of mineral wealth, the nature of the terrain, the navigability of the waterways, and the languages spoken by the natives whom subsequent expeditions might wish to interrogate or do business with.<sup>14</sup> The eminent geographer-astrologer John Dee, who drew up in 1578 a vast navigational map which took in the coastlines of both North and South America, and who acted as cartographic consultant to some of the other voyagers including Humfrey Gilbert, has in fact left us a contemporary account of the Eskimos being interviewed on the subject of the geography and mineralogy of their region.<sup>15</sup>

They were sufficiently different from English men and women to merit attention on ethnological and medical grounds. Frobisher, and the Company of Cathay which sent him out, thought them important mainly because they believed that a study of them would throw light on the land and water lying between Greenland and Asia. Given that the Eskimos differed from the American Indians, as described by Spanish and French writers,<sup>16</sup> was it because they were really Asiatics who had come from north-east Russia? If so, it would

9 Lok, "Financial records", ff.63 and 74v.

10 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 51.

11 Dionysius Settle, *A True Report of Capteine Frobisher his Last Voyage... 1577* (London, 1577), p. 17. As reprinted in Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, pp. 11-25.

12 See note 13 in the commentary below

13 See note 17 *ibid.*

14 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 72.

15 Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, p. 236.

16 Eskimos can also be compared with American Indians in contemporary drawings by Jacques Le Moyne. See Paul H. Hulton, ed. *The Work of Jacques Le Moyne de Morges...* (London, 1977), vol. 2, plates 63 and 103-134.



Sir Martin Frobisher, painted for the Cathay Company by Cornelis Ketel, 1577. (By permission of the Trustees of the Bodleian Library, Oxford)

seem that there must be either a navigable water-passage (the famous Northwest Passage which the Frobisher expeditions were supposed to discover) or else a land-bridge by which contact with Cathay might be established. Already the English knew something of the inhabitants of North Russia, and the Eskimos seemed to resemble them. So much so, that they were sometimes called 'Tartar' men, and George Best was encouraged to argue the parallel in some detail.<sup>17</sup>

However, the three Eskimos had been taken captive in the first instance as hostages, and would presumably never have been brought to England if they had been able in that role to secure for Frobisher the reciprocal deal that he sought. The point was that, on the previous expedition, five men of the English company had been captured by the natives in a skirmish, and it was against the release of these men (or, at least, information as to their whereabouts) that Frobisher held the Eskimo trio. Unfortunately, the three hostages were to live scarcely longer in English conditions than did their luckless predecessor of the year before; and yet, if their fate was no happier, their scientific interest is nevertheless greater. For they became the subjects of a unique sequence of observations and documentation which ranged over physiognomy, motor skills, cultural attitudes and practices, physical constitution and pathology. It even touched on individual psychology.

The male Eskimo was captured separately from the woman and child: before them and at a different place. His clothing, as depicted by John White<sup>18</sup> is sufficiently unlike the woman's to confirm that they did not come from the same band. There is medical interest also in the circumstances of the capture of the mother and baby. A fierce conflict had developed between the English and the Eskimos, and a number of the latter had been killed. In the eventual retreat, two women who had been watching failed to get away in time and were taken prisoner. One of them, on being discovered to be old and ugly, was let go; the other, having been mistaken for a man, narrowly escaped being shot, and the bullet wounded the arm of the baby she was carrying. Best tells us that the English surgeon applied "salves" to the wound, but the woman preferred her own method of cure: "she, not acquainted with such kinde of surgerie, plucked those salves away, and by continuall licking with her owne tongue, not muche unlike oure dogges, healed uppe the childes arme".<sup>19</sup>

Unfortunately, Best does not give the name of "our Surgeon" on this second voyage, and it has not been possible to identify him from surviving records. Michael Lok, however, notes that there were at least three surgeons on the third voyage to the same region the following year: on board the *Ayde* on that occasion was John Harwood, while the *Michael* had Robert Hind and the *Judith*, John Paradise.<sup>20</sup> Almost nothing is known for certain about these three practitioners, so even an informed speculation as to whether any one of them is likely to have been on the previous voyage is out of the question.

Neither is it known what particular 'salves' may have been recommended and refused when the Eskimo baby was injured, but the documents do provide a

17 Lok, "Financial records", ff.15v. and 63; Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 23.

18 For the manner of his capture and its putative medical *sequelae*, see note 1 of the commentary below.

19 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 68.

20 Stefansson, *Three Voyages* vol. 2, pp. 221 and 223.

possible source of inference by showing what preparations had made up Frobisher's medicine chest on the previous voyage. This was a chest which he bought from one Hugh Morgan, a grocer, and Keevil describes its contents as largely comprising simple nostrums, deodorants for foul air, flavourings, purgatives and cleansing agents, with some useless extravagances (including pearls) thrown in to raise the cost. Despite this, Frobisher's health record for his personnel over the three voyages was well above average for the times,<sup>21</sup> and Best can report that during the whole of the second voyage they lost, out of a total complement of 134, only one man (apart from one who was already sick when he came aboard).<sup>22</sup> Such an achievement was partly due to the organisers having allocated the sum of £6 13s 4d to "the surgeon towards the furneshinge of his cheaste".<sup>23</sup> The male Eskimo also, whose name turned out to be something like 'Calichough',<sup>24</sup> was to refuse on his death-bed the treatment which the physician attending him prescribed: in that case it was blood-letting.<sup>25</sup>

While they were being held off-shore aboard the *Ayde*, both adult prisoners made attempts to escape, and it seems that on one occasion they nearly succeeded for the ship's boats were in the water secured only by ropes to the ship. They got into a boat, cut it adrift and began to make for the shore; but they were discovered before they had got far enough to take to the water and try to swim ashore. This put the English so much on their guard that when the Eskimos sent a great bladder to Frobisher as a present, apparently in order to encourage him to relent about the hostages, the English suspected that it was really to provide one of the prisoners with another means of escape from the ship.<sup>26</sup>

It was on the first Monday in August 1577 that Frobisher tried explicitly to bargain with the natives about exchanging the hostages for the five captured Englishmen, having previously tried to make contact with his countrymen through Calichough on his own.<sup>27</sup> Frobisher now set up the woman and child in a prominent place where they could be seen clearly, and took his other captive ashore with him. Calichough was supposed to explain to his kinsmen the terms on which he and his fellow captives, who were on view, would be released. Perhaps because he knew his mission was doomed to fail, Calichough broke down in tears when he met the local chief to whom he was to talk. There were several obvious difficulties: Calichough may not have understood Frobisher's instructions about what he was to say; this may not have been the same Eskimo band that had taken the Englishmen the year before; the Englishmen might already be dead, and Calichough knew it. This last seems most likely. The natives, it is true, tried to buy time by pretending to take a letter to the men who were supposedly being held elsewhere, which does suggest (if the Eskimos' action was correctly interpreted) that Frobisher's message had got through to them. But, on the previous Monday, a party of Captain York's men from the *Michael* had come across an abandoned Eskimo habitation, some distance away at York's Sound, where they found bloodstained clothes and some personal effects which

21 J.J. Keevil, *Medicine and the Navy*:... (Edinburgh, 1957-1963) vol. 1, pp. 178 and 86.

22 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 79.

23 Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, p. 98.

24 See note 14 of commentary below.

25 See note 7 of commentary below.

26 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 73.

27 See note 9 of commentary below.

were thought to have belonged to the Englishmen. York had hopefully left a letter for the men, in case they should still be alive, and had come back to the *Ayde* to report his discovery.<sup>28</sup>

Calichough's negotiations having come to nothing, Frobisher's expedition spent another couple of weeks in exploration and mining before setting sail for home from Frobisher Inlet on 22 August. Contemporary witnesses give some account of how the Eskimos adapted to shipboard conditions, and one of them commented approvingly that "they began to growe more civill, familiar, pleasaunt, and docible amongst us in a verye short time".<sup>29</sup> The focus of interest now shifts to descriptions of their reception and activities after landing in England, because these in turn throw light on the unique pictorial record that remains extant.

#### ACTIVITIES IN ENGLAND

When the Eskimos landed at Bristol, after a stormy passage which had caused them to put in at Milford Haven on the way, the Bristolians were naturally struck in the first place by their visitors' appearance. Two artists recorded this pictorially (their work is the subject of the next section), but there were obviously many verbal descriptions, some of which have survived. In addition to the well-known accounts by Best and Settle, both of which were published within a couple of years of the event, there is a lively but much less accessible eye-witness narrative by the local Bristol chronicler William Adams.

