

Brillumanninum til verju

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Nú eru 160 ár, síðan Charles Baron Hompesch, Brillumaðurin, vitjaði Tórshavn hina tiltiknu ferðina. Heilt síðan tá hefur hann í söguskriving og á mannamunni verið lýstur sum ein grummur sjórænari, ið var líkasælur um tær líðingar, hann framdi, og hugsaði bert um at ríka seg upp við at ræna frá verjuleysum fólki. Til dæmis skrifar Anton Degn:

Krigen mellem England og Danmark havde til Følge, at der i en Aarrække, fra 1808—13, ikke udførtes nogen Fisk fra Færøerne. Denne Beholdning, 2326 Pd. Raaskær, som fandtes ved Handelen i Begyndelsen af June 1808, blev bortført af det engelske Kaperskib, Salomine, *hvis Mand-skap under Anførsel af Skibets Ejer, en Baron Hompesch, røvede og plyndrede, hvad de kunde faa Fingre i, baade af offentlig og privat Ejendom i Thorshavn.*¹

Í Bretlandi hefur hann heldur ikki havt gott orð á sær. *Sir George Stenart Mackenzie*, ið var í Føroyum í 1812, skrivaði í 1830-útgávuna av *Edinburgh Encyclopædia*:

In the year 1808, Captain Baugh was sent to Faroe with the Clio sloop of war, and the fort at Thorshavn was destroyed, to prevent its being a protection to privateers. Some time afterwards, a German, assuming the title of Baron Hompesch, who had obtained a letter of marque, landed at Thorshavn, plundered the inhabitants of every thing, and broke into the church where the public chest was deposited. A small crucifix of silver, which stood on the altar, was seized with eagerness, but when found to be hollow, and of no great value, it was restored. The British government very properly and humanely refused to sanction these proceedings.... The money, and the value af all the goods of which Faroe and Iceland had been robbed, were restored.

Og Sir John Stanley skrivaði o. u. 1835:

In Faroe a Baron Hompesch landed with his crew and by force took from the inhabitants not only provisions for present use, but every article of their property which was convertible into money; and if he did not cut down or shoot any of the poor Faroese it was only because they were in no place collected in numbers sufficient to tempt them to opposition.²

Satt at siga hevði eg í so nógv ár verið blindaður av tí ringa orðinum, Brillumaðurin hevði á sær sum sjórænari og ránsmaður, at ilt var hjá mær at trúgva, at nakað kundi vera honum til verju. Men greiðir, skjalprógvaðir vitnisburðir vísa, at, hóast manningin á *Salamine* vóru ráir og ringir at hava undir aga, kann prógv ikki verða borið um, at Hompesch sjálvur hevur framt nakra óløgliga gerð í Føroyum. Frágreiðingarnar siga, at hann var ævintýramaður og hevði líkindi til tað, sum vápnaður hermaður, men hann var eingin ránsmaður ella sjórænari — heldur ikki so harðrendur, sum hann løgliga hevði havt rætt til.

Hendingarnar hetta summarið byrjaðu við, at briggin *Clio*, førd av kapteyninum Baugh, fríggjadagin hin 22. apríl 1808 kom til Føroya á leiti eftir donskum indiafarum á heimleið. Kapteynurin Baugh skáksigldi við skipi sínum um oyggjarnar í meira enn tríggjar vikur, áðrenn hann kom til sjóndar út fyri Skansanum seint á degi sunnudagin 15. mai. Tíðliga mánamorgunin vórðu 50 menn settir á land, og kommandanturin gav seg undir. Treytirnar við undirgevingini vóru 1) at Skansin við skotvirkjum sínum skuldi verða latin sigurvinnaranum, 2) at hermanneliðið á Skansanum skuldi ikki fara í part móti Bretlandi í eitt ár og 3) at ognir einstaklinga skuldu verða eirdar, men øll ríkisogn skuldi verða latin sigurvinnaranum í hendur. Síðan naglrak manningin á *Clio* goturstykkini og fór avstað við hernaðarútgerðini, og týskvældið 17. mai fór *Clio* úr Havn (Tórshavn) til Leith.³

Kaparin *Salamine* kom til Føroya um endan á mai, eisini á leiti eftir donskum indiafarum. Skipið kom á Havnina fyrstu ferð mikudagin 1. juni o. u. kl. 3 um morgunin. Hompesch ætlaði hesaferð bert at fáa fatur í hinum 63 ára gamla skipara

