

# **GRANHOLM GENEALOGY**

**NORSE ROYAL ANCESTRY**  
**(Norwegian and Finnish)**

## INTRODUCTION

The Norse or Scaninavian mythology has many deities, gods and goddesses. This part begins by listing Norwegian and Finnish ancestors, Njörd and Fjornot. Where the name in the lists are **highlighted** I have included a biography. There is no clear direct lineage from them, they are intermixed with the Swedish and Danish mythologies. In those separate booklets have I included the information about Odin and others near to him. Here I have shown our lineage from other mythical figures. These lineages do not start from a single person. The lists that follows converge different lineages which all lead to us. Some of the persons are referred to as Kings of Finland.

As in all listings of mytological/historical persons there is a gray area where the reader may use his or her imagination in deciding where the transition between myth and history is. But a fact is that somebody was there and had some influence, for instance how a name was established serves as some kind of proof of their existence. See the quotation below:

*Njörðr's name appears in various place names in Scandinavia, such as Nærdhæwi (now Nalavi), Njærdhavi (now Mjärdevi), Nærdhælunda (now Närlunda), Nierdhatunum (now Närtuna) in Sweden, Njarðvík in eastern Iceland, Njarðarlög and Njarðey (now Nærøy) in Norway. Njörðr's name appears in a word for **sponge**; Njarðarvötr. Additionally, in Old Icelandic translations of **Classical** mythology the Roman god **Saturn**'s name is **glossed** as "Njörðr".*

King Thorri of Finland, a descendant of the first king Fornjot, is the 41<sup>st</sup> great grandfather.. His daughter Goi had been abducted and his other two sons Nor and Gor went out in search of her from Finland or the part in Finland called Kvenland and referred to as “*historians have located*



*Kvenland somewhere around or near the Bothnian Bay, in the present-day regions of Swedish Norrbotten and Finnish **Ostrobothnia**. The traditional East Finnish name of this area was **Kainuu**”. In the map shown below and also later in the text about Thorri and his children, that area of Finland may be where we came from. Of further interest is that one branch of our ancestors uses the name Kainu, a name still listed in the Kokkola phone directory. A Mickel Olofsson Caino, born 1470 in Veteli, is my 14<sup>th</sup> great grand father.*

Nor became the first king of the Norwegian mainland, Gor over the islands. After them the land was again divided into smaller kingdoms, which were not united until the reign of King Harald Fairhair. A strange coincident is that he in turn had a Queen from Finland.

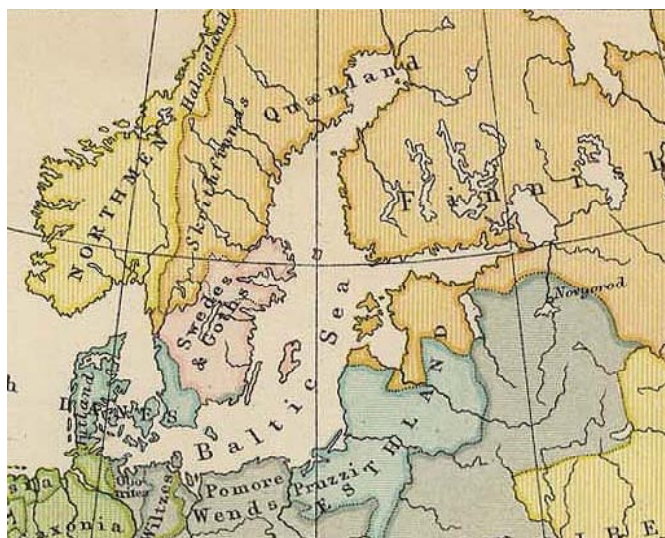
Finland became part of Sweden and in 1809 a Grand Duchy of Russia. In 1918 Finland elected Frederick Charles as a King (see the end) but he was replaced by a republican constitution.



This part covers the story of the Norwegian and Finnish ancestral mythical/historical royalty. Another historical separate part of the Norwegian Royal Ancestry begins with a united Norway's first king, Harald Fairhair (Hårfager), the son of King Halfdan, the last one in the this part. This second part covers our ancestry from King Harald Fairhair and our relationship to the present king of Norway. Harald married Snofrid Svåsesdotter from Finland, who thus became the first Queen of Norway. See the saga below:

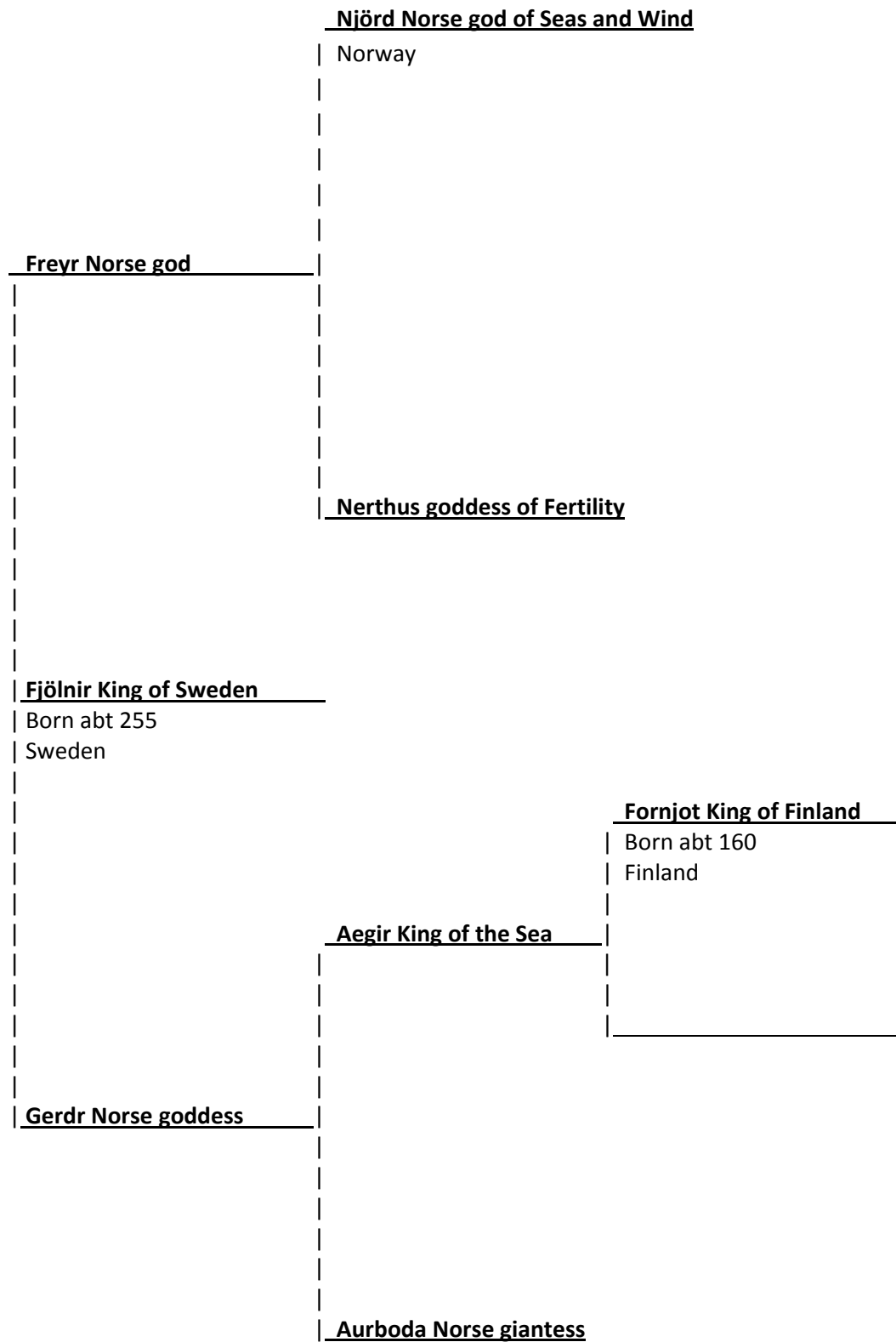
*King Harald, one winter, went about in guest-quarters in the Uplands, and had ordered a Christmas feast to be prepared for him at the farm Thoptar. On Christmas eve came Svase to the door, just as the king went to table, and sent a message to the king to ask if he would go out with him. The king was angry at such a message, and the man, who had brought it in, took out with him a reply of the king's displeasure. But Svase, notwithstanding, desired that his message should be delivered a second time; adding to it, that he was the Fin whose hut the king had promised to visit, and which stood on the other side of the ridge. Now the king went out, and promised to go with him, and went over the ridge to his hut, although some of his men dissuaded him. There stood Snaefrid, the daughter of Svase, a most beautiful girl; and she filled a cup of mead for the king. But he took hold both of the cup and of her hand. Immediately it was as if a hot fire went through his body; and he wanted that very night to take her to his bed. But Svase said that should not be unless by main force, if he did not first make her his lawful wife. Now King Harald made Snaefrid his lawful wife, and loved her so passionately that he forgot his kingdom, and all that belonged to his high dignity. They had four sons: the one was Sigurd Hrise; the others Halfdan Haleg, Gudrod Ljome and Ragnvald Rettilbeine. Thereafter Snaefrid died; but her corpse never changed, but was as fresh and red as when she lived. The king sat always beside her, and thought she would come to life again. And so it went on for three years that he was sorrowing over her death, and the people over his delusion. ..."*

**Political map as of 815**



Lars Granholm, August 2009

## The earliest Norwegian and Finnish Ancestry



#### Descendants of: Njordr, Norse god of seas and wind As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 Njordr Norse god of seas and wind (60th great grand father)  
m. Nerthus Goddess of Fertility (60th great grand mother)
- 2 Freyja goddess of love and beauty (59<sup>th</sup> great aunt)  
m. Odr
- 2 Freyr Norse god (59th great grand father)  
m. Gerdr Norse goddess [daughter of Aegir (Gymir) King of the sea (Norse mythology) and Aurboda]
- 3 Fjölfnir King of Sweden (myth) b. abt 255 Sweden (58th great grand father)
- 4 Sveigder King of Sweden (myth) b. 277 (57th great grand father) m. Vana of Vanaheim b. 281
- 5 Vanlandi King of Sweden (myth) b. 298 (56th great grand father)  
m. Driva Snaesdotter b. abt. 300 Finland [daughter of Snaer (Snow the Old)]
- 6 Visbur King of Sweden House of Ynglings (55th great grand father)  
m. Daughter of Aude the Rich [daughter of Audi the Rich King of Finland (myth)]
- 7 Domalde King of Sweden (myth) (54th great grand father)
- 8 Domar King of Sweden (myth) (53rd great grand father)  
m. Drott Queen of Sweden (myth) [daughter of Danp King of Denmark (myth)]

#### Descendants of: Fornjot King of Finland As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 Fornjot King of Finland (61st great grand father)
- 2 Aegir (Gymir) King of the sea (Norse mythology) (60th great grand father)  
m. Aurboda
- 3 Gerdr Norse goddess (59th great grand mother)  
m. Freyr Norse god [son of Njordr Norse god of seas and wind and Nerthus Goddess of Fertility]
- 4 Fjölfnir King of Sweden (myth) b. abt 255 Sweden

#### Descendants of: Loke god in Norse mythology As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 Loke god in Norse mythology (59th great grand father)  
m. Sigyn goddess in Norse mythology (59th great grand mother)
- 2 Narfi (myth) (58th great grand father)
- 3 Nott (myth) (57th great grand mother) m. Naglfari (myth)
- 4 Audi the Rich King of Finland (myth) (56th great grand father)

### Descendants of: Rig (Norse god) As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 **Rig (Norse god)** (55th great grand father) m. **Dana**
- 2 **Danp King of Denmark (myth)** (54th great grand father)
- 3 **Drott Queen of Sweden (myth)** (53rd great grand mother)  
m. **Domar King of Sweden (myth)** [son of Domalde King of Sweden (myth)]