Much of his work is still in manuscript, but extracts from it were printed for the first time at the beginning of this century.<sup>30</sup> He introduces them by saying that the expedition brought back "a man called Calicho, and a woman called Ignorth: they were savage people and fed only upon raw flesh"<sup>31</sup>; and it is he who says that the local people thought it strange that the Eskimos' clothes contained "no linen or woolle at all" but appeared to be made out of "stags' skins". In passing, it may be noted that the great William Camden, antiquary and contemporary chronicler of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, was to follow such sources as Best, Settle and Lok in reporting that the Eskimos whom Frobisher encountered were "appareled in sea-calves' skins". The physical description which he retails depicts "men with black hair, broad faces, flat noses, swarthy coloured . . . ; the women painted about the eyes and balls of the cheek with a blue colour like the ancient Britains".<sup>32</sup> Unfortunately, he does not even mention that Frobisher brought any of them back. Adams is also one of the few witnesses who comment on the child at any time after its capture. Even the medical man Dodding, who visited Calichough on a number of occasions and also made several observations about the woman<sup>33</sup>, has nothing to say of the infant whose welfare might be thought to have

28 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 65.

29 *op. cit.*, p. 125.

30 W. Adams, "A Summary of pettie Chronicle of the first Inhabitants of this famous Iland" (up to 1639). Bristol Archives Office, BAO 13748(4); and F.F. Fox, ed., *Adam's Chronicle of Bristol* (Bristol, 1910).

31 Adams, *Adam's Chronicle*, p. 115.

32 W. Camden, *The History of the Most Renowned and Victorious Princess Elizabeth* . . . (London, 1688), 4th edition p. 216.

33 See Dr. Dodding's report below.

been a matter of concern for him. Perhaps it reflects upon the sociology of historiography, in a way that a Marxist might savour, that in those days babies were not generally thought (by male historians) to be the stuff of history. At all events, Adams reports that the child was still being breast-fed, and that the Bristolians were intrigued by the way the mother carried him on the back of her shoulder, as depicted in White's drawing, and "gave suck by casting her breastes over her shoulder".<sup>34</sup>

The child is referred to as 'him' because the information that it was a boy is contained in one of the two other surviving references. The same authority states that the boy's name was 'Nutioc' and that he was aged about fourteen or fifteen months, a figure which is indeed consistent with what can be seen of him in White's picture. Although both statements may be correct, they have to be treated very cautiously because the source is unfortunately not reliable. It is the French edition of Settle's account published in Geneva in 1578, and it contains additional material some of which is definitely mis-information. For example, it wrongly assumes that the Eskimo couple were man and wife; and its assertion that Calichough was taken to the Queen and showed her how he could kill swans on the Thames with his small harpoon or bird-dart, is demonstrably false. This mistaken statement that he did reach the Queen has regrettably been perpetuated into the present decade by a recent modern study, which also includes a remarkable error about his medical condition.<sup>35</sup> Dr. Dodding, who attended him continuously from the time the Eskimo docked in Bristol to the time he died there in his care, specifically laments that the Queen was deprived of seeing him by his untimely death.<sup>36</sup> It was the child himself who came nearer to seeing the Queen, according to the other surviving reference to him. That sad little story is told at the beginning of a later section of this article.

Calichough may not have met the Queen, but he did meet the Mayor of Bristol. Thomas Colston was in office at the time, and it was probably toward the beginning of October when he played host at his home to the Eskimo trio. Calichough brought both his bird-dart and his boat to the party, no doubt by request—and he was indeed asked to play! Adams the chronicler was one of the guests, and he, among others, has left us a description of Calichough's public demonstration of skill with kayak and dart which took place on 9 October 1577, perhaps the same day as the mayoral reception.<sup>37</sup> The kayak was said to be about fourteen feet long, "made of Beastes' skins in form like unto a long barge or trow but sharpe at both ends, having but one round place for him to sit it". It was launched "at the back of Bristol" at full tide, and the Eskimo 'rowed' with his paddle up and down the river in the admiring view of the mayor and many others. While he paddled, Calichough displayed his prowess with the bird-dart, killing a "couple of ducks with his dart". His aim impressed Adams, who recorded: "he would hit a ducke at a good distance of (*sic*) and not misse". He landed at the Marsh, Adams goes on, and "carried his bote through the Cittie upon his

34 Adams, "A Summary or pettie Chronicle . . ."; and cp. Stefansson, *Three Voyages* vol. 2, p. 239.

35 R. Fortune, "The health of the Eskimos, as portrayed in the earliest written accounts", *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 45 (1971) 97-114, p. 100.

36 See Dr. Dodding's report below.

37 Cp. Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, pp. 237-239, 247.



backe"; and he did "the like . . . at the weare and other places, where many beheld them".<sup>38</sup>

The very much less reliable Geneva source attributes another athletic feat to Calichough. It reports that, when he was Frobisher's trumpeter on horseback, he made signs that he too wanted to try to ride. He mounted the horse back-to-front facing the tail, but was very pleased with the way it capered about. Doubt, however, is cast on the authenticity of this account by Best's observation that horses seemed to frighten the Eskimos: "They wondred muche al all our things, and were afraide of our horses and other beastes, out of measure".<sup>39</sup> Although it is always possible that Calichough quickly overcame his initial fear, yet, if he had already sustained the broken ribs, complications from which eventually killed him, the horse's capering must have been extremely painful—more so perhaps than paddling, dart-throwing or boat-carrying. And since it was the display of aquatic skills which caught the attention not only of the chronicler but also of the artists, it is these which provide a link with the pictorial record.

#### THE PICTORIAL RECORD

Looking back as he wrote some forty-odd years later, Adams mentions that painters drew pictures of the Eskimos at the time, and that such pictures "were here to be seene many yeares after" (perhaps implying that they were no longer to be seen at the time of his writing). The most famous of these artists nowadays is undoubtedly John White, a great number of whose colourful drawings of American subjects, done between 1577 and 1590, survive and can be studied in a handsome and faithful modern edition. Although no copy is now extant, he may have drawn the 1576 Eskimo also; the Dutch artist Lucas de Heere certainly did, because one such drawing of his survives and has been reproduced for comparison in the White edition.<sup>40</sup>

White also seems to have made the original drawing from which were subsequently derived various woodcuts and engravings of Calichough on the river with his boat and spear. By the very next year (1578), a version of this picture had been incorporated in the Geneva edition of Settle's narrative. Further evidence of drawings by White has come down to us in the form of some convincing sketches made at the end of 1577 or early in 1578 by the Dutch ichthyologist Adriaen Coenenzn, who says that he was copying pictures which an unidentified mariner showed him at the Hague. Although Coenenzn's account of the captives is in some ways confused, it seems clear that the hand in the drawings is ultimately White's; and, while one of the compositions is otherwise unknown, the others reflect the originals of the familiar woodcuts just mentioned. White's magnificent and detailed drawings of our Eskimo trio need examination, but first it should be understood that he was not their official painter.

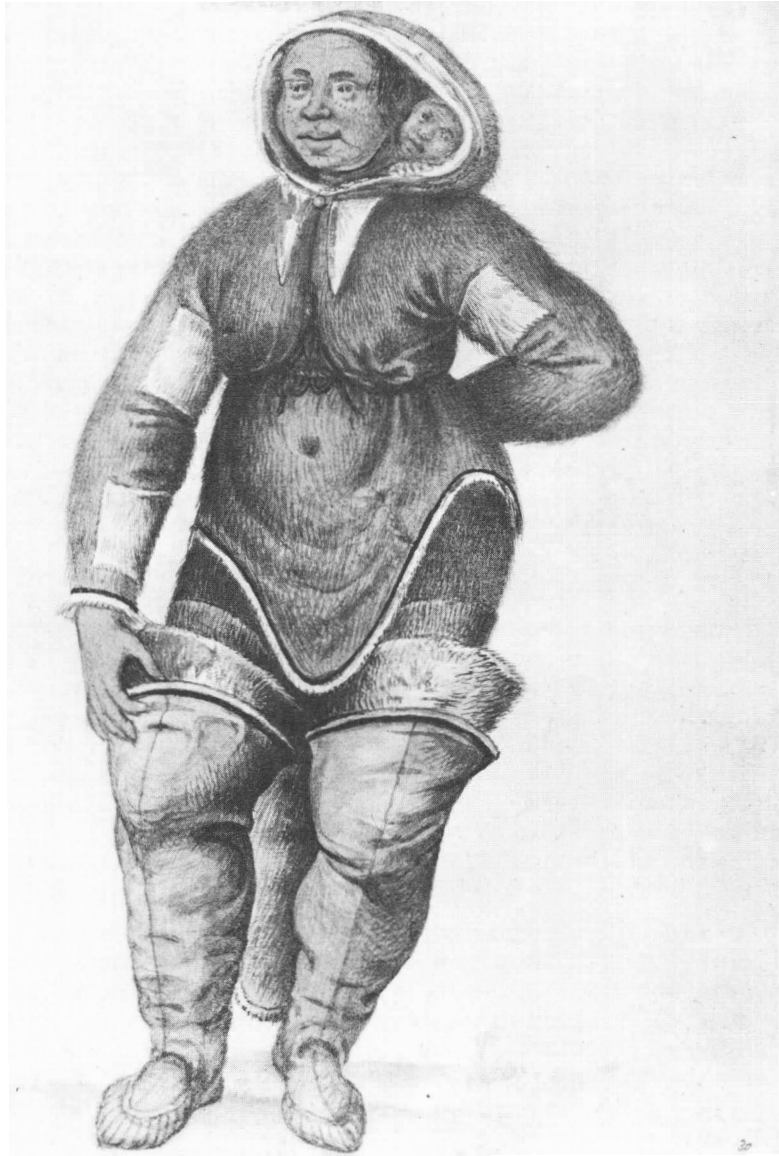
38 Adams, "A Summary or pettie Chronicle . . .", f.165; and *Adam's Chronicle*, p. 115.