Hansen at hava hann til leiðvísara fyrstu tíðina. Fyrst lætst hann at vera franskur kapari til tess at lokka skipara Hansen at koma við, meðan hann helt, at tað var vinaliga sinnað skip. Eftir at Hompesch hevði avdúkað seg sum bretskan kapara, eydnaðist skipara Hansen at sleppa til rýmingar. Hompesch royndi nú at finna skiparan við at senda vápnað lið at leita eftir honum og at hótta við at bumba býin, um skiparin ikki varð funnin innan ein tíma. Nú flyggjaðu havnarfólk út úr býnum, og vápnaðir menn av *Salamine* nýttu høvið til at fremja smástuldu, áðrenn skipari Hansen varð fingin aftur á skipið.⁴

Manningin á *Salamine* var útskotspakk, og barónurin Hompesch og kapteynurin Gilpin hava verið noyddir at hava hana undir hørðum aga. Verstir av manningini hava — sum vit síggja av frágreiðing um gerðir teirra seinni í Íslandi — verið tveir írar og nakrir danskir og norskir matrósar.⁵ Hesir seinnu hava sjálvandi verið partasvíkar, teir munnu hava verið farnir í tænastu um borð eftir at hava verið tiknir fangar av bretum, til tess at sleppa undan teimum hørðu korunum á bretskum fangaskipum. Havnin slapp rættiliga væl hesaferð. Hevði tað ikki verið hampamaður, ið ræði hevði á skipinum, mundi hann havt rænt alt, sum var at ræna í býnum. Men tað einasta, ið tikið varð av týðningi tann dagin, vóru 134 Rdl., sum hvurvu úr skriviborði Løbners.⁶

Nú sigldi Hompesch burtur norðureftir. Men í Norðoyum fekk hann at vita, at danska ríkisstýrið átti pening og vørugoymslu í Havn. Løbner segði, at barónurin helt fram, at presturin í Norðoyum, Peder Sørensen, hevði sagt honum tað, men mest er líkt til, at hann hevur fingið at vitað tað frá skipara Hansen. *Salamine* helt so aftur til Havnar, og mánamorgunin kl. 10 s.p. 6. juni sendi Hompesch fólk á land til at taka einahandilin og húsini hjá embætismonnum, serstakliga hjá Løbner. Hann tók allan peningin hjá tí almenna og vøruna í handlinum. Mikudagin hin 8. juni fór *Salamine* avstað til Lerwick við einum parti av feinginum, men eitt vápnað lið av monnum varð latið eftir í Havn til at varða tað, sum eftir

var. Vøruskráirnar hjá tollbúðini í Lerwick vísa, at hin 14. juni vórðu latnar inn til varðveitslu:

- 2410 bundi av hosupørum, 10 pør í hvørjum bundi
- 802 bundi av troyggjum, 10 í hvørjum bundi
- 40 tunnur av lýsi
- 30 tunnur av kornbrennivíni
- 121 stykki av grovum lørifti
- 10 stykkir av bummull og ull
- 5 tunnur av kaffibønum
- 2 innsiglaðar kistur við pengum, onnur við silvuri, hin við kopari.

Barónurin Hompesch kom nú aftur til London at geva bretsku myndugleikunum frágreiðing um upptøkuna, men kapteynurin Thomas Gilpin fór við *Salamine* aftur til Havnar at taka tað, sum eftir var av vøru. Hin 27. juni varð hon flutt burtur úr Havn og hin 1. juli skipað upp í tollbúðini í Lerwick:

- 19 tunnur av tjøru
- 17 stengur av rájarni
- Nøkur furuborð
- 1350 bundi av hosupørum, 10 pør í hvørjum bundi
- 136 bundi av troyggjum, 10 í hvørjum bundi
- 138 tunnur av lýsi
- 7 posar og 4 kíkar við fjøður
- 1 kassi við brýnum
- 17 tunnur og 51 stykki av tál.⁷

Hompech vendi sær til herflotaráðsrættin (the Admiralty Court) um, at henda vøra varð dæmd honum til sum løgligur herfongur.

Meðan Hompesch var í London, sigldi *Salamine* til Reykjavíkar og steðgaði har frá 23. juli til 8. august.⁸ Teir vóru ikki varir við nakað víggirt pláss, men fóru, eins og í Havn, avstað við øllum peningi og allari vøru, sum hugsandi var, at danska ríkisstýrið átti. Skipari Hansen var enn við *Salamine*, men hann varð blakaður á land undir Sandoy 17. august.⁹ Nú stevndi kaparin til London og varð verandi har frá september til, ið hvussu er, miðjan november.