### Descendants of: Dyggvi King of Sweden (myth) As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 **Dyggvi King of Sweden** (myth) (52nd great grand father)
- 2 **Dag the Wise King of Sweden** (51st great grand father)
- 3 **Agne King of Sweden** (myth) d. 400 excavated and dated to c. 400 (50th great grand father)  
m. Skjalf Frostisdaughter
- 4 **Alrek King of Sweden** (myth) (49th great grand father)
- 5 **Yngvi King of Sweden** (myth) (48th great grand father)
- 6 **Jorund King of Sweden** (myth) (47th great grand father)
- 7 **Aun The Aged King of Sweden** (myth) b. 509 (46th great grand father)
- 8 **Ongentheow (Egil Vendelkråke) King of Sweden** (myth) b. 530 (45th great grand father)
- 9 **Ohthere King of Sweden** (myth) b. 561 (44th great grand father)
- 10 **Eadgils King of Sweden** (myth) (43rd great grand father)  
m. **Yrsa Queen of Sweden** (myth) b. ABT 570 [daughter of Helgi King of Sweden (myth)]
- 11 **Eystein King of Sweden** (myth) b. ABT 600 (42nd great grand father)
- 12 **Ingvar Eysteinnsson King of Sweden** (myth) b. ABT 616 (41st great grand father)
- 13 **Anund Ingvarsson King of Sweden** (myth) b. ABT 638 15127 (40th great grand father)
- 14 **Ingjald the Ill-ruler King of Sweden** (myth) b. ABT 660 (39th great grand father)  
m. Gauthild Algautsdotter Queen of Sweden (myth) b. ABT 664  
[daughter of Algaut Gautreksson of Sweden (myth) and Alov Olofsdotter Princess of Närke]
- 15 **Olof Trätälja King of Norway** (Vestfold) b. Vännland d. 710 (38th great grand father)  
m. Solveig [daughter of Halfdan Guldtand]
- 16 **Halfdan Hvitbeinn King of Uppsala** (37th great grand father)  
m. Åsa Princess  
[daughter of Eystein Ruler of Oppland and Hedmark]
- 17 **Eystein Fart King of Norway** (Vestfold) b. Vestfold, Norway d. 780 (36th great grand father)  
m. Hild Eriksdotter Princess of Vestfold  
[daughter of Erik Agnarsson King of Vestfold]
- 18 **Halfdan the Mild King of Romerike and Vestfold** (35th great grand father)  
m. Liv Dagsdotter Princess of Vestmar  
[daughter of Dag King of Vestmar]

19 **Gudrud the Hunter King in SE Norway** (34th great grand father)  
m. **Åsa Haraldsdotter Princess of Agder** (35th great grand mother)  
[daughter of Harald King of Agder]

[Children of Gudrud the Hunter King in SE Norway and Åsa Haraldsdotter Princess of Agder]

20 **Halfdan the Black King of Agder** b. 810 d. 860 (33rd great grand father)  
m. **Ragnhild Sigurdsdotter Princess of Ringerike**  
[daughter of Sigurd Hjort King of Ringerike and Ingeborg Princess of Jutland]

[Children of Gudrud the Hunter King in SE Norway and Alfild Queen of Norway (Vestfold)]  
20 **Olaf II "Geirstad-Alf" Gudrurudsson King of Norway** (34th great grand father)

#### **Descendants of: Thorri King of Finland As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm**

1 **Thorri King of Finland** (41st great grand father)

2 **Nor Thorrisson Founder of Norway** (44th great grand father)  
m. **Hödd**  
[daughter of Svadi]

3 **Raum the Old Norsson** (43rd great grand father)  
m. **Hildur Gudraudsdotter**

4 **Hring Raumsson** (42nd great grand father)  
m. **NN Vifilsdatter** b. abt 406

5 **Halfdan Hringsson the Old King of Ringerik** b. abt 450 Ringerike, Norway (41st great grand father)  
m. **Almveigu Eymondsdotter**

2 **Gor Thorrisson** (40th great grand father)

3 **Heytir Gorresson** b. abt 365 Raumsdal, Norway (40th great grand father)

4 **Svidri Heytsson** b. abt 600 (39th great grand father)

5 **Sveidi/ Sveithi Svidrasson Sea King** b. abt 650 (38th great grand father)

6 **Halfdan the Old** (37th great grand father)

7 **Ivar Halfdansso Jarl** (36th great grand father)  
m. **NN Eisteinsdotter**

8 **Eystein Ivarsson Earl of Oplande** b. 800 d. 890 (35th great grand father)  
m. **Aseda (Ascrida) Rognvaldsdotter** [daughter of Ragnvald "the Mountain-High" King of Norway]

[Children of Eystein Ivarsson Earl of Oplande and Aseda (Ascrida) Rognvaldsdotter]

9 **Rognvald "The Wise" Earl of More** b. ABT 830 d. 892 (34th great grand father)  
m. **Hilda Hroffsdotter of Norway** b. ABT 848 d. 892

10 **Rollo Gånge-Rolf Duke of Normandy** b. 860 Norway, Trøndelag d. 931 Normandy (33rd great grand father)  
m. **Poppa de Bayeux Duchess of Normandy**

2 **Goi Thorrisdaughter** (45th great aunt)  
m. **Hrolf in Bergr King of Hedemark**  
[son of Svadi]



# Njördr

*Njord in an illustration to the [Poetic Edda](#) from 1893*

In [Norse mythology](#), **Njord** or **Njördr** (Old Norse *Njördr*) is one of the [Vanir](#) and the god of wind, fertile land along the seacoast, as well as seamanship, sailing and fishing. The prose Edda says he has the power to calm the sea or fire. He is **the father of Yngvi-Freyr and Freyja**. Their mother was, according to the [Heimskringla](#), Njord's own sister and lover. Apparently the Vanir, unlike the [Aesir](#), had the custom of [consanguineous](#) marriage. His sister's name may also be Njord, according to the reconstruction of the name of a [Teutonic](#) goddess that [Tacitus](#) transliterated into Latin as "Nerthus" (= *Njördr*). His dwelling is said to be [Noatún](#) ('Ship-town'). Njord is also a god closely associated with fertility, as are the Vanir in general.

Njord and his children joined the Aesir as Vanir hostages after the Aesir/Vanir war. Such hostages are considered part of the family of the aristocracy and rightful leaders, but are not free to leave so as to secure the mutual interests of the peace treaty.



*"Njörð's desire of the Sea" by [W. G. Collingwood](#).*





# Nerthus

"Nerthus" (1905) by Emil Doepler.

**Nerthus** is a goddess in Germanic paganism associated with fertility. Nerthus is attested by Tacitus, a first century AD Roman historian, in his work entitled *Germania*. Various theories exist regarding the goddess and her potential later traces amongst the Germanic tribes. The minor planet 601 Nerthus is named after Nerthus



## Etymology

Nerthus often is identified with the Vanir god Njördr who is attested in various thirteenth century Old Norse works and in numerous Scandinavian place names. The connection between the two is due to the linguistic relationship between *Njördr* and the reconstructed Proto-Germanic *\*Nertuz*,<sup>[1]</sup> "Nerthus" being the feminine, Latinized form of what *Njördr* would have looked like around 1 CE. This has led to theories about the relation of the two, including that Njördr may have once been a hermaphroditic deity or, generally considered more likely, that the name may indicate an otherwise unattested divine brother and sister pair such as the Vanir deities Freyja and Freyr. Connections have been proposed between the unnamed mother of Freyja and Freyr and the sister of Njördr mentioned in *Lokasenna* and Nerthus.

Nerthus typically is identified as a Vanir goddess. Her wagon tour has been likened to several archeological wagon finds and legends of deities parading in wagons. Terry Gunnell and many others have noted various archaeological finds of ritual wagons in Denmark dating from 200 AD and the Bronze Age. Such a ceremonial wagon, incapable of making turns, was discovered in the Oseberg ship find. Two of the most famous literary examples occur in the Icelandic family sagas. The Vanir god Freyr is said to ride in a wagon annually through the country accompanied by a priestess to bless the fields. H.R. Davidson draws a parallel between these incidents and the Tacitus' account of Nerthus, suggesting that in addition a neck-ring wearing female figure "kneeling as if to drive a chariot" also dates from the Bronze Age.

# Freyja

"Heimdallr returns the necklace Brísingamen to Freyja" by [Swedish](#) painter [Nils Blommér](#).



**Freyja** is a major goddess in [Norse Paganism](#), a subset of [Germanic Paganism](#). Because the documented source of this religious tradition, the [Norse Mythology](#), was transmitted and altered by [Christian](#) medieval historians.

In the [Eddas](#), Freya is portrayed as a [goddess](#) of [love](#), [beauty](#), and [fertility](#). Blonde, blue-eyed, and beautiful, Freyja is described as the fairest of all goddesses, and people prayed to her for happiness in love. She was also called on to assist childbirths and prayed to for good seasons.

Freyja was also associated with [war](#), [battle](#), [death](#), [magic](#), [prophecy](#), and [wealth](#). She is cited as receiving half of the dead lost in battle in her hall [Fólkvangr](#), whereas [Odin](#) would receive the other half at [Valhalla](#).

[Frigg](#) and Freyja are the two principal goddesses in Norse religion, and described as the highest amongst the [Asynjur](#). Freyja is the goddess most honoured after or along with Frigg, and her worship seems to have been even the more prevalent and important of the two. In the [Droplaugarsona Saga](#), it is described that in a temple at Ölvusvatn, [Iceland](#), statues of Frigg and Freyja have been seated upon higher thrones opposite those of Thor and Freyr. These statues were arrayed in drapery and ornaments of gold and silver.

Freyja is also presented as a mythological Princess of [Sweden](#). Her father [Njörðr](#) is seen as the second [mythological King of Sweden](#), and her brother [Freyr](#) is the third. Freyr and Freyja's mother is Njörðr's sister (who has been often linked to the ancient Germanic goddess [Nerthus](#)), as it is a custom of the [Vanir](#) and allowed by their laws.

Further in *Heimskringla*, it is written that many temples and statues of native pagan gods and goddesses were raided and destroyed by [Olaf Tryggvason](#) and [Saint Olaf](#) during the gradual and violent process of the [Christianization of Scandinavia](#).

## Possessions



*Freyja, depicted in a painting by J. Penrose.*

Surviving tales regarding Freyja often associate Freyja with numerous enchanted possessions.

### Brísingamen

Brísingamen is Freyja's famous necklace reputedly made of gold and amber, which also appears in *Beowulf*. In some mythological writings, Brísingamen is assigned to Frigg. It is written that women often wore "stone-necklaces" as a part of a woman's apparels, to indicate their social status. That is the reason why woman is periphrased with reference to jewels and agates.

### Falcon Cloak

Freyja owns a cloak of *falcon* feathers, which can give her the ability to change into the guise of any birds, and to fly between worlds. It is called *Valshamr*, the "hawk's plumage", "falcon skin", or "falcon-feathered cloak" in different translations. The same magical cloak was also assigned to Frigg in some tales.

### Cat-drawn Chariot



*A depiction of Freyja riding a cat-driven chariot and flanked by Italian Renaissance-inspired putti by Swedish painter Nils Blommér.*

Freyja often rides on a *chariot* drawn by a pair of large cats. She rode this chariot to Baldur's funeral. These cats are called *Gib-cats* in the Prose Edda. They are thought to be either *Norwegian forest cats* [49] or *Lynx*. Cats are sacred to Freyja, just as wolves are to Odin. "When a bride goes to the wedding in fine weather, they say 'she has fed the cat well,' not offended the favourite of the love-goddess."

Freyja is considered a warrior goddess among her many roles. The chariot also is a warlike attribute and often given to exalted deities only. This does not mean that every exalted Germanic deity must have a wagon, but most of them have special rides. Odin and Heimdallr have horses, Thor has a chariot drawn by goats, Freyr has a boar, but Freyja has both chariot and boar.

A silver decoration showing Freyja in the [Museum of National Antiquities](#) in [Stockholm](#).