39 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 125.

40 P.H. Hulton and D.B. Quinn, eds., *The American Drawings of John White* (London and Chapel Hill, 1964), vol. 1, p. 142 and vol. 2, plate 146a.



Calichough, by John White, probably 1576. (From P.H. Hulton and D.B. Quinn, eds. *The American Drawings of John White*, (1964) with permission of P.H. Hulton)



Eskimo woman and child, by John White, probably 1576. (From Hulton and Quinn, *ibid.*)

That honour fell to Cornelis Ketel, a Flemish painter living in London who was sent down from the capital to make a permanent record of the Eskimos. This same artist had in fact painted the single Eskimo from the previous year; evidently in London, and apparently *post mortem*. For the Cathay Company records contain, just after the expenses of his illness, death and embalming, details of “a greate picture of the whole bodye of the strainge man . . . which was geven the Quenes maiestie”.<sup>43</sup> Ketel did five paintings of Calichough in all: three in his native dress, one in English dress and one naked. The poor man had to submit to being treated as a scientific specimen, and it is to be hoped that this change and deprivation of clothing, inflicted as they were in the chilly damp of an English autumn, did not contribute to his death. Ketel’s rate for the largest of these paintings was £5 each. He also made four paintings of the woman, two large and two small. Substantial frames were ordered for the pictures, two of them being framed and sent abroad. Although the extant accounts make it clear that these pictures were paid for by the Company itself, rather than by royal commission, they also show that two of the four pictures of “the strainge woman”, at least, were intended from the start “for the Quene at new yeares daye”. There was a large one costing £4, and a smaller one at £1; a charge of 2s. - 4d. is also recorded for carriage to Hampton Court.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, there can be little doubt that, if the Queen did not see Calichough in person, she nevertheless saw his portrait and that of the woman. For it is almost certainly Ketel’s portraits of the couple that were hanging in Hampton Court Palace some fifteen years later when they were noticed there by one Jacob Rathgeb. Rathgeb was secretary to the Duke of Württemberg and, as he accompanied his master through the Palace, he noted “lifelike portraits of the wild man and woman whom Martin Forbisser, the English captain, took in his voyage to the New World and brought alive to England”. Both pictures were sold off after Charles I’s execution but were bought back at the Restoration, and they are last heard of in a catalogue of James II’s pictures when they were back at Hampton Court.<sup>45</sup> None of the Ketel pictures is known to survive to the present day, but it is not impossible that one or more of them will eventually reappear.

The Cathay Company accounts indicate that Ketel also painted at this time three distinguished participants in the Frobisher expeditions: Michael Lok, Warden of the Cathay Company, who left a short verbal description of the 1576 Eskimo and compiled the financial records from which quotation is made; Christopher Hall, whose personal journal of the 1576 expedition can still be read<sup>46</sup>; and the leader himself. There was too a £6 canvas of the good ship *Gabriel*. The Frobisher portrait, which is a full-length likeness about life-size, now hangs in the Bodleian Library at Oxford.<sup>47</sup> It has the added interest, in the present context, that even here there is a medical connection (albeit a very tenuous one). The benefactor who presented it to the University in 1674, almost

43 Lok, “Financial records”, f.15v.

44 *op. cit.*, ff. 63v., 74v. and 75.

45 Rye, *England as Seen by Foreigners*, pp. 18, 205.

46 Christopher Hall, “The first Voyage of M.M. Frobisher, to the Northwest, for the search of the straight or passage to China, . . .” (1576); reprinted in Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol 1, pp. 149-154.

47 R.L. Poole, *Catalogue of Portraits in the Reading Room and Gallery of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1920), pp. 20-21.

exactly a century after it was painted, was Walter Charleton, another royal (and indeed royalist) physician. Born in 1619 and admitted to Magdalen College, Oxford, sixteen years later, he qualified as an M.D. in 1641. He became physician-in-ordinary both to Charles I, whom none other than William Harvey was currently attending, and to Charles II, of whom he published a grossly flattering eulogy in 1661. It was no doubt as a result of these court connections that the Frobisher portrait came into his possession. He was President of London's College of Physicians for three years, 1689-1691, and a founding fellow of the Royal Society; he died in 1707.<sup>48</sup>

White's drawings of the Eskimo trio, however, although having suffered a period of obscurity along with his other American work until they were acquired for the British Museum in 1765, can now readily be studied. There are two pictures of the man, and one of the woman.<sup>49</sup> From the detailed commentary which accompanies these reproductions the following descriptions are adapted.

The woman is posed standing almost full face, with one arm bent and the hand behind her back; the other hand, broad and capable, fingers the top of her outer boot. Her face is broad and tattooed with blueish spots, her nose large and wide, her eyes slightly slanted. Her mouth too is broad, with both lips full in the middle but narrowing sharply towards the sides of her mouth. Like her hood, out of which the child peeps over her left shoulder, the well-tailored sealskin jacket is carefully edged with white fur, and it is patched on the insides of the sleeves as a reinforcement (presumably) against rubbing. The bottom edge is uneven, coming down like a short apron in front and having a long tail, also apron-shaped, at the back. A cord round her body helps to support her substantial breasts. Her sealskin trousers are visible only at the hips, because she has no less than three pairs of skin boots over them: two pairs are worn with soft fur facing outwards, the outer pair with the fur inwards. A bone was apparently fitted inside the outer pair so that the boots stayed upright, and the Eskimos kept all their small loose possessions stuffed into the tops of their boots. The feet are finished off carefully, moccasin-style.

Little impression can be gained of the child, but the woman's expression suggests a definite personality. Some observers have felt that it conveys a certain sad assurance, as if she had borne much but could go on doing so: a touch or more of fatalism. This impression can now be compared with the comments of a contemporary medical man about her reaction to stress. Dr. Dodding was so surprised by the equanimity with which she took the death of her fellow-captive, whom she had looked after diligently, that he could not decide whether it reflected commendable stoicism or callous indifference.<sup>50</sup> A modern practitioner might perhaps add the third possibility of a kind of depressive withdrawal: either such as often occurs in the course of ordinary mourning, or (since there had not in fact been much of a bond between them) occasioned by the realisation that now she was on her own. Certainly Best comments on the Eskimos' general tendency towards demonstrative, and even quasimusical, grief on such occasions.<sup>51</sup>

48 N. Moore, "Charleton"; in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1887), vol. 10, pp. 116-119.

49 Hulton and Quinn, *American Drawings*, vol. 2, plates 84 a/b and 63 respectively. The associated commentary is in vol. 1, pp. 141-145.

50 See Dr. Dodding's report below.

51 See note 9 of the commentary below.

Calichough's portrait is of similarly high quality. He stands facing half-left, with his right arm bent and the hand behind his back. His left arm is stretched out, with his strong, broad hand leaning on a bow, which is made of whalebone lightly decorated and having a thick sinewy bowstring. In another version of this picture, White shows him with a long kayak paddle in his left hand and an arrow for his bow lying on the ground. Calichough's clothing is very similar to the woman's, but differs sufficiently in detail to suggest that he comes from a different band (as he almost certainly did).<sup>52</sup> His hood fits more closely, his much shorter jacket barely reaches his waist and has an edge-hem except at the back where the long flap hangs down. To show this long jacket-tail, White also drew a back-view. The cut and edging, however, are very much like the woman's, though it lacks the lighter arm-patches. Calichough's trousers are visible from waist to knee, and have two light patches on the inside of the thighs. He seems to be wearing only a single pair of boots, which have the fur inward and the tops turned down to knee-length; each one is tied with cords or sinews under the knee, and again the feet are finished moccasin-style.