Móti endanum av juli tókti Hompesch, at hann var fyri vanvirðing frá herflotayvirmonnum og øðrum. Hann bað til dæmis hin 26. juli herflotaráðið (the Admiralty) um loyvi til at fara til Hetlands við einumhvørjum skipi, ið møguliga fór hagar úr Leith, men tað varð honum sýtt.¹⁰ Hetta var heldur óvanlig viðferð frá bretska herflotaráðnum av so høgum her-virmanni, Lieutenant-General, í bretska herinum. Leysasögur fóru nú at ganga um misgerðir Hompesch og harðrendu framferð hansara í Føroyum.

Upprunin at hesum leysasögum var tann frágreiðing, sum undirskrivað var av Emiliusi Løbner og Wenzeli Hammershaimb viðvíkjandi vitjan Hompesch í Føroyum í juni, eitt skjal, sum ein og hvør føroyskur søgustudentur eigur at kenna.¹¹ Henda váttan hevur higartil verið høvuðskelduskjalið viðvíkjandi søguni um vitjan *Salamine* í Havn. Hon var skrivað eftir áheitan frá kapteyninum Baugh, sum fór úr Leith á skipinum *Clio* hin 5. juli og kom til Havnar 10. juli um kvøldið, ætlandi við ongum øðrum ørindum uttan hesum.¹² Herflotaráðið bað um at fáa hesa váttan, av tí at tað helt, at undirgevingin av Skansanum, undirritað av Løbneri, gav *Clio* hertøkurættin yvir danska peninginum og donsku vøruni, sum Hompesch var farin av stað við. *Clio* hevði tikið danska virkið og átti eftir triðju grein í undirgevingarreglunum rættin til ríkisognirnar, sum vardar høvdu verið av Skansanum. Men kommandanturin Løbner nýtti høvið til at gera Hompesch so nógvar trupulleikar, sum gjørligt, og váttanin má tí verða lisin við hesum í huga. Løbner var sjálvandi argur inn á Hompesch, tí at hann var farin við almennum peningi og almennari vøru. Men Hompesch var eisini hvassorðaður og speiskur og læt ivaleyst Løbner kenna seg ógviliga lítlan, av tí at hann hevði latið sær Skansan av hondum til *Clio*. *Ákæran sum Løbner hevði ímóti Hompesch, at hann hevði tikið ymsar ognarlutir frá honum, er ivaleyst følsk. Eg haldi, at Løbner hevur selt honum hesa vøru og síðan látið, sum tær vóru stolnar.* Heimild mín fyri hesum sjónarmiði er verjuroða Hompesch sjálvs, sum hann skrivaði í eftirfylgjandi brævi til lord Hawkesbury og eisini sendi avrit av til limirnar í herflotaráðnum (the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty):

Baron Hompesch to Lord Hawkesbury

Leith, 25. August 1808

My Lord,

Glad when called to address His Majesty's Ministers that is to Lord Hawksberry I have to vindicate my conduct, being the first to whom the Venom of foul Malicious aspersions against me was sent — I with invigorated confidence address this Nobleman, who personally knows I was once deemed, to represent in the Cabinet as well as the Field, if my superior liege duty to His Britannic Majesty had not superseded the primitive ties of Birth, my Military services and those of the several thousand men I brought under English banners, I trust need not be recalled to the memory of British Ministers, no more than the sacrifices I made, nor the loss I experienced on that Account. — Not successful in my various repeated applications for Active Service in my own Military profession, I thought (not being allowed to do so on land) I might at least try to fight His Majesty's enemies at Sea; for this purpose I bought, Armed, and Manned, at my own expence, a private Vessel of War of twenty Guns, and with His Royal Highness the Commander in Chief's permission, mounted her myself tho' (for form's sake) intrusted to my Agent as Owner, and to Captain Gilpin as Commander, myself being rated in the Ship's Books only as Chaplain to the Vessel. — After sailing westwards, sighting near the Bay of Biscay a French Privateer, who ran away, N I veer'd, round England and Ireland, north about, in expectation of Danish Indiamen; when finding myself in the Northern latitudes, I recollected, a Danish Fort being in the Faroe Isles, proceeded there, and landed, in order to storm it, but found the Fort had been partly destroyed a fortnight before by a British Vessel of War. I seized some Effects belonging to the King of Denmark, deposited them at Lerwick in Shetland, left some of my Men in Farro in token of possession, and, for my person, returned to London, to make my report of this transaction to the Commander in chief and to Ministers, demanding further orders on the Subject. — A vague rumour, which whilst in London I never could properly fathom, apprised me some sort of complaint against me had been received by Government; Verbal application of my Agent Mr. Gilpin 432 Strand in my behalf on the subject, produced a written Summons from Lord Castlereagh's Office to state my proceedings at Farro. I applied personally at the office and explained to the under Secretary of State Mr. Cooke (I trust satisfactorily) my conduct there. Subsequent loose hints made me suspect these Aspersions to originate in the disappointment of Prize Money of the Clio and Co. . . . (cancellation). I therefore made Leith in my way and applied to Vice Admiral Vashon and Captain Baugh the Commander of the Clio. The Admiral told me he had sent the Clio on purpose to Farro the second time for such an investigation, that it was hard, he should lose his Prize