# Odr

*By Gattin (1882), depicting "Odr leaving the tearful Freyja".*



In Norse mythology, **Odr** or **Óð** (Old Norse: Odr, "the frenzied one"), sometimes anglicized as **Odr** or **Od**, is a figure associated with the major goddess **Freyja**. The *Prose Edda* and *Heimskringla*, written in the 13th century by **Snorri Sturluson**, both describe Odr as Freyja's husband and father of her two daughters **Hnoss** and **Gersemi**. A number of theories have been proposed about Odr, generally that he is somehow a **hypostasis** of the deity **Odin** due to their similarities.

## Poetic Edda

Odr is mentioned in stanza 25 of the *Poetic Edda* poem *Völuspá*. The name appears in a kenning for the major goddess **Freyja**; "Óð's girl", pointing to a relation with the goddess

Stanza 47 of the poem *Hyndluljóð* contains mention of a figure by the name of **Ædi**. There, Hyndla taunts Freyja, stating that Freyja had run to Ædi, "always full of desire". The identity of Ædi is uncertain; it has been theorized that this may simply be Odr, or that the figure may be another lover of Freyja's. This reference has been described as "puzzling" as no other information is provided regarding the situation referred to by Hyndla.

## Prose Edda

In section 35 of the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*. There, he is described as the husband of Freyja, and the two are described as having produced a daughter, Hnoss, so beautiful that her name is used as a word for an extremely valuable and beautiful treasure. Odr is described in this section as traveling far away, while Freyja stays behind. In his absence, she is described as crying tears of **red gold**, and, further, when Freyja searches for him in distant lands, she goes by many different names.



# Freyr

*"Frey and his Steed, Golden-Bristle" by Jacques Reich*

**Freyr** (sometimes anglicized **Frey**) is one of the most important gods of [Norse paganism](#). Freyr was highly associated with agriculture, weather and, as a [phallic fertility god](#), Freyr "bestows peace and pleasure on mortals". Freyr, sometimes referred to as [Yngvi-Freyr](#), was especially associated with Sweden and seen as an ancestor of the [Swedish royal house](#).

In the [Icelandic](#) books the [Poetic Edda](#) and the [Prose Edda](#), Freyr is presented as one of the [Vanir](#), the son of the sea god [Njördr](#), brother of the goddess [Freyja](#). The gods gave him [Alfheimr](#), the realm of the [Elves](#), as a teething present. He rides the shining [dwarf](#)-made boar [Gullinbursti](#) and possesses the ship [Skidbladnir](#) which always has a favorable breeze and can be folded together and carried in a pouch when it is not being used. He has the servants [Skirnir](#), [Byggvir](#) and [Beyla](#).



Frey and his Steed, Golden-bristle.

The most extensive surviving Freyr [myth](#) relates Freyr's falling in love with the [giantess Gerdr](#). Eventually, she becomes his wife but first Freyr has to give away his [magic sword](#) which fights on its own "if wise be he who wields it". Although deprived of this weapon, Freyr defeats the giant [Beli](#) with an [antler](#). However, lacking his sword, Freyr will be killed by the fire giant [Surtr](#) at [Ragnarok](#), the end of the world.

## Gylfaginning

In the [Gylfaginning](#) section of his [Prose Edda](#), Snorri introduces Freyr as one of the major gods.

Njördr i Noatúnum gat sidan tvau börn, hét sonr Freyr en dottir Freyja. Tau varu fögr alitum ok mattug. Freyr er hinn agætasti af asum. Hann rædr fyrir regni ok skini solar, ok tar med avexti jardar, ok a hann er gott at heita til ars ok fridar. Hann rædr ok fésælu manna. *Gylfaginning* 24, [EB's edition](#)

[Njördr](#) in [Noatún](#) begot afterward two children: the son was called Freyr, and the daughter [Freyja](#); they were fair of face and mighty. Freyr is the most renowned of the [Aesir](#); he rules over the rain and the shining of the sun, and therewithal the fruit of the earth; and it is good to call on him for fruitful seasons and peace. He governs also the prosperity of men.

Scandinavian gold plaque showing a meeting between Freyr and Gerdr.



The woman is [Gerdr](#), a beautiful [giantess](#). Freyr immediately falls in love with her and becomes depressed and taciturn. After a period of brooding, he consents to talk to [Skirnir](#), his foot-page. He tells Skirnir that he has fallen in love with a beautiful woman and thinks he will die if he cannot have her. He asks Skirnir to go and woo her for him.

Ta svarar Skirnir, sagdi sva at hann skal fara sendiferd en Freyr skal fa honum sverd sitt. Tat var sva gott sverd at sjalft vask. En Freyr lét eigi tat til skorta ok gaf honum sverdit. Ta for Skirnir ok bad honum konunnar ok fekk heitit hennar, ok niu nottum sidar skyldi hon tar koma er Barey heitir ok ganga ta at brullaupinu med Frey. *Gylfaginning* 37, [EB's edition](#)

Then Skirnir answered thus: he would go on his errand, but Freyr should give him his own sword-which is so good that it fights of itself; - and Freyr did not refuse, but gave him the sword. Then Skirnir went forth and wooed the woman for him, and received her promise; and [nine nights later](#) she was to come to the place called [Barrey](#), and then go to the bridal with Freyr.

The loss of Freyr's sword has consequences. According to the *Prose Edda*, Freyr had to fight [Beli](#) without his sword and slew him with an [antler](#). But the result at [Ragnarök](#), the end of the world, will be much more serious. Freyr is fated to fight the fire-giant [Surtr](#) and since he does not have his sword he will be defeated.

Even after the loss of his weapon Freyr still has two magical artifacts, both of them [dwarf](#)-made. One is the ship [Skidbladnir](#), which will have favoring breeze wherever its owner wants to go and can also be folded together like a napkin and carried in a pouch. The other is the boar [Gullinbursti](#) whose mane glows to illuminate the way for his owner.



A detail from a [runestone](#) from [Gotland](#), in the [Museum of National Antiquities](#). The three men are interpreted as [Odin](#), [Thor](#) and Freyr.

Freyr is depressed after seeing Gerdr. Njördr and [Skadi](#) ask Skirnir to go and talk with him. Freyr reveals the cause of his grief and asks Skirnir to go to [Jötunheimr](#) to woo Gerdr for him. Freyr gives Skirnir a horse and his magical sword for the journey.

*Yngvi-Freyr constructs the [Temple at Uppsala](#) in this early 19th century artwork by [Hugo Hamilton](#).*



When Skirnir finds Gerdr he starts by offering her treasures if she will marry Freyr. When she declines he gets her consent by threatening her with destructive magic

Odin makes Njördr and Freyr priests of sacrifices and they become influential leaders. Odin goes on to conquer the North and settles in Sweden where he rules as king, collects taxes and maintains sacrifices. After Odin's death, Njördr takes the throne. During his rule there is peace and good harvest and the Swedes come to believe that Njördr controls these things. Eventually Njördr falls ill and dies.

**Freyr had a son named Fjölfnir**, who succeeds him as king and rules during the continuing period of peace and good seasons. Fjölfnir's descendants are enumerated in *[Ynglingatal](#)* which describes the [mythological kings of Sweden](#)



# Fjölñir

**Fjölñir**, *Fjölner*, *Fjolner* or *Fjolne* (1st century BC - early 1st century AD) was a Swedish king of the House of Yngling, at Gamla Uppsala. He appears in a semi-mythological context as the son of Freyr and Gerd.

Fjölñir drowned in a vat of mead visiting Peace-Frodi, an equally mythological king of Zealand, where Denmark later appeared. Fjölñir was then succeeded by his son Sveigdir.

## Grottasöñgr

*Grottasöñgr* informs that Fjölñir was the contemporary of Caesar Augustus (63 BC, AD 14). He was a mighty king and the crops were bountiful and peace was maintained. At his time, king Frodi, the son of Fridleifr, ruled in Lejre in Zealand. *Grottasöñgr* relates that when Frodi once visited Uppsala he bought two giantesses, Fenja and Menja:

However, the two giantesses were to be his undoing (see *Grottasöñgr*).

## Ynglinga saga

The *Ynglinga saga* tells that Fjölñir was the son of Freyr himself and the giantess Gerd, but he was the first of his house who was not to be deified.

Freyr tok ta riki eptir Njörd; var hann kalladr drottinn yfir Svium ok tok skattgjafir af teim; hann var vinsæll ok arsæll sem fadir hans. Freyr reisti at Uppsölum hof mikít, ok setti tar höfudstad sinn; lagdi tar til allar skyldir sinar, lönd ok lausa aura; ta hofst Uppsala audr, ok hefir haldízt æ sidan. A hans dögum hofst Froda fridr, ta var ok ar um öll lönd; kendu Sviar tat Frey. Var hann tvi meir dýrkadr en önnur godin, sem a hans dögum vard landsfolkit audgara en fyrr af fridinum ok ari. Gerdr Gýmis dottir hét kona hans; sonr teirra hét Fjölñir.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

Frey took the kingdom after Njord, and was called drot by the Swedes, and they paid taxes to him. He was, like his father, fortunate in friends and in good seasons. Frey built a great temple at Upsal, made it his chief seat, and gave it all his taxes, his land, and goods. Then began the Upsal domains, which have remained ever since. Then began in his days the Frode- peace; and then there were good seasons, in all the land, which the Swedes ascribed to Frey, so that he was more worshipped than the other gods, as the people became much richer in his days by reason of the peace and good seasons. His wife was called Gerd, daughter of Gýmis, and their son was called Fjolne.

Then Snorri tells that after Freyr's death, Fjölfnir became the king of Sweden. However, he drowned in a vat of [mead](#) visiting Peace-Frodi (*Fridfrodi*), the king of [Zealand](#).

Fjölfnir, son Yngvifreys, réð ta fyrir Svium ok Uppsala aud; hann var ríkr ok arsæll ok fridsæll. Ta var Fridfrodi at Hleidru; teirra i millum var heimbod ok vingan. Ta er Fjölfnir for til Froda a Selund, ta var tar fyrir búin veizla mikil ok bodit til vida um lönd. Frodi atti mikinn húsabœ; tar var gert ker mikit margra alna hatt, ok okat med storum timbrstokkum; tat stod i undirskemmu, en lopt var yfir uppi, ok opit golftilit, sva at tar var nidr hellt leginum, en kerit blandit fult mjadar; tar var drykkur furdu sterkr. Um kveldit var Fjölfnir fylgt til herbergis i hit næsta lopt, ok hans sveit med honum. Um nottina gékk hann út i svalir at leita sér stadar, var hann svefnœrr ok daudadrukkinn. En er hann snerist aptr til herbergis, ta gékk hann fram eptir svölunum ok til annarra loptdura ok tar inn, missti ta fotum ok féll i mjadarkerit, ok týndist tar.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

Fjolne, Yngve Frey's son, ruled thereafter over the Swedes and the [Upsal domains](#). He was powerful, and lucky in seasons and in holding the peace. Fredfrode ruled then in [Leidre](#), and between them there was great friendship and visiting. Once when Fjolne went to Frode in [Sealand](#), a great feast was prepared for him, and invitations to it were sent all over the country. Frode had a large house, in which there was a great vessel many ells high, and put together of great pieces of timber; and this vessel stood in a lower room. Above it was a loft, in the floor of which was an opening through which liquor was poured into this vessel. The vessel was full of mead, which was excessively strong. In the evening Fjolne, with his attendants, was taken into the adjoining loft to sleep. In the night he went out to the gallery to seek a certain place, and he was very sleepy and exceedingly drunk. As he came back to his room he went along the gallery to the door of another left, went into it, and his foot slipping, he fell into the vessel of mead and was drowned

The *Historia Norwegiæ* provides a Latin summary of *Ynglingatal*, which precedes Snorri's quotation. It also informs that **Fjölfnir was the son of Freyr, the father of Svegder** and that he drowned in a vat of mead.