There is a further drawing of the man: this time he is in his kayak, with its circular opening just large enough to let him in, and is using the bird-dart, which he holds in an ingenious thrower with one hand while he manages the paddle with the other.<sup>53</sup> This colourfully complements the verbal description of his display on the Avon at Bristol.<sup>54</sup> In the main picture, his face, in which some have seen signs of strength and of a kindliness absent from the woman's, is lined and brown. Indeed, it is said that among the Eskimos the men's complexions were very similar to those of Englishmen who led an outdoor life. His features are narrower, leaner and more aquiline than the woman's; and, by contrast also with hers, his eyes are scarcely slanted at all. His nose is broad but not so flattened; his lips, so far as can be judged from the lower one, which is clearly visible, are red and full; his upper lip is obscured by a longish red-brown moustache, and he wears a short, rather straggling, beard. Altogether there is about him a liveliness which accords with his behaviour after his arrival in England. This physiognomical detail is of particular interest in Calichough's case, because Dodding makes several remarks, in the theoretical language of his day, about the man's temperamental characteristics. Since these latter were connected in that language with a person's physical features, Dodding's diagnosis itself might now be checked. Dodding regarded him as basically 'choleric' in temperament, and Polemon's classic description of the typical physique and physiognomy of the choleric man shows that Calichough conforms at least in respect of his facial pigmentation, curling hair and relatively elongated features.<sup>55</sup>

#### THE FUNEBRIA

Just under a month after paddling his boat and spearing ducks on the Avon, Calichough died; and less than a week later the woman also was dead. They were both buried at St. Stephen's church, Bristol, whose Parish Register contains the following entry under 'Burials in Anno 1577':

52 See earlier discussion above.

53 Hulton and Quinn, *American Drawings*, vol. 2, plate 147a/b.

54 See notes 37 and 38 above.

55 See note 8 of the commentary below.

'Collichang a heathen man buried the 8th of November. Egnoock a heathen woman buried the 13th of November'<sup>56</sup>

This document has not been noticed before. It may be the earliest occasion on which the deaths of two non-Christians were recorded in an English parish register, and the decision to bury them here would in any case have been thought generous at the time. Although the 1576 Eskimo apparently preceded them into the consecrated soil of an English churchyard, the parish register concerned does not confirm this. Dodding's autopsy report independently confirms the date of the first interment, for it is also dated the 8th and says that Calichough died the previous day though the parenthesis at the beginning of the penultimate paragraph may even suggest that he was buried on the day he died. Dodding says that this haste, and his insistence that the woman should watch the burial, was to allay the fears of cannibalism and of grave-side human sacrifice which he supposed her to have.<sup>57</sup>

Dodding has a lot to say, of course, about the multiple contributory causes of the man's death. But, as far as the woman is concerned, he seems more interested in her mental reaction (or lack of it) to Calichough's end than in the physical symptoms she was showing. For, although he comments that she was "troubled . . . with boils" on the day Calichough died, and that they were worse next day, he does not suggest that they were the prodrome to a fatal illness. Of course, they may not have been: she may have died of something unconnected with them. Or if they were, Dodding may have recognised it and begun treatment soon after his 'Reporte . . .' was written.

With the adults already dead by early November, what of the child? The major British historians who were writing at the time provide almost nothing. John Stow, for example, who made a speciality of London history and monuments, says only that "neither the man, woman nor childe lived long in this Country"<sup>58</sup>; and Stow's much younger contemporary John Speed mentions only the voyages and the false gold, but not the Eskimos.<sup>59</sup> Knowledge is greatly amplified, however, by the affecting details of Lok's financial records for the Company. The child reached the capital in the care of a nurse, presumably *en route* for the Queen, and was lodged with this nurse for eight days, at the Company's expense, at the *Three Swans*, an inn which Stow did not mention when he surveyed the city a quarter of a century later.<sup>60</sup> But the child fell ill. Medical aid was summoned, in the form of "Iohn gymblet surgione" (who was paid five shillings), but it was to no avail and the child died before he could be presented at Court.<sup>61</sup> So far this third medical figure who attended the Eskimos in England has eluded the researcher.

The Cathay Company records say that the child was buried in the parish (church) of St. Olave's in Hart street: thus did he join his adult predecessor of the

56 Parish Register of St. Stephen's Church, Bristol (1559-1663). Bristol Archives Office.

57 See Dr. Dodding's report below.

58 John Stow, *Annales, or a Generall Chronicle of England*; continued and ed. by Edmund Howes (London, 1631/32), p. 681b.

59 John Speed, *The History of Great Britaine* (London, 1611), 878b.

60 John Stow, *A Survey of London* (1603); two vols. ed. and intro. C.L. Kingsford (Oxford, 1971 reprint).

61 Lok, "Financial records", ff. 74v. and 75; cp. Rye, *England as seen by Foreigners*, p. 205.

year before. The parish register for these years is extant, both in the original bound manuscript and also as published in an apparently scrupulous transcript.<sup>62</sup> So far as can be seen, however, its pages are silent about these exotic guests. Perhaps the prosperous and fashionable City church preferred to keep quiet about its theological liberality, by contrast with St. Stephen's of Bristol; or perhaps the child, at least, was baptised at some stage and consequently buried under a Christian name which we have not recognised. St. Olave's was indeed a prosperous church. Stow described it as "a proper parish Church", whose endowments and monuments he catalogues<sup>63</sup>, and some eight years after Nutioc's burial it played host to another famous Elizabethan infant, in happier circumstances, when Sir Philip Sidney's daughter Elizabeth was baptized there. It seems to have been built around the middle of the previous century on the site of a thirteenth-century church whose crypt remains, and, although it survived the Great Fire, of 1666, it could only partly defy the bombs of the Second World War, with the result that no more than a section of the Tudor structure can be seen today.<sup>64</sup> Still a busy City church, it stands in the south-western angle of Hart Street and Seething (formerly Sydon) Lane, within sight of the Tower and a mere three-hundred yards from its outer wall. Was it chosen for the Eskimos because its dedicatee, the Norseman Olaf Haraldsson who was converted to Christianity in the eleventh century, was thought to be suitable *numen* to preside over their pagan arctic bones? The speculation is intriguing.

These *funebria* raise a final point, about the names of the Eskimos. For the forms they give differ from those found elsewhere, which in turn differ among themselves. Although, needless to say, definitive versions cannot be given, on substantial conclusion does emerge from the literature. It is that the only real personal name of the three is the man's. The spelling in Dodding's report, minus its Elizabethan final 'e', has been adopted in the paper; and it may simply be noticed that, of all the other variants, the one that Adams uses, 'Callichough' is one of the closest. The other two names, 'Egnock' (or 'Ignorth', etc.) and 'Nutioc', evidently correspond to Baffin Eskimo words for 'woman' and 'child' respectively.<sup>65</sup>

#### DR. DODDING'S REPORT

The major document presented here in a newly revised translation is a medical report in Latin, by the historically inconspicuous physician Edward Dodding, on the fatal illness of the Eskimo man. Dodding himself was a well-qualified medical practitioner of his day. A native of Westmorland, he was granted a licence to practise medicine by the University of Cambridge in 1572-3. He had graduated M.A. in 1566 from Trinity College, three years after being elected a Fellow there, and was awarded his M.D. ten years later. Bristol's specifically 'medical' records for the time have perished, and Dodding's name is not to be found in the surviving 'burgess books' which list a great many accredited practitioners, starting

62 Parish Register of St. Olave's, Hart Street. Catalogue no. 01 in Rectory Library, 8 Hart St., London; burials for 1577 are on ff. 11v. -12. The transcript published by the Harleian Society is W.B. Bannerman, ed., *The Registers of St. Olave, Hart St.* (London, 1916).

63 Stow, *Survey of London*, vol. 1, p. 132.

64 A. Povah, *Annals of the Parishes of St. Olave's Hart Street*... (London, 1894), pp. 13, 147; B.F.L. Clarke, *Parish Churches of London* (London, 1966), pp. 20-21.