money as Captain Baugh had made them at Farro presents to the Value of a Hundred pounds, that he, the Admiral had sent a translation of Löbner's statements to the Admiralty, and had requested the Lord Justice Clerk to send One to Ministers, and I was readily furnished, by the Admiral with the Original of the gross falsehoods sent to your Lordship. The truth is this; Löbner the Danish Commandant at Thorshaven Farro, cowardly skulk'd, and without necessity submitted to the Clio; when a fortnight after, I landed, I was surprised, to find the Fort and Guns partly destroyed; this (as then told me by this Commandant Löbner, in order to vindicate his Surrender) had been done in a most treacherous manner by His Majesty's Sloop of War the Clio, as, in the Dusk of the evening she had made Signals of distress, which he said (and so far truly observed) ought by any Nation, friend or foe, to be religiously respected, upon which he, Löbner thinking immediate help at duty even of common humanity, sent the half of all his forces (ten or eleven Men) in a Boat to assist the supposed Vessel in distress; yet night coming on, and supposing (as he pretended) that his first supply of Assistance had not been adequate to the wants of that distress'd Vessel, he did send the remainder of all his forces in a second Boat, which however (as he afterwards learned) shared the fate of the first, viz: to have every one in her clap'd under the hatches of the Clio, with manual, person abuse and indignities; and that then the Clio, under the protection of the Law of Nations, and the cloud of night, landed one hundred men, and by that course prevented his (Löbner's) defence, and forced him to capitulate; that however (contrary to the Verbal part af the Capitulation, and Captain Baugh's pledged word of Honor, which had Stipulated, that in the Fort nothing should be injur'd) this same Fort and some of its Guns were afterwards destroyed by him — Löbner also cautioned me not to believe what Captain Baugh may say of him, as he knew some evil disposed persons had made Complaints to Captain Baugh against his (Löbner's) conduct towards the Inhabitants. — I replied to Löbner that I neither could nor did believe any British Commander whatever capable of such gross Violations, but if his (Löbner's) Statement could possibly be true, I conceived the Commander of the Clio to have acted wrong in abusing Signals of distress, and foolish in entering into any Capitulation whatever. — And these are the words which were afterwards in that libel grossly and falsely amplified, even into blackguard expressions, which however I pledge my word, were never even dreamed of by me. Pretended, and as I then thought real, but now learn false representations of distressful claims on common humanity, induced me to make them a present of all the Provisions I could spare from my own Vessel; nay forebore not only to seize (as I had a right to do) a Danish Vessel which lay there, but gave them a recommendatory letter to all British Commanders to let pass and not to Mollest this Vessel of theirs (the Rainden Frija) especially as Lord Gambier had (formerly at the

