

The 1469 Letter.

As reported in Brian Smith's *Shetland Documents 1195-1579*, "[King Christian] gave the king of Scotland his letter of confirmation [følgreibreff] to his subjects [undersaatterne] in Orkney and in Hetland, [to the effect] that after the negotiations which he had had with the king of Scotland, they should be obedient and duiful to him, and give him their scat annually, until such time as he [the king of Denmark] or his descendenats, kings of Norway, should pay to the king of Scotland the money for which the said lands and islands were mortgaged..."

The original is not known to exist. The above account of it is translated from A. Huitfeldt, *Historiske Bescriffelse om huis sig haffuer tildraget under ... Her Christiern den første*, Copenhagen 1599.

This separate letter, written the same day as the pawning document, instructed the other Lords of Norway of Orkney and Shetland to pay their skat to James III and to be obedient to him until the King's lands were redeemed. It is important to note that it did not form part of the pawning contract (otherwise it would have been written into the terms of that document).

The intent of the whole arrangement was that James would receive the whole of the income from Shetland and would have security for payment of the dowry. It is clear that, had the subject of the pawning been the whole of Shetland, there would have been no need for the separate letter - all taxes would automatically be collected by James. This letter was necessary because the pawning contract did not concern the whole of the islands, only the king's lands. Without it, James III would only have had rights to the skat from the king's lands, not the other 90%.