65 See Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, pp. 233-236.



from 1545, but do not record those who had been licensed elsewhere unless they had become freemen of the city in some other way.<sup>66</sup> His admission to a fellowship of the College of Physicians, on June 25th 1584, indicates that he must have moved his practice from Bristol to London. It happens that his election to the College, along with one Thomas Randall, was the occasion of much dispute among the London physicians, because the eminent Thomas Mouffett maintained that he himself had a prior claim to a fellowship. Mouffett, a near contemporary of Dodding at the same Cambridge college, had subsequently spent much time abroad, where he energetically adopted the Paracelsian tradition. He was eventually elected both fellow and censor of the Physicians' College in Armada year, and later came to know Drake and to attend Walsingham.<sup>67</sup> When, in 1589, the College launched a scheme to prepare a pharmacopoeia, Dodding was one of four members who were charged with the responsibility of drawing up the section on "Juices, Robs [i.e. sweetened concentrates of fruit-juice], Conserve, Medicated Wines, and Confections"; but the project was never completed.<sup>68</sup> At his death on 11 April 1592, he was buried at St. Dunston-in-the-West, Fleet St.<sup>69</sup> This church was entirely rebuilt in 1831-33 on virtually the same site, and, although a few sixteenth-century monuments were transferred to the new building, there is now no trace of one to Dodding.<sup>70</sup>

His 'Reporte of the Sicknesse and Death of the Man at Bristoll which Capt. Furbisher brought from the North-west', unlike White's famous drawings and the other narratives already noticed, is a relatively obscure document. The manuscript, which is written in quite a difficult hand, even as Elizabethan hands go, can now be found in the Public Record Office.<sup>71</sup> It is a great deal more difficult to read than, for example, the notebooks of his famous contemporary William Camden the historian, who also had personal connections with the North American voyages.<sup>72</sup> This difficulty may perhaps account for the occasional 'scribal' error in the transcript published in the Calendar of State Papers and reprinted in 1938 by Stefansson.<sup>73</sup> The Latin is accurate and serviceable for the most part, if somewhat graceless. There follows a revision of the first complete English rendering of this remarkable document with a commentary, in seventeen annotations, on relevant aspects of the medical and historical background against which it was written:

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- 66 G. Parker, "Early Bristol medical institutions, . . .", *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Soc.* 44 (1922): 155-178. The authors are grateful to Ms. M.E. Williams, archivist at the County Record Office, Bristol, for information about the records referred to, and for kindly searching them on their behalf.
- 67 S. Lee, "Moffett"; in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London, 1894), vol. 38, pp. 101-103.
- 68 For information about Dodding's career at the College, the authors are indebted to Dr. Charles Webster of the Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, at Oxford University.
- 69 W. Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, vol. 1 (1518-1700); second ed. (London, 1878), p. 86. Also J. Venn and J.A. Venn, eds., *Alumni Cantabrigiensis, Part 1*, (Cambridge, 1922), vol. 2, p. 51.
- 70 Clarke, *Parish Churches*, pp. 48-49.
- 71 Edward Dodding, "Doctor Dodyngs Reporte of the Sicknesse and Death of the Man at Bristoll which Capt. Frobisher brought from the North-west: . . ." MS no. SP12/118, dated 8 November 1577.
- 72 David Quinn and Neil Cheshire, *The New Found Land of Stephen Parmenius* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 12-15 and plate 8.
- 73 *Calendar of State Papers*, Colonial 59; Domestic Eliz. cxviii, no. 40, i./Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, pp. 135-137.

'When the body had been dissected, the first thing to claim my attention was two ribs; these had been badly broken, in sustaining a fall of some force and impact<sup>1</sup>, and were still gaping apart without having knit together. Either the care of them had been neglected, as tends to happen in the very hectic circumstances and restricted conditions such as you find on board ship, or (which I suspect is more likely) some contamination which nobody noticed had excited inflammation, and the contusion of the lung had, in the course of time, become putrefied as a result<sup>2</sup>.

'This condition, aggravated externally by the harmful cold and intensified by poor diet, was in the meantime neither put right from outside by surgery nor arrested internally by medication<sup>3</sup>, so that it rapidly developed unchecked day by day into an incurable ulcer of the lung. The disease spread and invaded healthy areas, with a great deal of clammy and sticky material flowing away from the same putrid region. The left part of the lung was so completely congested that it expelled nothing at all throughout the whole course of the illness, and his breath was virtually held in as a result of the constriction. Consequently, it was a considerably weakened constitution that had to resist the virulence of the malignant disease.

'When he was among us, his diet was too liberal either for the severity of the disease to tolerate or for the man's habitual daily way of life to sustain. This situation was brought about by the utmost solicitousness on the part of that great man, the Captain, and by boundless generosity from those with whom he lodged. Everyone's judgement was deceived by the hidden nature of the disease and by misguided kindness, rather than by ill-will; but when, shortly before his death, the nature of his illness expressed itself in the rather obvious symptom of breathlessness, he was already a victim of dropsy. For in the left thoracic cavity a great quantity of liquid, such as is rarely revealed to anatomical scrutiny and investigation, was obviously flowing. This was disturbed by any movement of the body (as one may be fairly sure from the outcome) and obstructed the expiration of the lung, and the lung itself in the end stuck to the ribs more firmly than anyone would think.

'Innumerable indications of cerebral injury<sup>4</sup> and ulceration (so to speak) remain and are coming very openly to light, quite apart from the deafness and intense head-pains with which he was continuously afflicted; but for brevity's sake I must pass these over in silence. However much of its appropriate volume nature had subtracted from his tiny spleen she had evidently added with interest to his enormous stomach<sup>5</sup>, which, being flooded with liquid and swollen out, seemed much larger than is the case with our people. This was a consequence, I think, of his unhealthy voraciousness<sup>6</sup>.

'Elsewhere there was, you might say, an 'Anglophobia', which he had from when he first arrived, even though his fairly cheerful features and appearance concealed it and gave a false impression with considerable skill. His own actions, however, either betrayed it openly and exposed it, as it seemed to me when I was looking into individual things more closely and suspiciously examining everything; or else they betokened an incipient fatal illness, as I declared often enough, but nobody would listen. These signs became more clearly recognisable and confirmed from the state of his pulse<sup>7</sup> rather than from himself: for this was all the time too small, too sluggish and too weak, rather than too slow; although it was also slower than either his youth or his choleric temperament<sup>8</sup> would require.

'In the early onset of the illness, I was summoned when his strength was still unimpaired. With much argument I recommended blood-letting, in order that, by quenching the fire of the inflammation and reducing the quantity of matter, they might both subside. But the foolish, and only too uncivilised, timidity of this uncivilised man forbade it, and the judgement of those with whom he had been sailing prevailed with me.

'In the end, having been called the hour before the one in which he died, I found everything threatening imminent death—and no wonder, for his speech was impaired and almost cut off, his appetite faded and pulse non-existent. Quite enough! He summoned up to a certain extent all the energies and faculties which he had abandoned, came back to himself as if from a deep sleep and recognised us as people he knew. But I turned my attention to medication, and he spoke those words of ours which he had learned, the few that he could, and in turn replied quite relevantly to questions. And he sang clearly that same tune with which the companions from his region and rank had either mourned or ceremonially marked his final departure<sup>9</sup> when they were standing on the shore (according to those who heard them both): just like the swans who foresee what good there is in death, and die happily with a song<sup>10</sup>. I had scarcely left him when he moved from life to death, forcing out as his last words, given in our language, "God be with you".

'I was bitterly grieved and saddened, not so much by the death of the man himself as because the great hope of seeing him which our most gracious Queen had entertained had now slipped through her fingers, as it were, for a second time<sup>11</sup>. But the heroes of these new and substantial acts of gallantry are affected by a much greater sadness, for they have been deprived of the rewards and prizes for the truly Herculean labour<sup>12</sup> which they have carried out. In my judgement<sup>13</sup>, these men can in all justice expect the highest recognition on our part, for they have triumphantly survived these expeditions by sea,—tortuous and comfortless that they indeed were, and obviously unachieved before this time. They have undertaken enormous tasks, bringing to the kingdom and posterity advantages greater than the hazards, and to their own names supreme glory; and they have demonstrated that what he [i.e. Frobisher] has undertaken to do he has succeeded in.

'Consequently we may retain these nerves and life-blood of kingdom and state, which is how the theorists appositely describe economic resources, as easily as we have sought them out. But let us not, before we take them over, lose sight in our ingratitude (for I don't see what else there is to fear) of what we should repay to God for all that he has made over to us from foreign kings. Let us not hope for any goodwill, because they do not wish it; and let us not fear any evil, because they do not venture it.