Blockade of Copenhagen) already given passes to this same Vessel to carry Provisions to Farro. — I inquired if there was any Public property at Thorshaven, but was solemnly assured there was none. — Conscious of having as much as laid in my power done my duty as a Man and an Officer, I left North Farro continuing my Cruise off these Islands in wait of the expected Danish Indiamen coming Northabouts. — However on this cruise I found means to discover that not only Public property was hidden at Thorshaven but also a Real King's Magazine managed even by a Superintendant called the King's Merchant, existed there; in consequence I returned, found this not only to be the case, but that even a Public cassa had been kept of the produce not only of Retail Sale of this King's Magazine, but likewise of the Taxes and duties paid to the Danish Royal Exchequer, as well as the Public Church monies, the whole of which however had been hid from the Clio, as well as from me; but having upon my second visit found a clue to this labyrinth, the Monies were found digged under the Altar of the church, and the Stores compressed into what they called themselves the King's Magazines Yet pretended not to be look'd on as Public Royal Magazines, because the King traded (tho' exclusively) Yet only there as an individual, and not as King. — They aded a great deal about the new principle of liberty and equality. I told them I professed myself by no means an advocate of this kind of mischievous new Philosophy, but true to my own King I had the Honor to serve. I look'd upon whatever belonged to another King enemies to mine, as Kingly, and inimical, and according to our British Laws of good prize — In consequence of which I certainly did seize the Public Money Cassa, as well as the Stores hoarded in the Danish King's Magazines. — however so far of being meanly guilty of pilfering of a Jacket a Bed or a Pillow (as amongst other horrors was, on whatever side, pretended) I gave full value for whatever trifles I had not only but also (as I now find too generously) made them presents out of my own Stores, not only, but ordered my Captain to bring them on his return whatever in their (as I then supposed) distress'd situation they might wish (of which I desired them, and they actually did furnish a Specification) the full of which was brought and delivered to them at my expense. to enter farther in the dirty expounding of their vile lies, would indeed be a degrading Office, and I trust unnecessary in my rank, and reputation. — As to Sherriif Hammersheim, having signed Löbners Libel, Hammersheim is only Löbner's tool; Löbner himself told me that Hammersheim was completely in his power, and existed only by his Sufferance, having embezzl'd Monies from the Public Cassa in Hammershiem's trust, to which he was indebted, to a very large Amount; which circumstance Captain Baugh told me likewise to have heard at Farro. — That my Seizures were unpleasant to the Clio, and Admiral Vashon, I easily conceive, as by these they loose some Prize Money. — That the Clio and her Captain are far from being guilty of

the horrors the Danish Commandant Löbner arraign'd them with towards me, I am not only persuaded on the general principle that a British Commander cannot be guilty in such a way; but likewise the character and reputation of Captain Baugh as an Officer and Gentleman, stands superior to it, and after the conversation I now here have with him on the subject, I am convinced that all what Löbner utter'd to me against him, is of a piece with what he stated against me, Viz: only Calumnies to palliate his own Cowardly conduct in the Defence of the Fort intrusted to him, and I was pleased that Captain Baugh is of the same opinion as to the Calumnies this Löbner uttered against me. — The only thing I took the liberty to observe to Captain Baugh, was, that before making myself the Vehicle of Calumnies, I would rather first have personally applied to a brother Officer if (especially by an enemy) I had been told of personal or gross insults from him; he properly replied that he was at Sea, and did not know my address. — To Vice Admiral Vashon I observed (in the same time) that over anxious of the good opinion of an Officer of the same rank with myself I laid before him a Copy of such Vouchers as Chance in the present moment left in my hands / that although transmitting this libelous Danish conveyance to the Admiralty was perhaps Officially justifiable, yet his wantonly volunteering his exertions with his friend the Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland, unnecessarily, unofficially to trouble Ministers, previous to all proofs and inquiries, the Admiral transmitting to them, the above Slandorous Venom against a British Officer of equal Rank with his own was at least over Officious. — The Admiral thought himself not accountable for his reports; yet even the possible arising benefit and lucre from wresting these Prizes from my poor brave Sailors, in my Opinion does not justify his sending on purpose to North Farro, to court as it were, such a Slandorous report; nor to seek byways to trouble Ministers extra Officially with it. — To the Lord Chief Justice Clerk in vindication of my character I likewise applied this morning personally, explained the whole, and communicated to him some Vouchers I fortunately had with me; and flatter myself to have convinced him of the rectitude of my conduct, of which I am the more proud, as in him I found a Man whose perspicuity as well as liberality, and seeming wonderfully superior talents and abilities in every branch — renders transaction with, truly a pleasure and a happiness. — If I understood him right, he told me that two various complaints each at a different time had been brought over from Farro; the first complaining of my ransacking every shop and (contrary to Captain Baugh's capitulation) my prizes being *Private* Danish property; whilst the present one seems to be organized to prove that (tho *Public* property) these Prizes ought to belong to the *Clio*, and not the *Salamine*, this is an additional proof of the various foul prevarications of this Löbner. — To you my Lord I take the liberty to transmit this Statement, adding to it a translated extract of some Danish Vouchers, which by a fortunate Chance