# Sveigdir

**Sveigdir**, *Sveigder* or *Swegde* was a [Swedish king](#) of the [House of Yngling](#) in Norse mythology. He was the [son of Fjölner](#), whom he succeeded as king, and he [married Vana of Vanaheim](#), probably one of the [Vanir](#).

Lured by a [dwarf](#), Sveigdir disappeared into a stone and never came back. He was succeeded by [his son Vanlandi](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote of Sveigdir in his *[Ynglinga saga](#)* (1225):

Sveigdir tok ríki eptir födur sinn; hann strengdi tess heit at leita Godheims ok Odins hins gamla. Hann fór með 12 menn víða um heiminn, hann kom út í Tyrkland ok í Svitjod hina miklu ok hitti þar marga frændr sína ok vini, ok var í teirri för 5 vetr. Þá kom hann að þr til Svitjodar, dvaldist hann þá enn heima um hrið. Hann hafði fengið konu þá er Vana hét út í Vanaheimi; var teirra son Vanlandi. Sveigdir fór enn at leita Godheims. Ok í austanverðri Svitjod heitir þær mikill at Steini, þar er steinn sva mikill sem stór hús. Um kveldit eptir solarfall, þá er Sveigdir gekk frá drykkju til svefnbúrs, sa hann til steinsins, at dvergr sat undir steininum. Sveigdir ok hans menn varu mjök druknir ok runnu til steinsins. Dvergrinn stóð í durum ok kallaði a Sveigdi, bað hann þar inn ganga, ef hann vildi Óðin hitta. Sveigdir hljóp í steininn; en steinninn laukst tegar að þr, ok kom Sveigdir eigi að þr.<sup>[1][2]</sup>

Swegde took the kingdom after his father, and he made a solemn vow to seek [Godheim](#) and [Odin](#). He went with twelve men through the world, and came to [Turkland](#), and the [Great Svithiod](#), where he found many of his connections. He was five years on this journey; and when he returned home to [Sweden](#) he remained there for some time. He had got a wife in [Vanheim](#), who was called Vana, and their son was [Vanlande](#). Swegde went out afterwards to seek again for Godheim, and came to a mansion on the east side of Swithiod called [Stein](#), where there was a stone as big as a large house. In the evening after sunset, as Swegde was going from the drinking-table to his sleeping-room, he cast his eye upon the stone, and saw that a dwarf was sitting under it. Swegde and his man were very drunk, and they ran towards the stone. The [dwarf](#) stood in the door, and called to Swegde, and told him to come in, and he should see Óðin. Swegde ran into the stone, which instantly closed behind him, and Swegde never came back.<sup>[3][4]</sup>

# Vanlandi

*Vanlandi was burned by the river ("shooting creek"). In the summer, the creek hardly merits the name and today it is called Skuttungeån.*

**Vanlandi** or *Vanlande* was a [Swedish](#) king at [Uppsala](#) of the [House of Yngling](#) in [Norse mythology](#). He was the [son of Sveigdir](#) whom he succeeded as king. He married a girl from *Finland* , but forgot about her. In revenge, the girl arranged so that Vanlandi was [hag ridden](#) to death. He was succeeded by his [son Visbur](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote of Vanlandi in his *[Ynglinga saga](#)* (1225):

Vanlandi hét son Svegdis, er ríki tok eptir hann ok réð fyrir Uppsala aud; hann var hermadr mikill, ok hann fór víða um lönd. Hann tók vetrvíst á Finnlandi með Snjá hinum gamla, ok fékk þar dóttur hans Drífu. En á því fór hann á brott, en Drífa var eptir, ok hét hann at koma aftur á triggja vetrar fresti; en hann kom eigi á 10 vetrum. Þá sendi Drífa eptir Huld seidkonu, en sendi Visbur, son teirra Vanlanda, til Svítjóðar. Drífa keypti at Huld seidkonu, at hon skyldi sýða Vanlanda til Finnlands, eða deyða hann at öðrum kosti. En er seidr var framídr, þá var Vanlandi at Uppsölum; þá gerði hann fúsan at fara til Finnlands, en vinnir hans ok ráðamenn bönnuðu honum, ok sögðu at vera mundi fjölkyngi Finna í farfýsi hans. Þá gerdist honum svefnhöfugt, ok lagdist hann til svefns. En er hann hafði lítt sofnað, kallaði hann ok sagði, at mara trad hann. Menn hans fóru til ok vildu hjálpa honum; en er teir tóku upp til höfudsins, þá trad hon fotleggina, svo at nær brotnuðu; þá tóku teir til fotanna, þá kafði hon höfudit, svo at þar dó hann. Svíar tóku lík hans, ok var hann brendr víð á þá er Skúta heitir. Þar varu settir bautasteinar hans.<sup>[1]</sup>



Vanlande, Swegde's son, succeeded his father, and ruled over the [Upsal domain](#). He was a great warrior, and went far around in different lands. Once he took up his winter abode in [Finland](#) with [Snæ the Old](#), and got [his daughter Drífa](#) in marriage; but in spring he set out leaving Drífa behind, and although he had promised to return within three years he did not come back for ten. Then Drífa sent a message to the [witch Huld](#); and sent [Visbur](#), her son by Vanlande, to [Sweden](#). Drífa bribed the witch- wife Huld, either that she should bewitch Vanlande to return to Finland, or kill him. When this witch-work was going on Vanlande was at [Upsal](#), and a great desire came over him to go to Finland; but his friends and counsellors advised him against it, and said the [witchcraft](#) of the Finn people showed itself in this desire of his to go there. He then became very drowsy, and laid himself down to sleep; but when he had slept but a little while he cried out, saying that the [Mara](#) was treading upon him. His men hastened to him to help him; but when they took hold of his head she trod on his legs, and when they laid hold of his legs she pressed upon his head; and it was his death. The Swedes took his body and burnt it at a river called Skytaa, where a [standing stone](#) was raised over him.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

# Visbur

In [Scandinavian mythology](#), **Visbur** was a king of the [House of Ynglings](#) and the [son of Vanlandi](#). He was burned to death inside his [hall](#) by the [arson](#) of two of his own sons in revenge for rejecting their mother and denying them their heritage. He was succeeded by his [son Domaldi](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote of Visbur in his *[Ynglinga saga](#)* (1225):

Visburr tok arf eptir Vanlanda födur sinn; hann gékk at eiga dottur Auda hins audga ok gaf henni at mundi trja storbœi ok gullmen. Tau attu 2 sonu, Gisl ok Öndur. En Visburr lét hana eina ok fékk annarrar konu; en hon for til födur sins med sonu sina. Visbur atti son er Domaldi hét; stjúpmodir Domalda lét sida at honum úgæfu. En er synir Visburs varu 12 vetra ok 13, foru teir a fund hans ok heimtu mund modur sinnar, en hann vildi eigi gjalda. Ta mæltu teir, at gullmenit skyldi verda at bana hinum bezta manni i ætt hans, ok foru i brott ok heim. Ta var enn fengit at seid ok sidit til tess, at teir skyldu mega drepa födur sinn. Ta sagdi Huldr völvu teim, at hon mundi sva sida, ok tat med, at ættvig skyldu avalt vera i ætt teirra Ynglinga sidan. Teir jattu því. Eptir tat sömnudu teir lidi, ok komu at Visbur um nött a úvart ok brendu hann inni.<sup>[1]</sup>

Visbur succeeded his father Vanlande. He married the daughter of [Aude the Rich](#), and gave her as her bride-gift three large farms, and a gold ornament. They had two sons, Gisle and Ond; but Visbur left her and took another wife, whereupon she went home to her father with her two sons. Visbur had a son who was called Domald, and his stepmother used [witchcraft](#) to give him ill-luck. Now, when Visbur's sons were the one twelve and the other thirteen years of age, they went to their father's place, and desired to have their mother's dower; but he would not deliver it to them. Then they said that the gold ornament should be the death of the best man in all his race, and they returned home. Then they began again with enchantments and witchcraft, to try if they could destroy their father. The [sorceress Huld](#) said that by witchcraft she could bring it about by this means, that a murderer of his own kin should never be wanting in the Yngling race; and they agreed to have it so. Thereafter they collected men, came unexpectedly in the night on Visbur, and burned him in his house.

The *[Historia Norwegiæ](#)* presents a Latin summary of *Ynglingatal*, older than Snorri's quotation:

Hic [Wanlanda] genuit Wisbur, quem filii sui cum omni curia sua, ut citius hærenditarentur, vivum incenderunt. Cujus filium Domald [...]<sup>[8]</sup>

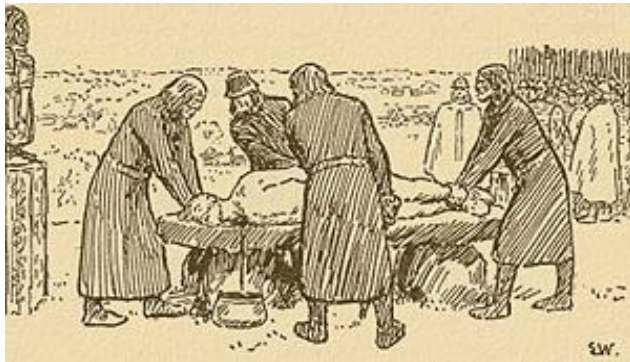
He [\[Vanlande\]](#) was the father of [Visbur](#), whose sons burnt him alive with all his hirdsmen, so that they might attain their inheritance more swiftly. His son was Domalde



# Domalde

In Norse mythology **Domalde**, *Domaldi* or *Domaldr* was a Swedish king of the House of Ynglings, cursed by his stepmother, according to Snorri Sturluson, with *osgæssa*, "ill-luck". He was the son of Visbur.

The luck of the king is the luck of the land, and Domalde's rule was marked by bad crops and starvation. The first autumn, the Swedes sacrificed oxen at the temple at Uppsala, but the next harvest was not better. The second autumn, they sacrificed men, but the following crops were even worse.



*The sacrifice of Domalde by Halfdan Egedius*

The third year many Swedes arrived at Gamla Uppsala at the Thing of all Swedes and the chiefs decided they had to sacrifice the king. They sprinkled the statues of the gods with his blood and the good harvests returned.

He was succeeded by his son Domar whose reign was prosperous.

Snorri Sturluson wrote of Domalde in his *Ynglinga saga* (1225):

Domaldi tok arf eptir födur sinn Visbur, ok réð löndum. A hans dögum gerdist i Svitjod sultr mikill ok seyra. Ta efldu Sviar blotu stor at Uppsölum; hit fyrsta haust blotudu teir yxnum, ok batnadi ekki arferd at heldr. En annat haust hofu teir mannblot, en arferd var söm eda verri. En hit tridja haust komu Sviar fjölment til Uppsala, ta er blot skyldu vera. Ta attu höfdingjar radagerd sina; ok kom tat asamt med teim, at hallærit mundi standa af Domalda konungi teirra, ok tat med, at teir skyldu honum blota til ars sér, ok veita honum atgöngu ok drepa hann, ok rjoda stalla med blodi hans. Ok sva gerdu teir.<sup>[2]</sup>

Domald took the heritage after his father Visbur, and ruled over the land. As in his time there was great famine and distress, the Swedes made great offerings of sacrifice at Upsal. The first autumn they sacrificed oxen, but the succeeding season was not improved thereby. The following autumn they sacrificed men, but the succeeding year was rather worse. The third autumn, when the offer of sacrifices should begin, a great multitude of Swedes came to Upsal; and now the chiefs held consultations with each other, and all agreed that the times of scarcity were on account of their king Domald, and they resolved to offer him for good seasons, and to assault and kill him, and sprinkle the stalls of the gods with his blood. And they did so.

The *Historia Norwegiæ* presents a summary of *Ynglingatal*, older than Snorri's quotation:

Cujus [Wisbur] filium Domald Sweones suspendentes pro fertilitate frugum deæ Cereri hostiam obtulerunt. Iste genuit Domar [...]<sup>[9]</sup>

His [Visbur] son Domalde was hanged by the Swedes as a sacrificial offering to Ceres to ensure the fruitfulness of the crops. Domalde begot Domar

# Domar

In [Norse mythology](#), the [Swedish](#) king **Domar** of the [House of Ynglings](#) was the [son of Domalde](#). He was [married to Drott](#), the sister of [Dan](#) the Arrogant who gave his names to the Danes. Drott and Dan are in this work said to be the children of [Danp son of Rig](#).