'I am not saying this, however, to encourage anyone hiding a guilty conscience to be of a quiet mind; but that I may shift particular individuals from dishonourable activity, and that I may press everyone in general toward a keener cultivation of sacred things. For how absurd it would be to say or think that the quicker and more ready our Good and supreme God is in giving, the slower we are at being deserving. And yet there will always be that true voice of the True God to be recognised: "Not because you are worthy, but because I am merciful". If the libation-vessels of incantation-makers, begged-for effigies, vacuous rituals and magic charms had been of any avail in overcoming disease, this man Calichough (for that was his name<sup>14</sup>, would, while he was still alive, have hacked it off quivering like a hydra-head and then thrown it away. For nobody was more practised than he in this art, and (unless I am mistaken) nobody trusted more deeply in those very superstitions: he made an incantation for every time his pain abated.

'I showed the body to the woman, who was troubled at the time with boils (which broke out very densely on her skin next day, when this was written); and at my persuasion she was led with me, albeit unwillingly, to the burial. This I purposely wanted to be carried through without ceremony, lest there be implanted in her any fears about human sacrifice among us. She was kept there all the time until the body had been completely covered over with earth; I showed her human bones which had been dug up, and made her understand that we all were to be buried in the same way. I did this in order to remove from her mind all anxiety about human flesh being eaten (a practice which had become deeply rooted among them<sup>15</sup>), and so that she might learn to put aside the fear henceforward.

‘But that woman either excelled all our people in decorum and stoicism or else was far outstripped in human sensitivity by the wild animals themselves. For she was not in any way disturbed by his death, and, as far as we gathered from her expression, it did not distress her. So much so that, by this most recent behaviour of hers, she has expressed quite clearly what we had long before arrived at by conjecture: namely, that she had regarded him with an astonishing degree of contempt, and that although they used to sleep in one and the same bed, yet nothing had occurred between them apart from conversation,—his embrace having been abhorrent to her.’<sup>16</sup>

Goodbye.

Yours, as you know,  
Edward Dodding (Bristol, November 8th)

‘Had hardy Ulysses escaped his plight,  
‘How great his Lady’s joy: her fame how slight!’<sup>17</sup>

#### COMMENTARY ON THE REPORT

1. ‘*a fall of some force and impact*’. We happen to know that the Eskimo had indeed suffered such a fall in the recent past. Although we cannot be sure, of course, that it was this particular one which occasioned the serious injuries which Dodding describes, it does nevertheless seem a very likely candidate. When he was captured, at the very end of July or beginning of August, he had been brought down by one Nicholas Conger, a Cornish wrestler, who overpowered and threw him so heavily (on his side, significantly) that Best was moved to comment in his eye-witness narrative: “Conger . . . showed his companion [i.e. his adversary] such a Cornish trick that he made his sides ache against the ground for a month after.”<sup>74</sup> If our conjecture is correct, they will have ached for a good three months, not just one, until his death; and the English company would perhaps have relished Conger’s wrestling display rather less if they had known how severe an injury he had inflicted. Since the greater part of Dodding’s whole diagnosis depends upon his immediate and striking observation that the broken ribs were still ‘gaping apart without having knit together’ (*dehiscentes adhuc nec invicem agglutinatae*; lines 2-3), Fortune’s recent statement that Dodding found “a healed rib fracture” is inexplicable.<sup>75</sup>

Curiously enough, the great William Clowes<sup>76</sup> tells us that in 1570 he had successfully treated a similar, though apparently less severe, injury sustained by the boatswain aboard the very same ship, the *Ayde*. Two ribs had been fractured by a capstan bar, and the pleura and lungs were injured. Clowes “made an incision over the fracture, and removed a long sharp sliver of bone which was abrading the pleura. He redressed the wound on the fifth day, and it was healed on the tenth, . . .”<sup>77</sup>

2. ‘*contamination . . . putrefied as a result*’ (*morbis . . . , et . . . putredinem itidem contraxerat*). It seems clear from this, and from the succeeding passage, that Dodding’s patient had an infection of the lung (consequent upon the severely broken ribs), and perhaps empyema. Inspection of these first three paragraphs thus allows us to correct and elaborate Stefansson’s summary.<sup>78</sup>: he had merely said that this Report “shows that the poor man died of pneumonia”.

74 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 65.

75 Fortune, “The health of the Eskimos”, p. 100.

76 See notes 6, 7 and 8 above.

77 J.J. Keevil, *Medicine and the Navy* vol. 1, p. 130.

78 Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, p. 237.

Dodding's notion of such 'contamination' or pathogenic process (*morbus*), however, would have been very different from our present-day concepts of infection, even though the word 'infection' was already current in English medical parlance (and had been so, in a limited way, even in the previous century). For we have a record of its use, also in a naval context, by Sir Thomas Seymour and his colleagues in 1545 when they wrote to the King about a plague that was raging among army and navy personnel at Portsmouth, and advised against moving men from already infected ships to ones that were as yet clear.<sup>79</sup> But the idea that disease might be spread through the agency of infective organisms as such was, of course, unknown to Dodding, although there were those who suspected that in some cases a particle-like intermediary was responsible.

As long ago as the first century B.C., for example, the poet Lucretius (drawing upon the 'atomic theory' of Democritus, the Greek philosopher who wrote four centuries earlier) had hinted that some diseases might be passed from sick to healthy individuals by 'seeds';<sup>80</sup> but this suggestion was not taken up at the time. From Dodding's point of view, the first rational theory of the nature of infection had been put forward relatively recently by Girolamo Fracastoro, whose celebrated treatise of 1546 distinguished three forms of contagion: by direct contact from person to person, by means of intermediary infected particles, and by transmission from a distance through the air.<sup>81</sup> According to Fracastoro (and, for that matter, according to Paracelsus and a rather diffuse medical tradition), infection was due to the passage of minute self-replicating particles or corpuscles.<sup>82</sup>

At the time when Dodding wrote, however, the humoural system which Galen had elaborated from the earlier Greek theories of Empedocles, Aristotle and (most notably) Hippocrates, was the basis of medical understanding and practice in the West, and was thought consistent with this corpuscularian innovation.<sup>83</sup> The humours were of four kinds: blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile and each had corresponding qualities. Thus blood was hot and wet; phlegm, cold and wet; black bile, cold and dry; yellow bile, hot and dry. Excess or defect of particular humours determined both the bodily state and the temperament of the individual, so that (according to which humour prevailed) sanguine, phlegmatic, melancholic or choleric temperaments could be distinguished, reflecting an excess of blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile respectively.<sup>84</sup> The Eskimo was of the 'choleric' type, in Dodding's view (see commentary notes 5 and 8 below). These concepts still persist to some extent in our everyday language, and can even be related to the 'dimensions' of some personality theories in modern psychology.<sup>85</sup>

The various temperaments were recognised to be normal deviations from a state of ideally healthy equilibrium which was unattainable in practice, and

79 Keevil, *Medicine and the Navy*, vol. 1, pp. 62-63.

80 Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, 6, 1090-1137.

81 G. Fracastoro, *De contagione et contagiosis morbis*... (Venice, 1546).

82 C.M. Cipolla *Public Health and the Medical Profession in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1976), *passim*.

83 O. Temkin, *Galenism: Rise and Decline of a Medical Philosophy* (Ithaca and London, 1973), chapter 4.

84 R.E. Siegel, *Galen's System of Physiology and Medicine* (Basle and New York, 1968), pp. 216-241.

85 H.J. Eysenck, *Fact and Fiction in Psychology* (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 52-58.

disease was produced only when this imbalance of the humours (called 'dyscrasia') interfered with bodily or mental functioning. This provided Galen with a basis for classifying diseases, according to which humours were out of balance. When disease supervened, the body made its own attempt to redress the balance of humours through a process known as 'coction'.<sup>86</sup> Fever was taken to indicate that such an effort was in progress. The physician could attempt a number of different ways of helping the patient to 'concoct' his humours and restore a more harmonious mixture, thus producing the desired state of 'eucrasia' 'eucrasia': he might administer drugs; he might suggest alterations in the diet; or he might recommend physical means, the best-known of which was blood-letting.<sup>87</sup> This last was what Dodding prescribed for Calichough, having commented on his unfavourable diet, but the patient refused it.

3. 'by surgery... medicines'. Although the medical profession in Elizabethan England was not as clearly structured as it is today, nevertheless, apart from quacks and charlatans, it could be seen to function at three more-or-less distinct levels. But outside London these levels seem to have been separated a good deal less distinctly.