I just have by me. Still more proofs and Vouchers (not at present with me) I can, and will produce if necessary; but I trust your Lordship will by this time already be convinced I am not unworthy your good opinion, of which I am inexpressibly anxious, and for which alone and the vindication of my reputation, I transmit these Papers, as if the Clio should think herself entitled to any claim on these Prizes, it is a mere dry question of Law, which the Law must decide. — And now (tho' certainly such a Miscreant is not worthy the trouble, and I am sure, if arraigned by me, would pretend to have been forced to his Statements) Yet it seems but one duty remains incumbent on me, Viz: to seek this Löbner and either to cause him to be hung at the Yard Arm of the Salamine, or at least to have him tyed up at the Gangway and well scourged for his Calumnies against me, as well as against Captain Baugh. — Only that (as my most innocent exertions seem liable to misconstructions and blame) I waver about that Step, wishing rather the previous Sanction of Ministers in favor of the Ceremony of either of the above two operations.

I have the Honor to be respectfully

Your Lordship's

Most obedient Servant

*Hompesch*¹³

Mítt sjónarmið er, at har, ið frágreiðing Løbners víkur frá tí hjá Hompesch, mugu vit heldur trúgva Hompesch. Hetta bræv varð sent herflotaráðnum. Herflotaráðið hevði hug til at prógva, at barónurin Hompesch var illmennni og lygnari; og kapteynurin Baugh stóð til at fáa peningaligan vinning, um vøran og peningurin, sum Hompesch tók, vórðu dømd bretsku krúnuni og *Clio* til sum herfongur. Serstakliga er hetta brotið úr frágreiðingini álitandi:

As to Sheriff Hammersheim, having signed Löbners Libel, Hammersheim is only Löbner's tool; Löbner himself told me that Hammersheim was completely in his power, and existed only by his Sufferance, having embezzl'd Monies from the Public Cassa in Hammersheim's trust, to which he was inbebted, to a very large Amount; *which circumstance Captain Baugh told me likewise to have heard at Farro.*

Barónurin Hompesch heitir á kapteynin Baugh, *mótmann sín í einum herfongrættarmáli* (Prize Court case), og biður hann staðfesta frágreiðing sína. Sjálvandi hevði hann ikki gjørt hetta, var hann í minsta iva um, at hann fekk orð síni staðfest.

Ta vanligu hugsanina, at Wenzel Hammershaimb, fúti, var

ein veikur maður, sum fullkomiliga var í valdi Løbners, skilja vit nú. Fútin, neyðar maður, hevði møguliga tikið av peningakassanum og var ikki førur fyri at gjalda aftur og kom so í klørnar á Løbneri. Men støða Løbners er andstyggilig. Eftir at hava givið Skansan frá sær uttan bardaga reypar hann, ikki bert fyri einum, men tveimum fíggingda heryvirmonnum, av valdi sínum til at fáa starvsbróðir, ið framt hevði kassasvik, at skriva undir hvat skriv, honum lysti. Eg haldi, at Hompesch mundi hava lítla virðing fyri tílíkum manni. Men hetta er muran í Løbner, at hann roynir at vinna aftur við falsan tað, hann hevur mist við vesaldómi sínum. Ein tulking av teimum skjalprógvaðu vitnisburðunum, grundað á tað ástøði, at Løbner var tann reiðiligi maðurin og Hompesch tann óreiðiligi, tykir mær á ongan hátt at hava nakað at halda um.

Tað, ið Hompesch gjørdi, var at leggja hald á pening og vøru í almennari ogn fíggingdans. Nú, ið herfongrætturin sat, var høvuðsspurningurin, hvør ið hevði løgligan ognarrætt til peningin og vøruna. Uttan iva var hetta, tá ið *Clio* kom, løgliga ogn kongsins av Danmark. Hevði *Clio* farið við hesari vøru og hesum peningi, so sum Baugh hevði rætt til eftir triðju grein í undirgevingarskjalinum, hevði tað verið dømt honum til sum lögligur herfongur (prize). Hevði *Salamine* komið fyrst og tikið Skansan og síðan tikið peningin og vøruna, hevði Hompesch fingið hetta sum løgligan herfong. Men embætismenninir í Havn høvdu dult, fyrst fyri Baugh og síðan fyri Hompesch, at peningurin var til, og hvør ið átti vøruna. Tað er sjálvandi tjóðskaparlig skylda embætismanna at fjala, hvat teir kunnu av ríkisins ognum fyri fíggingda, sum teir hava givið seg undir — um teir kunnu. Men teir kunnu illa seinni gremja seg um, at snildir teirra eru avdúkaðar og ognirnar tiknar.