His rule lasted long and after the sacrifice of his [father Domalde](#), the crops were plentiful and peace reigned. Consequently there is not much to tell about his reign, and when he died at [Uppsala](#), he was transported over the Fyris Wolds ([Fyrisvellir](#)) and burnt on the banks of the river, where a stone was raised over his ashes.

He was succeeded by his [son Dyggvi](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote of Domar in his *[Ynglinga saga](#)* (1225):

Domarr hét sonr Domalda, er tar næst réd ríki; hann réd lengi fyrir löndum, ok var ta god arferd ok fridr um hans daga. Fra honum er ekki sagt annat, en hann vard sottedaur at Uppsölum, ok var færdr a Fyrisvöllu ok brendr tar a arbakkanum, ok eru tar bautasteinar hans.<sup>[1]</sup>

Domald's son, called Domar, next ruled over the land. He reigned long, and in his days were good seasons and peace. Nothing is told of him but that he died in his bed in [Upsal](#), and was transported to the [Fyrisvold](#), where his body was burned on the river bank, and where his [standing stone](#) still remains.<sup>[2][3]</sup>

The information about Domar's marriage appears after Snorri has presented Domar's son Dyggvi (Danish tongue refers to the [Old Norse](#) language as a whole and not only to the dialect of Denmark):

Modir Dyggva var Drott, dottir Danps konungs, sonar Rígs, er fyrstr var konungr kalladr a danska tungu; hans ættmenn höfdu avalt sidan konungsnafn fyrir hit æzta tignarnafn. Dyggvi var fyrstr konungr kalladr sinna ættmanna; en adr varu teir drottmar kalladir, en konur teirra drottningar, en drott hirsveitin. En Yngvi eda Ynguni var kalladr hverr teirra ættmanna alla ævi, en Ynglingar allir saman. Drott drottning var systir Dans konungs hins mikillata, er Danmörk er vid kend.<sup>[4]</sup>

Dygve's mother was [Drott](#), a daughter of King Danp, the son of [Rig](#), who was first called "king" in the Danish tongue. His descendants always afterwards considered the title of king the title of highest dignity. Dygve was the first of his family to be called king, for his predecessors had been called "Drottmar", and their wives "Drottningar", and their court "Drott". Each of their race was called Yngve, or Yngune, and the whole race together Ynglinger. The Queen Drott was a sister of King [Dan Mikillati](#), from whom [Denmark](#) took its name.<sup>[5][6]</sup>



# Fornjot

**Fornjot** (Old Norse *Fornjotr*) is an ancient giant in Norse mythology, the father of Kari (a personification of wind), of Logi (a personification of fire), and of Hler or Aegir (the ruler of the sea) and a king of Finland. The meaning of the name is not clear, It might possibly be from *for* 'old' + *jótr* 'Jutlander' or more likely 'giant' (Finnish 'jätti', Norse 'jotunn' - giant) or might be from *for* 'early' + *njótr* 'destroyer'. Fornjot is also, following a particular legendary genealogical tradition, the first-known direct paternal ancestor of William I of England and also through other supposed descendants a terminal ancestor of ascending branches of many European noble families and modern Icelandic families.

## *Fornjot in the texts*

Fornjot is mentioned only twice in old verse: in stanza 29 of *Ynglingatal* where "son of Fornjot" seems to refer to fire and in a citation in Snorri Sturluson's *Skáldskaparmál*:

How should the wind be periphrased? Thus: call it son of Fornjot, Brother of the Sea and of Fire, Scathe or Ruin or Hound or Wolf of the Wood or of the Sail or of the Rigging.

Thus spake Svein in the *Nordrsetu-drápa*:

First began to fly  
Fornjot's sons ill-shapen.

Fornjot is listed as a giant (*jötun*) in one of the *thulur* sometimes included in editions of the *Skáldskaparmál*. This is as expected, since Fornjot's son Aegir is also identified as a giant in various sources.

In the *Orkneyinga saga* and in *Hversu Noregr byggdist* ('How Norway was settled')—both found in the *Flatey Book*—Fornjot appears as an ancient ruler of Finland, Kvenland and Gotland. He is the father of three sons named Aegir or Hler, Logi 'flame', and Kari. The *Hversu* account says further that Hler ruled over the seas, Logi over fire, and Kari over wind.

# Aegir

In Norse Mythology, Aegir and his daughters brew ale in a large pot.

**Aegir** (Old Norse "sea") is a jötunn and a king of the sea in Norse mythology. He seems to be a personification of the power of the ocean. He was also known for hosting elaborate parties for the gods. In Snorri Sturluson's *Skaldskaparmal*, Aegir is identified with Gymir and Hler who lived on the isle of Hlésey. The prose header of *Lokasenna* states that his hall is a place of sanctuary lit with bright gold and where the beer pours itself.



While many versions of myths portray him as a jötunn, it is curious that many do not. In some texts, he is referred to as something older than the jotun, and his origins are not really explained. **Gymir**, it may be noticed, is also the name of the giant father of the beautiful maiden Gerdr (the wife of Freyr) as well as the husband of Aurboda. Another link between the Aegir and the sea giants is found in Hymir, who is said in *Hymiskvida* to be the father of Týr.

Aegir is said to have had nine daughters with his wife, Ran. His daughters were called the billow maidens. They were named Bara (or Dröfn), Blodughadda, Bylgja, Dúfa, Hefring, Himinglæva, Hrönn, Kolga, and Unnr, each name reflecting a different characteristic of ocean waves. Snorri lists them twice in *Skaldskaparmal* but in one instance he replaces Bara with Dröfn.

Aegir is a son of Fornjotr, a giant and a king of Finland, and brother of Logi (fire, flame) and Kari (wind). In *Lokasenna*, he hosts a party for the gods where he provides the ale brewed in an enormous pot or cauldron provided by Thor. The story of Thor getting the pot for the brewing is told in *Hymiskvida*. Aegir had two servants, Fimafeng (killed by Loki) and Eldir.

# Gerdr

*Skirnir* tries to woo Gerdr for *Freyr* as depicted by Harry George Theaker (1920).



*Frigg*, these other three being among those whom Snorri Sturluson elsewhere relates that Odin had bedded.

**Gerdr** is a *jötunn* in Norse Mythology most well known as the wife of the Norse god *Freyr*. She is the most beautiful of all creatures and may have been a personification of soil fertility. Her brilliant, naked arms illuminated air and sea. Gerdr is daughter of *Gymir* and *Aurboda*, and also has a brother named *Beli* who is leader of the Barking Giants.

## Poetic Edda

The account of her wooing is given in the poem *Skirnismal*. Gerdr initially rejected marriage to Freyr, refusing his proposals (delivered through *Skirnir*, his messenger) even after bringing her eleven golden apples and the multiplying ring *Draupnir*. Skirnir finally threatens to use Freyr's sword to cover the earth in ice and she agreed to marry Freyr.

## Prose Edda

In *Skaldskaparmal* Gerdr is named along with *Jörd*, *Rind*, and *Gunnlöd* as rivals of *Odin*'s wife

*"Skirnir's Message to Gerdr"* (1908) by *W. G. Collingwood*.

According to the *Ynglinga saga* she was the mother of Freyr's son *Fjölfnir* who succeeded Freyr as ruler of Sweden



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loki>

# Loki

*Loke och Sigyn (1863) by [Mårten Eskil Winge](#).*



**Loki** or **Loke** is a god or [giant](#) in [Norse mythology](#). The 13th century [Icelandic Poetic Edda](#) and [Prose Edda](#), two of the very few sources of information regarding the figure, inconsistently place him among the [Aesir](#), as his blood-brotherhood makes him a member of [Odin's](#) family. Although Loki is frequently mentioned in 13th century Icelandic sources, scholars generally believe that it is unlikely that he was ever worshipped. Loki is depicted in both the *Poetic Edda* and *Prose Edda* as the husband of the goddess [Sigyn](#).

In the Eddas, Loki is described as a son of [Farbauti](#) and in the *Prose Edda* as also a son of [Laufey](#), Loki also had two brothers ([Helbindi](#) & [Byleist](#)) of whom nothing is known. Loki is introduced in the *Prose Edda* as the "contriver of all fraud". Tales regarding Loki in these sources often feature Loki mixing freely with the gods

for a long time, even becoming [Odin's blood brother](#) before arranging the accidental murder of [Baldr](#) by [Hödr](#) in the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*. After Baldr's death, the [Aesir](#) restrain Loki with the [entrails](#) of his son [Narfi](#). He is eventually freed and fights alongside the [Jotun](#) against the forces of the Aesir at [Ragnarök](#).

Loki is the son of [Fárbauti](#) and [Laufey](#), and the brother of [Helblindi](#) and [Býleistr](#). By the jötnunn [Angrboða](#), Loki is the father of [Hel](#), the wolf [Fenrir](#), and the world serpent [Jörmungandr](#). By Sigyn, Loki is the father of [Nari](#) and/or [Narfi](#). By the stallion [Svaðilfari](#), Loki is the mother of the eight-legged horse [Sleipnir](#).

*"Loki and Idun" (1911) by [John Bauer](#).*



Loki is an adept [shape-shifter](#), with the ability to change both form (examples include transmogrification to a [salmon](#), [horse](#) etc.) and [sex](#) (he turned into a woman to trick [Frigg](#) to learn Baldr's weakness). But he had to borrow [Freyja's](#) cloak whenever he wanted to change into bird form.

In the Eddic depictions Loki mainly plays the role of a villain: a coward (when he was captured by a giant, he begged for his life and promised to give him the goddess [Idun](#)), liar, cheater (he tricked Idun into being captured by the giant and only went to save her when threatened by the gods), thief (he stole [Sif's](#) hair and stole various things from the giants; he also stole [Freyja's](#) necklace and

got beaten by Heimdall who was sent by Freyja to get the necklace back), and as a murderer (he killed the god [Baldur](#) by tricking his blind brother Hödr into using a projectile made of mistletoe).

## Children

Loki was the father (and, in more than one instance, the mother) of many beasts, humans and [monsters](#).

Relationships with giantesses is nothing unusual for gods in Norse mythology; Odin, [Thor](#), [Njördr](#), [Freyr](#) are good examples; and since Loki was actually a giant himself, there is nothing unusual about this activity. Together with [Angrboda](#), he had three children:

- [Fenrir](#) the giant [wolf](#) preordained to slay Odin at the time of [Ragnarök](#);
- [Jörmungandr](#), the great [sea serpent](#);
- [Hel](#), ruler of the realm of the dead.

Loki also married a goddess named [Sigyn](#) who bore him two sons: [Narfi](#) and [Vali](#). (This Vali is not to be confused with Odin's son with the giantess Rind and sometimes his name is Nari). To punish Loki for his part in Baldr's death, Odin turned Vali into a rabid wolf who proceeded to tear Narfi's throat out. Narfi's entrails were used to chain Loki to a large rock until Ragnarok.

While he was in the form of a [mare](#) Loki mated with the stallion [Svadilfari](#) and gave birth to [Sleipnir](#), the eight-legged steed of [Odin](#). One story in [Hyndluljóð](#) states that Loki ate the heart of a woman and proceeded to give birth to a monster whose name is not given.

## Cooperation with the gods

Loki occasionally works with the other gods and goddesses. For example, he tricked the unnamed [giant](#) who built the walls around [Asgard](#) out of being paid for his work by distracting his horse while disguised as a mare = thereby he became the *mother* of Odin's eight-legged horse [Sleipnir](#) (although Loki is the one who gave ill advice to the gods in the first place).