At the bottom stood the apothecaries, who were shopkeepers belonging in London to the Company of Grocers; and we have seen already that it was from a grocer, Hugh Morgan, that Frobisher had bought his medicine chest for the previous voyage. They sold medicines and the materials from which medicine, for internal or external application, could be prepared. They naturally tended to concentrate on the sale of those *materia medica* which could not easily be obtained elsewhere, such as the common herbal and vegetable remedies, and they also gave advice on which remedy would best suit a particular ailment. In this way they provided a rudimentary medical service, and there is little doubt that they were paid for both drugs and advice.

The second rank of practitioners comprised the surgeons. They were distinguished by their use of instruments to treat disease, although they too no doubt gave advice concerning internal disorders. The surgeons had long been associated with the barbers, since the two trades had some skills and tools in common, and barbering would tide the surgeon over between cases if business was slow.

The barbers and the surgeons were organised into companies which supervised the training of apprentices, gave the licences which entitled men to practise, and laid down rules to govern the conduct of their members. In Bristol, the municipal authorities had licensed a Guild of barber-surgeons as early as 1439, and some six years later had agreed to establish a sailors' hospital on a small scale in the mediaeval priory of St. Bartholomew.<sup>88</sup> In London, the barbers and the surgeons originally had separate companies, the members of each company enjoying the right to practise surgery; yet in 1540 the companies were united, and they remained so until the surgeons broke away in 1745.<sup>89</sup>

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86 Siegel, *Galen's System*, pp. 205-209.

87 See for example R. E. Siegel, "Galen's concept of blood-letting..."; in A. G. Debus, ed., *Science, Medicine and Society in the Renaissance* (London, 1972) vol. 1, pp. 243-275.

88 Parker, "Early Bristol medical institutions", pp. 164 and 159.

89 Jessie Dobson and R. M. Walker, *Barbers and Barber Surgeons of London...* (Oxford, 1978).

The highest rank in the medical profession was accorded to the physicians. They kept no shops and used no instruments: instead, they examined patients and referred them either to apothecaries, with the appropriate prescriptions which they wrote in Latin, or to surgeons for treatment with the knife, the cautery, or the lancet. The physician owed his exalted position in the medical hierarchy to his superior education. He had been to Oxford or Cambridge, or, exceptionally, to one of the medical universities on the continent (such as Basle or Padua), where he had studied the classical medical texts in Latin and sometimes even in Greek. He was examined in these before his doctorate or his licence to practise, after which he was held to be competent to treat patients.

The College of Physicians of London was established by Henry VIII in 1518 largely through the efforts of Thomas Linacre, who made a number of notable translations of Galen from Greek into Latin. The College was empowered to issue licences to practise in London and for seven miles around, and also had the duty of supervising the apothecaries' shops in the City. Fellowship of the College was open (with a very few exceptions) to those who had been to Oxford or Cambridge, but others who had a medical degree from some different university could apply to become a Licentiate and thus to practise in London.

4. '*cerebral injury*' (*cerebri vulnerati apostematique...signa*). The site and nature of any such lesion, whether sustained mechanically at the same time as his rib injury or as a metastatic consequence of its infection, were not such as to impair, as often happens, the man's perceptual-motor co-ordination or his balance. As we have seen, the Eskimo was able to manoeuvre his kayak, throw his speak accurately on the move and even (perhaps) ride a horse when facing towards its tail. Or was it a failure of spatial orientation which resulted in his inadvertently facing the tail?

5. '*enormous stomach*' (*stomacho capacissimo*). Consistently with Dodding's observation, which may or may not refer to the anatomical 'stomach' only, John White's drawing shows an ample abdomen clearly, and allows us to compare it with the relatively lean and bony character of the man's face. In terms of modern anthropometry or somatotyping, following Sheldon for example, it is an 'endomorph' abdomen on an otherwise mesomorphic (even 'ecto-mesomorphic') frame, with the broad structure of his hands noted above confirming the mesomorphic component. Dodding's basically Hippocratic-Galenical system already associated different temperamental constitutions with different characteristic body-builds, and he accordingly notes the incongruity, which would nowadays be known in this context of 'dysplasia'.<sup>90</sup> Such a lack of 'harmony' in the constitution of the body-parts (to invoke a favourite Renaissance concept), which may be compared with temperamental 'dyscrasia', was remarked by Michael Lok in his brief description of Frobisher's previous Eskimo captive: in that case the man's legs were thought disproportionately short and thick with respect to the rest of his body.<sup>91</sup>

6. '*unhealthy voraciousness*'. We do not know, of course, how far this individual was representative of his people, but the eating habits of the Eskimos were the subject of several colourful contemporary descriptions. In addition to those men-

90 W.H. Sheldon, *The Varieties of Temperament* (New York, 1942), pp. 381-404.

91 Stefansson, *Three Voyages* vol. 1, p. 166.

tioned below (note 15), Bristol's local historian William Adams says that it was found that the Eskimo couple could eat only raw flesh and drink water; and the rather unreliable Geneva edition of Settle's account contains a note (presumably by the editor, Nicolas Pithou) to the effect that they once killed a doe and ate all the entrails with their contents.<sup>92</sup> Settle himself writes of the Eskimos in general whom they observed<sup>93</sup>. "They eat their meat all raw . . . or something per-boyled [i.e. somewhat parboiled] with blood and a little water, which they drink". They do not use implements, but he does not suggest that they eat excessive quantities.

7. *'the state of his pulse'*. In Dodding's day the examination of the patient's pulse was considered to be of great importance in arriving at the diagnosis of his ailment, a fact which is illustrated by the grant of arms to the College of Physicians of London in 1546 of a "cuffe ermine with a hand ffelinge the powlse of the arme". But what seems strange to modern observers about this emphasis on pulse-taking is that it was made without any knowledge of the circulation of the blood.

The art of the pulse was nevertheless highly developed, and a good many tracts were devoted to it. In Elizabethan times, almost thirty variants of the pulse were described and it was recognised that an irregularity in the pulse was a more ominous portent than were relatively stable alterations in its force or its rate. But it is difficult to see what conclusions the Elizabethan physician could legitimately draw from his examination without understanding cardio-vascular physiology. There was, to be sure, a theory of the cardio-vascular system current at the time, but it too was firmly based on Galenical principles which had been developed from Erasistratus. Precisely what Galen and subsequent Galenists believed is a complex question,<sup>94</sup> but we may notice certain features.

The Galenical model acknowledged the differences between arteries and veins, but they were considered to belong to completely separate systems. Blood was thought to be elaborated in the liver from chyle, which in turn was produced from food in the gut and passed to the liver *via* the portal vein. In the liver the blood was imbued with a spirit or *pneuma* that was innate in all living substances. This 'natural spirit' controlled growth and nutrition. Venous blood (thick, dark and charged with natural spirit) was passed to the organs of the body through the *vena cava* and its tributaries, and the blood ebbed and flowed in the veins like a great tide. It was recognised that the heart's action was necessary to this quasi-tidal movement. Body-tissues consumed the blood and were thereby, nourished; and since the blood was continuously being used up in this way, there was clearly no need to postulate a circulation.

The Galenical view of the cardio-vascular system held sway for a further half-century until William Harvey published his revolutionary work on blood-circulation (1628), in which his 'introductory discourse' outlines and criticises this prevailing account.<sup>95</sup>

92 *op. cit.* vol. 2, pp. 237-239.

93 Settle, "A true report. . ." pp. 19-20.

94 See for example W. Pagel, *William Harvey's Biological Ideas* (Basle and New York, 1967), pp. 127-209; and also Siegel, *Galen's System*, pp. 83-123.

95 William Harvey, *The Movement of the Heart and Blood*; trans. by Gweneth Whitteridge of *De motu cordis*. . . , 1628 (Oxford, 1976), pp. 10-28.



We may notice, as a curiosity, that one of the contributors to that new era of cardio-vascular physiology was to be the distinguished English physician Walter Charleton, who donated Ketel's portrait of Frobisher to Oxford University, and who had been a *protégé* of Harvey himself. Charleton published three lectures concerning this subject in 1683<sup>96</sup>, but it must be said that they were regarded as expository rather than original.

8. '*his choleric temperament*' (*temperatura eius biliosa*). The dominant humour in the 'choleric' temperament was yellow bile, by contrast with the black bile of the 'melancholic'; the associated Empedoclean 'element' was fire; and the relevant combination of 'qualities' was heat and dryness. Correct identification of the patient's constitutionally (and seasonally) dominant humour had a bearing on treatment and prognosis for the Hippocratic physician, whose knowledge of the physiognomic and somatic correlates of the various temperaments would facilitate this identification. The study of such correlates had been pioneered by Theophrastus in the first years of the third century B.C., and developed in the early second century A.D. by Polemon of Smyrna who wrote of the choleric man: "He is of upright stature, massive figure, red complexion, his shoulders thrown back and not too strong, his chest flat, his beard long and curled, his back wide . . . his face long, his eyelashes curved, his nose hollowed"<sup>97</sup>. We may compare these features with John White's drawing as described above.