Hompesch var harður, men ikki óheiðurligur. Hin 1. juni læt hann vera við at taka skip Nólsoyar Páls, so sum hann hevði fullan rætt til — tí eitt og hvørt fíggingdaskip var herfongur. Tvørturímóti gav hann Nólsoyar Pállvi viðmælisbræv til møguligar herskipakapteynar, sum annars høvdu kunnað steðgað *Royndini Fríðu* á ferð síni eftir førningi til Føroya. Hann tók

ikki matin úr goymslum einahandilsins, so sum hann hevði løg-
ligan rætt til. Meira at siga gav hann teimum nakaðlítið av
einum og hvørjum og kapteyni sínum boð um at føra teimum
úr Lerwick tilíkt, sum teimum tørvaði.

Teir lutir, sum Hompesch ætlandi hevði stolið frá Løbner,
vóru sambært eykatingi í Havn 10. mars 1810, hesir: Ein
grønur veiðijakki kantaður við gráum lambsskinni, mettur til
34 Rd., 20 pør av fínum ullintum hosum, mett til 16 Rd. 64
Sk., 2 átuklæði, mett til 2 Rd., 1 koddi við línveri uttanum,
mettur til 1 Rd. 48 Sk. og ein loðhundur (poodle dog), sum
Løbner ikki vildi seta virði á. Frá Mads Mørch, handilsforvalt-
ara einahandilsins, er Hompesch ákærdur fyri at hava stolið
eina merskúmpípu, mett til 5 Rd., eitt sindur av grønlenskum
klæðum, mett til 6 Rd. 48 Sk. og eina æðudúnsdýnu, mett til
16 Rd. Hetta eru alt lutir, sum vit kunnu halda, at Hompesch
mundi viljað hava keypt til egna nýtslu. Óhugsandi er, at
Hompesch hevði viljað gjørt sjórænari fyri lógini fyri tilíkar
smálutir.

Hetta var knappliga eitt ár, áðrenn rætturin viðvíkjandi
herfeingi, kom við úrskurði. Hompesch hevði trupulleikar við
at vísa á, at vøra og peningur, hann hevði lagt hald á, vóru
almenn ogn. Men hann fekk stuðul frá tí manni, vit síðst høvdu
væntað, frá Nólsoyar Páll, ið var staddur í London í novemb-
er 1808. Páll royndi at sleppa undan at geva vitnisburð Hom-
pech til fyrimunar, men hann noyddist at viðganga, at egnu
ognir hansara vórðu eirdar. Tað skjalið ljóðar so:

*Attestation of P. P. Nolsoe, dated 4th November 1808,
exhibited by Townsend*

4th November 1808

Appeared personally Poul Poulson Nolsoe, of Bishopstadt, in Bordoe,
in the Faroe Islands, lately commanding the schooner Rainden Freija, but
at present residing on board the ship North Star, of which he is super-
cargo, now lying in the River Thames, and made Oath, that at the time
of the capture of the goods, wares and merchandizes, stores, treasures and
effects, by the private ship of war Salamine, Captain Thomas Gilpin,
Commander, proceeded against in this cause 1308 wollen frocks, the pri-
vate property of the Deponent, then lying in the Magazine or Warehouses

at Thorshaven aforesaid, were seized and taken as prize by the said ship; but that on the application of this Deponent's brother, Jacob Nolsoe, who was clerk on the said Magazines or Warehouses, to the Commander of the said ship, to have the said frocks restored as private property; and it being explained to the satisfaction of the Commander of the said ship, that the said frocks were the private property of the Deponent, the said Commander restored the same, as such, to this Deponent's said brother for this Deponent's Use and Benefit; and this Deponent verily believes, that if any other person or persons had made a claim to any property seized or taken by the said ship as their private property, the same would have been restored to the owners or claimants, owner or claimant, as their or his private property.

Poul P. Nolsoe.

Same day the said Poul Poulson Nolsoe was duly sworn to the truth thereof, before me.

C. Coote, Surr.¹⁴

Tá ið málið var komið at enda, var rætturin tó enn í iva um, hvørt peningurin og vøran vóru almenn ogn ella einstaklinga.