In another myth, after Thor threatened to crush all his bones for cutting off Sif's hair, Loki pits the dwarves against each other in a gifting contest. The dwarves make [Odin's spear](#), [Freyr's ship](#) and [Sif's](#) new hair. He even rescues [Idunn](#) after he gave her to a giant, but only after being cornered and threatened with death by the gods. Finally, in [Trymskvida](#), Loki manages, with [Thor](#) dressed as a bride at his side, to retrieve [Mjolnir](#) after the giant [Trymr](#) secretly steals it, in order to ask for [Freyja](#) as a bride in exchange.

Even though Loki may have been a liability to gods (leading to the death of Baldr, the birth of [Fenrir](#) and other monsters that would eventually engulf the world), his pranks ultimately provided the gods with all their most precious items, including Thor's hammer.



## Slayer of Baldr

Disguised as a giantess, Loki arranged the murder of [Baldr](#). He used [mistletoe](#), the only plant which had not sworn never to harm Baldr (in some versions it was deemed unimportant and harmless, and in others it was deemed too young to make an oath), and made a dart of it, which he tricked Baldr's blind brother [Hödr](#) into throwing at Baldr, thereby killing him. Another version of the myth, preserved in *Gesta Danorum*, does not mention Loki.

### Baldr



*The god of light, joy, purity, beauty, innocence, and reconciliation. Son of Odin and Frigg, he was loved by both gods and men and was considered to be the best of the gods. He had a good character, was friendly, wise and eloquent, although he had little power.*

*His wife was Nanna daughter of Nep, and their son was Forseti, the god of justice. Balder's hall was Breidablik ("broad splendor"). Nanna is linked with the Sumerian goddess [Inanna](#).*

Loki, in the shape of a giantess named [Tökk](#) refused to weep for Baldr.

## Binding and Ragnarök

*"Loki and Sigyn" (1901) by Johannes Gehrts.*



The murder of Baldr was not left unpunished, and eventually the gods tracked down Loki, who was hiding in a pool at the base of Franang's Falls in the shape of a salmon. There they caught Loki with a fishing net. They also hunted down Loki's two children with [Sigyn](#), [Narfi](#) and [Vali](#). They changed

[Vali](#) into a wolf, and he then turned against his brother and killed him. They used Narfi's entrails to bind Loki to [three](#) slabs of stone, and [Skadi](#) placed a snake above his head so that its venom would pour onto him. Sigyn sits beside him and collects the venom in a wooden bowl, but she has to empty the bowl when it fills up, during which time the searing venom drips onto Loki's face. The pain is then so terrible that he writhes, making the earth shake.

Baldr's murder was also one of the events that precipitated [Ragnarök](#). Loki would stay bound until then. When Ragnarök finally comes and Loki is freed by the trembling earth, he will sail to [Vigrid](#) from the north on a ship that also bears [Hel](#) and all those from [her realm](#). Once on the battlefield, he will meet [Heimdall](#). They will fight and kill each other.

## ***Archaeological record***

Two known depictions of Loki have survived into modern times.

### **Kirkby Stephen stone**

A 10th century depiction that is often interpreted as Loki exists in the parish church of [Kirkby Stephen, England](#). The figure is bound with irons and horned. The legendary character Loki is presumed to have been brought to England by Norse settlers in the region.

### **Snaptun stone**



*The "Snaptun stone" features a depiction of Loki with a curled mustache and scarred lips from 1,000 AD.*

On a spring day in [1950](#), a semi-circular flat [hearth](#) stone bearing a depiction of Loki was discovered on a beach near Snaptun, [Denmark](#). Made of [soap stone](#), the depiction was carved around the year [1000 AD](#). The depiction features a curled mustache. The figure is identified as Loki due to the seemingly scarred lips, a reference to a story recorded in [Skaldskaparmál](#). The stone is on display at the [Moesgaard Museum](#) near [Aarhus](#), Denmark.

*The Kirkby Stephen stone.*





# Sigyn

**Sigyn** (Old Norse "victorious girl-friend"<sup>[1]</sup>) is a [goddess](#) and wife of [Loki](#) in [Norse mythology](#). Sigyn is attested in the *[Poetic Edda](#)*, compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources, and the *[Prose Edda](#)*, written in the 13th century by [Snorri Sturluson](#). In the *Poetic Edda*, little information is provided about Sigyn other than her role in assisting Loki during his captivity. In the *Prose Edda*, her role in helping her husband through his time spent in bondage is stated again, she appears in various kennings, and her status as a goddess is twice stated. Sigyn may appear on the [Gosforth Cross](#) and has been the subject of an amount of theory and cultural references.



*"Loki and Sigyn" (1810) by Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg*

Sigyn appears in the books *[Gylfaginning](#)* and *[Skaldskaparmál](#)* in the *Prose Edda*. There, she is introduced as the wife of Loki, and that they have a son by the name of "Nari or Narfi". Sigyn is mentioned again in *Gylfaginning*. Here, the gods have captured Loki and his two sons, whom are stated as [Vali](#), described as a son of Loki, and "Nari or Narfi", the latter earlier described as also a son of Sigyn. Vali is changed into a wolf by the gods, and rips apart his brother "Nari or Narfi". The guts of "Nari or Narfi" are then used to tie Loki to [three](#) stones, after which

the guts turn to iron, and Skadi places a snake above Loki. Sigyn places herself beside him, where she holds out a bowl to catch the dripping venom. However, when the bowl becomes full, she leaves to pour out the venom. As a result, Loki is again described as shaking so violently that the planet shakes, and this process repeats until the events of [Ragnarök](#).

The mid-11th century [Gosforth Cross](#) located in [Cumbria, England](#) has been interpreted as featuring various figures from Norse mythology. The bottom portion of the west side of the cross features a depiction of a long-haired female, kneeling figure holding an object above another prostrate, bound figure. Above and to their left is a knotted serpent. This has been interpreted as Sigyn soothing the bound Loki.



*"Loki Bound (motive from the Gosforth Cross)" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood.*

# Narfi

**Narfi** in [Norse mythology](#) may refer to the son of [Loki](#) or the father of [Nott](#), the personified night.

## *Son of Loki*

In the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*, Narfi, also known as Nari or Narvi, is a son of [Loki](#) and [Sigyn](#) who is killed to punish Loki for his crimes. The gods turned his brother [Vali](#) into a slaving [wolf](#) who tears Narfi's [throat](#) out. His [entrails](#) are then used to bind Loki to a stone slab until [Ragnarök](#).

However, in the *Poetic Edda* book *Lokesenna*, the guts of Nari are used to bind Loki while Vali is turned into a wolf. Thus it is not generally clear to scholars whether Nari and Narfi are the same, or if Vali is another name for Nari or Narfi.

## *Father of Nott*

According to the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*, "Nörfi or Narfi" is also the father of Nott. It is not made clear by Snorri in the passage whether or not this is the same Narfi, son of Loki. However, in the *Poetic Edda*, Nott's father is called Nörr.

# Nott

*Nott rides her horse in this 19th century painting by Peter Nicolai Arbo.*



In Norse mythology, **Nott** (Old Norse "night") is night personified. Nott, personified, is attested in the *Poetic Edda*, compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources, and the *Prose Edda*, written in the 13th century by Snorri Sturluson. In both sources, Nott is listed as the daughter of a figure by the name of Nörvi and is associated with the horse Hrímfaxi, while the *Prose Edda* features information about Nott's ancestry, including her three marriages. Nott's third marriage was with the god Delligr and this resulted in their son Dagr, the personified day. In the *Vaftrúdnismál*, Odin states that the horse Hrímfaxi "draws every night to the beneficent gods" and that he lets foam from his bit fall every morning, from which dew comes to the valleys.

## Prose Edda

In the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*, Nott is again personified. In chapter 10, the enthroned figure of High states that Nott is the daughter of a jötnunn from Jötunheimr by the name of "Norfi or Narfi". Nott is described as "black and swarthy", and has had three marriages. Her first marriage was with Naglfari, and the two produced a son by the name of Audr. Nott's second marriage was to Annar, resulting in their daughter Jörd, the personified earth. Finally, Nott marries the god Delligr, and the couple have Dagr, who takes after his "father's people" in brightness and fairness. Odin took Nott and her son Dagr, placed them into the sky with a chariot and horse each, and they ride around the earth every 24 hours. Nott rides before Dagr, and foam from her horse Hrímfaxi's bit sprinkles the earth.

# Audr

Auðr or Audi the Rich is a character in Norse mythology who is mentioned by Snorri Sturluson. He appears in the *Prose Edda* where he is given as the son of Nótt and Naglfari and in the *Heimskringla* where he is the father of a girl who married a mythological king of Sweden named Visbur. In both cases he is little more than a name in a genealogy and the two names may not even refer to the same character.

Some consider him a king of Finland.

## Rig (Norse god)

*"Rig in Great-grandfather's Cottage" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood*

**Rig** or **Rigr** is the name applied to a [Norse god](#) described as "old and wise, mighty and strong" in the [Eddic poem](#) *Ríghula*. The prose introduction tells that **Rig is another name for [Heimdall](#)**, who is moreover called the father of mankind in *Völuspa*.



Rig wandered through the world and brought into being (apparently by fathering them) the progenitors of the three classes of human beings as conceived by the poet. The youngest of these sons inherited the name "Rig" and in turn his youngest son, Kon the Young or *Kon ung* (*konung* meaning 'king' in Old Norse) also inherited the name or title "Rig". This third Rig was the first true [king](#) and the ultimate founder of the state of royalty as appears in the *Ríghula* and in two other works in connection.

### Ríghula

*Ríghula* tells how Rig happened upon a [farm-hut](#) which was owned by [Ái](#) 'great-grandfather' and [Edda](#) 'great-grandmother'. They offered Rig shelter and poor, rough food for a [meal](#). That night Rig slept between the pair in their bed and then departed. Nine [months](#) later Edda gave [birth](#) to a son who was *svartan* (dark/black in color). They named him Thræl (*thrall*, *serf*, *slave*). Thræl grew up strong but ugly. He married a woman named Thir (slave girl, bondswoman) and they had twelve sons and nine daughters with names mostly suggesting ugliness and squatness. They became the race of serfs.

Travelling further, Rig came across a nice [house](#) where lived a [farmer/craftsman](#), [Áfi](#) "grandfather" with his wife [Amma](#) "grandmother". The [food](#) was good and this couple also let Rig sleep between them. Nine months later, a son, Karl (*churl*, freeman) was born whose face and hair was red. Karl married a

*Heimdall in Rig's shape" by Carl Larsson*



woman named Snör (daughter-in-law) and they had twelve sons and ten daughters with names mostly suggesting a neat appearance or being of good quality. One of the names is *smidr* (smith). These become the ancestors of the lesser farmers and herdsman.

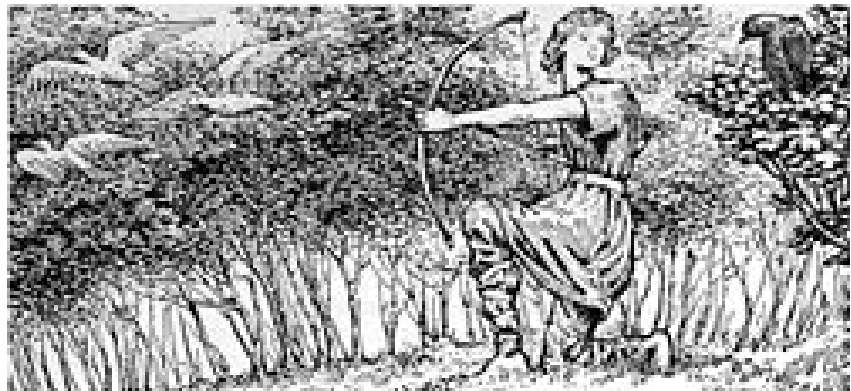
Travelling further, Rig came to a [mansion](#) inhabited by [Fadir](#) (Father) and [Modir](#) (Mother). They gave him excellent food served splendidly and, nine months later, Modir gave birth to a beautiful [baby](#) named [Jarl](#) (earl, noble) whose hair was blond and who was *bleikr* (bright white in color). When Jarl grew up and began to handle weapons and to use hawks, hounds, and horses, Rig reappeared, claimed Jarl as his son, gave Jarl his own name of Rig, made him his heir, taught him [runes](#), and advised him to seek lordship.