Was Calichough choleric? Best records that, when the Englishmen showed him a drawing of the previous Eskimo captive, he was very puzzled and began to talk to it. On getting no answer, "he would *with* a little help have grown into choller at *the* matter, until at last . . . he found him but a deceiving picture". He then became noisily distressed, "thinking that we could make menne live or die at oure pleasure"<sup>98</sup>. This is in spite of the fact that some Eskimos of the time seemed to have an intuitive understanding of other visual representations, in the form of sketch-maps of places and terrain. For what it is worth, Dodding certainly thought Calichough extremely superstitious (see last paragraph but two of the *Report*).

9. '*mourned . . . his final departure*'. No other contemporary source mentions a particular ceremonial episode of this sort, with or without singing. But Best insists that the Eskimos were in general very sensitive to the loss or departure of their fellows, and notes the custom of lamenting them "with a mournful song and Dirges"<sup>99</sup> and we do know that Frobisher's attempt to bargain with the natives, holding our Eskimo trio as hostages against the return of the Englishmen captured from the previous year's expedition, was the occasion of a highly emotional scene. This suggests that 'mourning' would indeed have been the keynote of any such demonstration as Dodding mentions.

The emotional exchange in which Calichough was involved took place on Monday 6 August, and it was his job to try to persuade the Eskimo leader (an enormously tall man called Catchoe) to release the five Englishmen or at least

96 Walter Charleton, *Three Anatomie Lectures* . . . (London, 1683).

97 Anonymous translation quoted in P. Mantegazza, *Physiognomy and Expression* (London, c. 1890), p. 160.

98 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 65.

99 *op. cit.*, p. 125.

to discover their whereabouts. When he came face to face with the chief, however, Calichough “fell so out into teares that he coulede not speake a worde in a greate space” according to Best.<sup>100</sup>

10. ‘*swans... die... with a song*’. Nearly forty years later this well-known legend became the subject of perhaps the most famous of all English madrigals, Orlando Gibbons’ *The Silver Swan*.

11. ‘*a second time*’. An allusion to the fact that the previous Eskimo man, brought back on the 1576 expedition, had also perished before he could be exhibited at court.

12. ‘*Herculean labour*’. Dodding’s Latin phrase here, *Herculei tanquam exanclati laboris*, alludes to Cicero’s *Herculi quendam laborem exanclatum in Academicæ Quaestiones* ii, 34.

13. ‘*my judgement*’. We may be fairly confident that the loyal Doctor’s sympathetic and congratulatory sentiments, unlike the unfortunate Eskimos themselves, were not born to blush unseen in high places. For Edward Fenton, who had captained one of the two smaller ships, the *Gabriel*, took care to send a copy of this report to Sir Francis Walsingham, then Private Secretary to Elizabeth on 25 November.<sup>101</sup>

14. ‘*his name*’. See previous discussion of the Eskimo names.

15. ‘*anxiety... (... among them)*’. George Best gave this same fear of cannibalism as a speculative reason why Eskimo warriors when badly wounded were seen to throw themselves off rocks into the sea to drown (an incident which Dionyse Settle also reports). He suggests that they did it “least perhaps their enimies should . . . praye of(f) their dead carcasses, for they supposed us be like to be Canibales, or eaters of man’s flesh”.<sup>102</sup> He goes on to say that, “considering their ravenesse and bloody disposition in eating anye kinde of rawe fleshe or carrion howsoever stinking”, he was afraid they might have eaten the five Englishmen whom they had captured from the previous year’s expedition. Settle specifically says that he judges the Eskimos themselves to be “Anthropophagai, or devourers of man’s fleshe . . . for that there is no fleshe or fishe which they finde dead (smell it never so filthily) but they will eate it as they finde it, without any other dressing. A loathsome spectacle. . .”.<sup>103</sup>

Nevertheless, Stefansson objects that the Frobisher documents have no good evidence for “harping on the charge of cannibalism” as they do. The practice appears among those people, he says, “under the conditions which bring it among all peoples, those of famine. There is ceremonial cannibalism, too, as when a murderer eats, or takes one bite from, the kidney of his victim in the belief that the soul of the dead is thereby kept from seeking vengeance”.<sup>104</sup> And yet, since a principal source of a people’s expectations about the likely behaviour of strangers would be its own habits and customs, there may be some more general

100 *op. cit.*, p. 70.

101 Stefansson, *Three Voyages* vol. 2, p. 134.

102 Best, *A True Discourse*, p. 68.

103 Settle, “A true report. . .”, p. 23.

104 Stefansson, *Three Voyages* vol. 2, p. 23.

truth in Settle's and Dodding's assertions. Stefansson does not refer to Dodding's account of the Eskimo woman's apparent, or imputed, anxiety on this point. The mention of 'human sacrifice' a few lines before presumably refers to the ritual killing of a man's wife at the burial or cremation of the dead man himself.

16. *'his embrace . . . to her'*. As we have seen, Best's contemporary account of the couple indicates that the man and woman were captured separately, and were not man and wife. He also remarks, in corroboration of Dodding, that since their capture "for so muche as we could perceive, albeit they lived continually together, yet did they never use as man and wife, . . .". And he goes on to elaborate: "Only I thinke it worth the noting the continencie of them both, for the man would never shift himselfe except he had firste caused the woman to depart out of his cabin; and they both were most shamefast lest anye of their privie parts should bee discovered, either of themselves or any other body".<sup>105</sup>

The woman had been, indeed, entirely indifferent to him at first, having recently been forcibly parted from her true husband. Yet, after Calichough had harangued her at some length, she became touchingly solicitous and industrious on his behalf. Best wrote: "The woman at the first, verie suddaynely, as though she disdeyned or regarded not the man, turned away and beganne to sing as though she minded another matter. But being agayne broughte togyther, the man broke up the silence first, and with sterne and stayed countenance beganne to tell a long solemne tale to the woman, whereunto she gave good hearing and interrupted him nothing till he had finished; and afterwards being growen into more familiar acquayntance by speech, were turned together so that (I thinke) the one would hardly have lived without the comfort of the other . . . the woman spared not to do all necessarie things . . . as in making cleane their Cabin and every other thing that apperteyned to his ease. For when hee was seasicke, shee would make him cleane, she would kill and flea *the dogges* for their eating, and dresse his meate".

17. *'Had hardy Ulysses . . . / . . . slight'*. We are grateful to Professor B.P. Reardon (Irvine College, U.S.C., California) for identifying the elegiac couplet which Dodding quotes as Calichough's epitaph: it is Ovid, *Tristia* v, 5, lines 51-2. Edward Dodding very slightly misremembered it, and should have written *Si nihil infesti durus vidisset Ulixes / Penelope felix, sed sine laude foret*; but he reversed the first two words of the second line. Although retaining the scansion, this has the stylistic disadvantages of filling the first metrical foot with a single-word spondee and removing the *chiasmus* effect. The verses are not at all a standard 'tag', and suggest that Dodding could use his classical reading with some originality.

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<sup>105</sup> Best, *A True Discourse*, pp. 69-70.

Congratulatory verses in English, by several different contemporary hands, separately compare Frobisher (as opposed to his captive) with Ulysses and also with other heroes of Greek legend, especially Hercules and Jason. There were even some international neo-Latinists of the day who took the Atlantic voyages as their epic subject, such as Thomas Watson and Parmenius of Buda, and they naturally saw to it that Frobisher got an honourable, if not equally elaborate, mention in their verses.<sup>106</sup> Of the English versifiers who favoured the comparison with Ulysses, we may note John Kirkham and Abraham Fleming; while Thomas Ellis was one who succumbed to the temptation to compare the gold-seeking Frobisher with Jason in his Argonautic quest for the Golden Fleece.<sup>107</sup>

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106 Quinn and Cheshire, *New Found Land*, pp. 67-69, 102-103, 134-135.

107 Stefansson, *Three Voyages*, vol. 2, pp. 48-50.

## Résumé

L'article décrit une autopsie assez spéciale pratiquée par un médecin de Bristol (Angleterre) au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, sur les corps de deux Esquimaux ramenés de l'Arctique canadien en 1576 par Martin Frobisher. Les circonstances entourant leur capture, leur comportement et leur mort y sont décrites, en même temps que nous sont révélées les préoccupations médicales de cette époque.