Men, barónurin tapti málið og fekk ikki inn í eygað burtur úr ævintýrferðum sínum í Føroyum og Íslandi, við tað at áhugamál hansara hvørja ferð, ið ætlað varð um spurningin, vórðu skotin til vikis. Rætturin gjørdi av, at, um tað, sum tikið var í Havn hevði verið einstaklinga ogn, hevði kaparin ongan rætt til upptøkuna, tí ein kapari hevði onga heimild til slíka upptøku á óvardum støðum á landi. Harafturat skuldu eftir undirgevingarsáttmálanum millum Løbner og Baugh einstaklinga ognir verða eirdar. Um ognirnar vórðu settar at vera almenn ogn, forðaðu bretska krúnan og briggin *Clio* fyri kravi Hompesch. *Clio* hevði tikið við undirgevingini av Skansanum, og eftir undirgevingartreytunum vóru allar almennar ognir tókar sigurvinnaranum. Tað, at embætismenninir úr Havn svikaliga høvdu fjalt ognirnar fyri kapteyninum Baugh, gjørdi tær ikki til løgligan herfong hjá baróninum Hompesch. Upp-tøkan í Íslandi, gjørd á óvardum støðum á landi, var á einum øðrum herfongrættartingi eisini dømd til at vera ikki løgligur herfongur.

Hevði Hompesch havt nýtt rættarlaga beina mannagongd,

hevði hann fingið okkurt fyri stríð sítt. Dómarin, the Rt. Hon. Sir William Scott, segði í dómi sínum:

I cannot dismiss this subject, without at the same time observing upon the conduct of the persons concerned in this privateer, in terms of some disapprobation. When they found this public property, which under the capitulation enured to the benefit of the Crown of Great Britain, it was their duty to have given notice to the Crown Officers of the fraud which had been practised, limiting their own expectations to the interest which they would derive as salvor for the crown.

Við øðrum orðum sagt, Hompesch átti bert at havt kravt part av ognunum sum samsýning fyri at hava funnið tær.¹⁵

Málið var lögfrøðiliga ógviliga áhugavert, tí tað var hitt fyrsta av sínum slag, og er at finna í bókini við fordømunum í bretskum sjórætti. Tað varð skotið inn fyri hægri dómstól og dómurin varð staðfestur hin 26. januar 1811.¹⁶ Jens Wolff (í royndum, tó ikki formliga, danskur konsul í London) kravdi seinni fyri føroyingar peningin og vøruna aftur,¹⁷ og peningurin og virðið av vøruni, undantiknar løgligar útreiðslur, vórðu send aftur til Havnar.¹⁸

Kanna vit ruddiliga alt próvtilfarið, mugu vit frískenna Brillumannin fyri ta vanligu ákærana, sum havd hevur verið ímóti honum. Embætismenninir í Havn kunnu neyvan gremja seg um, at vøran og peningurin, sum teir órættiliga fjaldu fyri Baugh, vórðu tikin frá teimum. Fólk yvirhøvur misti nakað-lítið við teimum smástuldrum, ið teir óstýriligu sjómenninir framdu, men virðið av tí, ið stolið varð, var lítilsvert, eisini fyri so lítlan bý, sum høvuðstaður Føroya var tá. Trupulleikarnar við vøruflutningi til Føroya fyrstu árin, ið tá komu, kunnu vit ikki kasta Hompesch fyri. Gerðir hansara gjørdu teir einki verri. Vit hava, tá ið satt skal verða sagt, verið teipað í 160 ár — av kommandantinum Løbner.

SUMMARY

This article challenges the traditional assumptions about one of the famous villains of Faroese history, Charles Baron Hompesch, who paid a visit to Tórshavn in his capacity as a privateer in the summer of 1808,

sailing under British letters of marque, and removed both the public money chests and the stores in the warehouses of the Royal Danish Monopoly. The Faroese view of Baron Hompesch has usually been that he was a cruel plunderer, indifferent to the suffering he caused, but intent only on enriching himself at the cost of a defenceless people.

The author first shows that this opinion was held in England, too, in Hompesch's time; but he goes on to demonstrate that the view arises from an account of the affair by the Danish commandant of the Tórshavn fort, Emilius Löbner, which can be shown in part to be false and one-sided.

The money and goods were eventually returned to the Faroe Islands, the Prize Court having refused to award them to Hompesch. The judgement did not, however, arise from any misconduct of Baron Hompesch in Faroe, but from a prior claim of the British Crown, based on the capitulation signed by Löbner when the *Clio*, a British naval brig, disarmed the Tórshavn fort two weeks before Hompesch's visit.

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