Through warfare Jarl became lord of eighteen homesteads with much wealth besides. Jarl also gained the hand of Erna 'Brisk' daughter of *Hersir* 'lord'. Erna bore eleven sons. They became the ancestors of the [warrior](#) nobility.

The youngest son, named Kon, was the best of them. He alone learned rune-craft as well as other magic and was able to understand the speech of birds, to quench fire, and to heal minds.

*"The Crow warns Kon" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood*

One day, when Kon ung was riding through the forest hunting and snaring birds, a crow spoke to him and suggested Kon would win more if he stopped hunting mere birds and rode to battle against foemen, that he should seek the halls of Dan and Danp who were wealthier than he. At that point the poem breaks off.



Rig (Rigus) was a man not the least among the great ones of his time. He married the daughter of a certain Danp, lord of Danpsted, whose name was Dana; and later, having won the royal title for his province, left as his heir his son by Dana, called Dan or Danum, all of whose subjects were called Danes.

The other tradition appears in chapter 20 of the *Ynglinga Saga* section of Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*. The story speaks of King [Dygví](#) of [Sweden](#):

Dygví's mother was Drott, a daughter of King Danp, the son of Rig, who was first called *konungr* in the [Danish tongue](#). His descendants always afterwards considered the title of *konungr* the title of highest dignity. Dygví was the first of his family to be called *konungr*, for his predecessors had been called *drottinn* ['chieftain'], and their wives *drottning*, and their court [drott](#) (war band). Each of their race was called [Yngvi](#), or Ynguni, and the whole race together Ynglingar. Queen Drott was a sister of King Dan Mikillati, from whom [Denmark](#) took its name.



# Dyggvi

**Dyggvi** or **Dyggve** was a [mythological Swedish](#) king of the [House of Ynglings](#). He died in bed and never reached [Valhalla](#). Instead he went to [Hel](#), [Loki](#)'s daughter, who acquired a husband of royal blood. He was succeeded by his [son Dag the Wise](#).

*"Hel" (1882) by [Karl Ehrenberg](#).*



In [Norse mythology](#), **Hel** is a being that presides over a realm of the [same name](#), where she receives a portion of the dead. Hel is referred to as a daughter of [Loki](#), and to "go to Hel" is to die. In the *Prose Edda* book *Gylfaginning*, Hel is described as having been appointed by the god [Odin](#) as ruler of a realm of the same name, located in [Niflheim](#). In the same source, her appearance is described as half-black and half-flesh colored, and as further having a gloomy, down-cast appearance. The *Prose Edda* details that Hel rules over vast mansions, her servants in her underworld realm, and as playing a key role in the attempted resurrection of the god [Baldr](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote of Domar in *Ynglinga saga*

(1225):

Dyggvi hét son hans, er tar næst réd löndum, Dygve was the name of his son, who succeeded him in ok er fra honum ekki sagt annat, en hann varð ruling the land; and about him nothing is said but that he sottdauðr.<sup>[1]</sup> died in his bed.

About Dyggvi's mother Snorri had more to say:

Modir Dyggva var Drott, dottir Danps konungs, sonar Rigs, er fyrstr var konungr kalladr a danska tungu; hans ættmenn höfdu avalt sidan konungsnafn fyrir hit æzta tignarnafn. Dyggvi var fyrstr konungr kalladr sinna ættmanna; en adr varu teir drottnar kalladir, en konur teirra drottningar, en drott hirdsveitin. En Yngvi eda Ynguni var kalladr hverr teirra ættmanna alla ævi, en Ynglingar allir saman. Drott drottning var systir Dans konungs hins mikillata, er Danmörk er vid kend.<sup>[4]</sup>

[Dygve's mother was Drott](#), a daughter of King Danp, the son of [Rig](#), who was first called "king" in the Danish tongue. His descendants always afterwards considered the title of king the title of highest dignity. Dygve was the first of his family to be called king, for his predecessors had been called "Drottnar", and their wives "Drottningar", and their court "Drott". Each of their race was called Yngve, or Yngune, and the whole race together Ynglingar. The Queen Drott was a sister of King [Dan Mikillati](#), from whom [Denmark](#) a took its name.

The *Historia Norwegiae* presents a Latin summary of *Ynglingatal*, older than Snorri's quotation:

Hujus [Domar] filius Dyggvi item in eadem regione vitæ metam invenit. Cui successit in regnum filius ejus Dagr [...]<sup>[11]</sup>

Likewise Dyggve, his [Domar's] son, reached the limit of his life in that same region [Sweden]. [His son Dag](#) [...]<sup>[12]</sup>

# Dag the Wise

*Illustration by Gerhard Munthe (1899)*

**Dag the Wise** or **Dagr Spaka** (2nd or 3rd century AD) was a mythological Swedish king of the House of Ynglings. He was the son of Dyggvi, the former king. According to legend, he could understand the speech of birds and had a sparrow that gathered news for him from many lands. When the bird was killed on one of these trips, Dag invaded Reidgotaland in order to avenge it. There he was ambushed by a thrall (slave) and killed.



However, in the *Ynglinga saga*, Snorri Sturluson gives Agne as Dag's son and successor, and the two brothers Alrekr and Eiríkr as his grandsons.

This is what Snorri tells of Dag:

Dagr hét son Dyggva konungs, er konungdom tok eptir hann; hann var madr sva spakr, at hann skildi fugls rödd. Hann atti spörr einn, er honum sagdi mörg tidindi; flaug hann a ymsi lönd. Tat var eitt sinn, at spörrinn flaug a Reidgotaland, a bœ tann, er a Vörva heitir; hann flaug i akr karls ok fékk tar matar. Karl kom tar ok tok upp stein ok laust spörrinn til bana. Dagr konungr vard illa vid, er spörrinn kom eigi heim; gékk hann ta til sonarblots til fréttar, ok fékk tau svör, at spörr hans var drepinn a Vörva. Sidan baud hann út her miklum ok for til Gotlands; en er hann kom a Vörva, gékk hann upp med her sinn ok herjadi: folkit flýði vids vegar undan. Dagr konungr sneri herinum til skipa, er kveldadi, ok hafdi hann drepit mart folk ok mart handtekit. En er teir foru yfir a nökkura, tar sem heitir Skjotansvad eda Vapnavad, ta rann fram or skogi einn verktræll a arbakkann ok skaut heytjúgu i lid teirra, ok kom i höfud konungi skoti; féll hann tegar af hestinum ok fékk bana. I tann tima var sa höfdingi gramr kalladr er herjadi, en hermennirnir gramir.<sup>[5]</sup>

King Dygve's son, called Dag, succeeded to him, and was so wise a man that he understood the language of birds. He had a sparrow which told him much news, and flew to different countries. Once the sparrow flew to Reidgotaland, to a farm called Varva, where he flew into the peasant's corn-field and took his grain. The peasant came up, took a stone, and killed the sparrow. King Dag was ill-pleased that the sparrow did not come home; and as he, in a sacrifice of expiation, inquired after the sparrow, he got the answer that it was killed at Varva. Thereupon he ordered a great army, and went to Gotland; and when he came to Varva he landed with his men and plundered, and the people fled away before him. King Dag returned in the evening to his ships, after having killed many people and taken many prisoners. As they were going across a river at a place called Skjotan's [the Weapon's] Ford, a labouring thrall came running to the river-side, and threw a hay-fork into their troop. It struck the king on the head, so that he fell instantly from his horse and died. In those times the chief who ravaged a country was called Gram, and the men-at-arms under him Gramer.<sup>[6][7]</sup>



# Agne

**Agne**, *Agni*, *Hogne* or *Agni Skjalfarbondi* was a mythological king of [Sweden](#), of the [House of Yngling](#).

*Agne being hanged by his wife Skjalf. Artwork by Hugo Hamilton, 1830*



[Snorri Sturluson](#) relates that he was the son of [Dag the Wise](#), and he was mighty and famous. He was also skilled in many ways.

One summer, he went to [Finland](#) with his army where he pillaged. The Finns gathered a vast host under a chief named [Frosti](#).

A great battle ensued which Agne won and many Finns were killed together with Frosti. Agne then subdued all of Finland with his army, and captured not only great booty but also Frosti's daughter Skjalf and her kinsman [Logi](#).

Agne returned to Sweden and they arrived at [Stocksund \(Stockholm\)](#) where they put up their tent on the side of the river where it is flat. Agne had a [torc](#) which had belonged to Agne's great-great-great-grandfather [Visbur](#) (who, interestingly, was the son of Skjalf's niece Drifa). Although, they were related, Agne married Skjalf who became pregnant with two sons, [Erik](#) and [Arik](#).

Skjalf asked Agne to honour her dead father Frosti with a great feast, which he granted. He invited a great many guests, who gladly arrived to the now even more famous Swedish king. They had a drinking competition in which Agne became very drunk. Skjalf saw her opportunity and asked Agne to take care of Visbur's torc which was around his neck. Agne bound it fast around his neck before he went to sleep.

The king's tent was next to the woods and was under the branches of a tall tree for shade. When Agne was fast asleep, Skjalf took a rope which she attached to the torc. Then she had her men remove the tent, and she threw the rope over a bough. Then she told her men to pull the rope and they hanged Agne avenging Skjalf's father. Skjalf and her men ran to the ships and escaped to Finland, leaving her sons behind.

Agne was buried at the place and it is presently called [Agnafit](#), which is east of the Tauren (the [Old Norse](#) name for [Södertörn](#)) and west of Stocksund.

*Ynglingatal* then gives [Alrekr](#) and [Eiríkr](#) as Agne's successors.

The *Historia Norwegiæ* presents a Latin summary of *Ynglingatal*, older than Snorri's quotation:

Qui [Dagr] genuit Alrik; hunc frater suus Eirikr This man [Dag] engendered Alrek, who was freno percussit ad mortem. Alricr autem genuit beaten to death with a bridle by his brother, Hogna; istum uxor sua juxta locum Agnafit, qui Eirik. Alrek was father to Agne, whose wife nunc Stokholmr dicitur, propriis manibus dispatched him with her own hands by interfecit suspendendo ad arborem cum catena hanging him on a tree with a golden chain aurea. Cujus filius Ingjaldr [...]<sup>[7]</sup> near a place called Agnafit. His son, Ingjald,

The location indicated by Snorri Sturluson as the place of Agne's death has a barrow called *Agnehögen* (Agne's barrow) in [Lillhersby](#). The barrow was excavated by [Oxenstierna](#) and dated to c. 400.



*Agne's barrow in [Sollentuna](#), [Sweden](#).*

## Alrek and Eirik

*Alrek and Erik fighting*

**Alrek and Eirik** (Old Norse *Alrekr* and *Eiríkr*) were two [legendary kings of Sweden](#).

### *In the Ynglinga saga*

According to the [Ynglinga saga](#), Alrek and Eirik were sons and heirs of the previous king [Agni](#) by his wife Skjalf. They shared the kingship. They were mighty in both war and sports, but were especially skillful horsemen and vied with one another about their horsemanship and their horses.

One day they rode off from their retinue and did not return. They were found dead with their heads battered but no weapons with them save the bridle bits of their horses. Accordingly it was believed that they had quarreled and come to blows and had slain each other with their bridle bits. They were succeeded by [Alrik's sons Yngvi](#) and Alf.



### *In Gesta Danorum*

Erik and Skalk the [Scanian](#) pursued the war and slew Alrik's son Gunthiovus. Then occurred a parley and secret interview between Alrik and Erik in which Alrik attempted to win Erik over to his cause. When this failed, Alrik asked that the war be settled by a single combat between himself and Gestiblandus. Erik refused the offer because of Gestibland's unfitness and advanced years but made a counter-offer to fight such a duel with Alrik himself if Alrik were willing. The fight occurred straightaway. Alrik was slain and Erik seemed to be fatally wounded so that a report actually came to King Frodi that Erik was dead. Indeed Erik was long in recovering. However Frodi was disabused when Erik himself returned announcing that Frodi was now also king of Sweden, Värmland, [Helsingland](#), and [Soleyar](#). Frodi then gave all those lands to Erik to rule directly and also gave Erik the two [Laplunds](#), [Finland](#), and [Estonia](#) as dependencies paying annual tribute.

## Yngvi and Alf

**Yngvi** and **Alf** were two legendary [Swedish](#) kings of the [House of Yngling](#).

*Alf and Yngvi slaying each other*

According to [Ynglingatal](#), [Historia Norwegiae](#) and [Ynglinga saga](#), Yngvi and Alf were the sons of [Alrik](#).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) relates that Yngvi was an accomplished king: a great warrior who always won his battles, the master of all exercises, generous, happy and sociable. He was both loved and famous.

Alf was unsociable and harsh and stayed at home instead of pillaging in other countries. His mother was Dageid, the daughter of king [Dag the Great](#) from whom is descended the [Dagling](#) family. Alf was married to Bera who was happy and alert and a very lovable woman.



One day in the autumn, Yngvi returned to [Uppsala](#) from a very successful Viking expedition which had rendered him famous. He used to spend time at the drinking table until late in the night, like Bera, and they found it pleasant to talk to each other. Alf, however, preferred to go to bed early and he started to tell her to go to bed early as well so that she did not wake him. Then Bera used to answer that Yngvi was much better for a woman than Alf, an answer that was getting on Alf's nerves.

One evening, the jealous Alf entered the hall and saw Yngvi and Bera converse on the high seat. Yngvi had a short sword in his lap and the other guests were too drunk to see that Alf had arrived. From under his cloak Alf drew a sword and pierced Yngvi. Yngvi, mortally wounded, got up, drew his own short sword and slew Alf. They were buried in two mounds on the [Fyrisvellir](#) (Fyris Wolds).

His [Agne's] son, [Ingjald](#), was murdered in Sweden by his own brother because he had brought discredit on the latter's wife, whose name was Bera (Ursa in Latin). After him [his son Jorund](#) ruled.

# Jorund

*Illustration by Gerhard Munthe (1899)*

**Jorund** or **Jörundr** (5th century) was a Swedish king of the House of Yngling. He was the son of Yngvi, and he had reclaimed the throne of Sweden for his dynasty from Haki (the brother of Hagbard, the hero of the legend of Hagbard and Signy).

Snorri Sturluson relates that when Jorund was young he used to travel the seas and plunder with his brother Erik, and they were great warriors. One summer they plundered in Denmark where they met another pillager, King Gudlög of Hålogaland (a province in Norway) with whom they fought. They took him prisoner and carried him ashore at Stromones where they hanged him. Gudlaug's surviving companions raised a mound over him there.



This act rendered the Swedish princes, Eric and Jorund, even more famous and they were thought of as even greater men. When they learnt that King Haki no longer had his forces around him, they decided to take care of their enemy. They assembled a large force that was joined by Swedes as they approached. They entered Mälaren (a bay at the time) and steered towards Uppsala. They left their ships at the Fyris Wolds and were met by Haki who had less men. Haki was a brutal fighter and managed to turn the tide of the battle. He slew Erik who held the banner and Jorund retreated with his men. Luckily, Haki had been seriously wounded and died.

Jorund then ruled Sweden at Uppsala, but he usually spent the summers pillaging. One summer, he plundered in Jutland and entered Limfjorden, where he continued the pillaging. They anchored in Oddesund but were discovered by the Norwegian pirate Gylaug of Hålogaland, the son of Gudlaug. Gylaug and his men attacked them and were joined by local forces who wanted revenge. As Jorund was vastly outnumbered (and had to run an almost 200 km long gauntlet to get out of the fjord), he lost the battle, and Gylaug had him hanged.

The Skjöldunga saga and the Bjarkarimur tell that Jorund was defeated by the Danish king Frodi, who made him a tributary and took his daughter. The daughter gave birth to Halfdan, but another woman became Frodi's legitimate wife and gave him an heir named Ingjaldr. Together with one of his earls, Swerting, Jorund conspired against Frodi and killed him during the blot.



# Aun

**Ane, On, One, Auchun or Aun the Old** (*Audhun*, the same name as the name *Edwin*) was the **son of Jorund** and one of the **Swedish** kings of the **House of Yngling**, the ancestors of **Norway's** first king, **Harald Fairhair**.

Aun was a wise king who sacrificed greatly to the gods, but he was not a warlike king and preferred to live in peace. Consequently, he was attacked by the Danish prince **Halfdan** (the son of **Frodi**, the son of **Dan the Arrogant**, the founder of Denmark). Aun lost the battles and fled to the **Geats** in **Västergötland**, where he stayed for 25 years until Halfdan died in his bed in **Uppsala** and was buried in a **mound**.

King Aun could return to Uppsala, but he was 60 years old. In order to live longer he sacrificed his own son to **Odin** who promised him that he could live for another 60 years. However, after 25 years, Aun was attacked by **Halfdan's** cousin **Ale the Strong**. Aun lost several battles and had to flee a second time to **Västergötland**. Ale the Strong ruled in Uppsala for 25 years until he was killed by **Starkad** the old.

After Ale the Strong's death, Aun could return to Uppsala. Once again, Aun sacrificed a son to Odin, but this time Odin said that he would live as long as he sacrificed a son every ten years and that he had to name one of the Swedish provinces after the number of sons he sacrificed.

When Aun had sacrificed a son for the seventh time, he was so old that he could not walk but had to be carried on a chair. When he had sacrificed a son for the eighth time, he could no longer get out of his bed. When he had sacrificed his ninth son, he was so old that he had to feed by suckling a horn like a little child.

After ten years he wanted to sacrifice his tenth and last son and name the province of Uppsala *the ten lands*. However, the Swedes refused to allow him this sacrifice and so he died. He was buried in a mound at Uppsala and succeeded by his last **son Egil**. From that day, dying in bed of old age was called *Aun's sickness* among the **Scandinavians**.

## Ongentheow (Egil)

**Ongentheow**, (– ca 515) was the name of a semi-legendary Swedish king of the house of Scylfings, who appears in Anglo-Saxon sources. He is generally identified with the Swedish king **Egil** (also Swedish *Egill*, *Egil*) who appears in *Ynglingatal*, *Historia Norwegiae* and in *Ynglinga saga*.

The reason why they are thought to have been the same is that they have the same position in the line of Swedish kings and are described as the fathers of Ohthere and grandfathers of Eadgils.

The epic Beowulf tells that the Geats under their new king Hætcyn captured the Swedish queen, but old king Ongenteow saved her, at a hill fort called Hrefnesholt, although they lost her gold. Ongentheow killed Hætcyn, and besieged the Geats at Hrefnesholt. The Geats were, however, rescued by Hygelac, Hætcyn's brother, who arrived the next day with reinforcements. Having lost the battle, but rescued his queen, Ongenteow and his warriors returned home.

However, the war was not over. Hygelac, the new king of the Geats, attacked the Swedes. The Geatish warriors Eofor and Wulf fought together against the hoary king Ongenteow. Wulf hit Ongentheow's head with his sword so that the old king bled over his hair, but the king hit back and wounded Wulf. Then, Eofor retaliated by cutting through the Swedish king's shield and through his helmet, giving Ongentheow a death-blow. Eofor took the Swedish king's helmet, sword and breastplate and carried them to Hygelac. When they came home, Eofor and Wulf were richly awarded, and Eofor was given Hygelac's daughter. Because of this battle, Hygelac is referred to as Ongentheow's slayer.



*Illustration by Gerhard Munthe (1899)*



In *Historia Norwegiae*, he was called Egil Vendelcrow. Egil was killed by a bull during the sacrifices at the Temple at Uppsala.

*A woodcut depicting the Temple at Uppsala as described by Adam of Bremen, including the golden chain around the temple, the well and the tree, from Historia de Gentibus (1555).*

# Ohthere

*Ohthere's grave mound*

**Ohthere**, *Ohtere* or *Ottar Vendelkråka* (ca 515 - ca 530) was a [semi-legendary king of Sweden](#) belonging to the house of [Scylfings](#).

When Othere and his actions are concerned, he is referred to as *Ongenteow's offspring* together with his brother [Onela](#). The section deals with Ohthere and Onela pillaging the [Geats](#) at the death of their king [Hredel](#), restarting the [Swedish-Geatish wars](#):



Ta wæs synn and sacu Sweona and  
Geata,  
ofer wid wæter wroht gemæne,  
here-nid hearda, syddan Hredel swealt,  
odde him Ongenteowes eaferan  
wæran  
frome fyrd-hwate, freode ne woldon  
ofer heafo healdan, ac ymb Hreosna-  
beorh  
eatolne inwit-scear oft gefremedon.<sup>[8]</sup>

There was strife and struggle 'twixt Swede and  
Geat  
o'er the width of waters; war arose,  
hard battle-horror, when Hrethel died,  
and Ongentheow's offspring grew  
strife-keen, bold, nor brooked o'er the seas  
pact of peace, but pushed their hosts  
to harass in hatred by Hreosnabeorh.

Later, it is implied in the poem that Ohthere has died, because his brother Onela is king. Ohthere's sons Eadgils and Eanmund fled to the Geats and the wars began anew.

## ***Scandinavian sources***

*Ynglingatal*, *Ynglinga saga*, *Islendingabok* and *Historia Norvegiae* all present Ottarr as the son of Egill (called [Ongenteow](#) in *Beowulf*) and as the father of Adisl/Adils/athils/Adils ([Eadgils](#)).

According to the latest source, *Ynglinga saga*, Ottarr refused to pay tribute to the Danish king [Frodi](#) for the help that his father had received. Then Frodi sent two men to collect the tribute, but Ottarr answered that the Swedes had never paid tribute to the [Daner](#) and would not begin with him. Frodi then gathered a vast host and looted in Sweden, but the next summer he pillaged in

the east. When Ottarr learnt that Frodi was gone, he sailed to Denmark to plunder in return and went into the [Limfjord](#) where he pillaged in [Vendsyssel](#). Frodi's jarls Vott and Faste attacked Ottarr in the fjord. The battle was even and many men fell, but the Danes were reinforced by the people in the neighbourhood and so the Swedes lost (a version apparently borrowed from the death of Ottarr's predecessor [Jorund](#)). The Danes put Ottarr's dead corpse on a mound to be devoured by wild beasts, and made a wooden crow that they sent to Sweden with the message that the wooden crow was all that Ottarr was worth. After this, Ottarr was called *Vendelcrow*.

### ***Ohthere's barrow***

Ohthere's barrow (Swedish: *Ottarshögen*) is located in [Vendel](#) parish, [Uppland](#), [Sweden](#). The barrow is 5 metres high and 40 metres wide. In the 17th century the barrow was known locally as *Ottarshögen*.

The barrow was excavated in the period 1914-1916. It showed the remains of both a man and a woman, and the finds were worthy of a king. The Swedish archaeologist Sune Lindqvist reported that in its centre there was a wooden vessel with ashes. There were few finds but they were well-preserved. There were some decorative panels similar to those found in the other [Vendel era](#) graves nearby. A comb with a case was found, as well as a golden Roman coin, a [solidus](#), dated to be no later than 477. It had been perforated and was probably used as decoration, but it showed signs of wear and tear and had probably been worn for a longer time.



*Ohthere's mounds*



# Eadgils

**Eadgils**, *Adils*, *Adisl at Uppsölum*, *Athisl*, *Athislus*, *Adhel* was a [semi-legendary king of Sweden](#), who is estimated to have lived during the [6th century](#).

*Beowulf* and [Old Norse](#) sources present him as the [son of Ohthere](#) and as belonging to the ruling [Yngling](#) (Scylding) [clan](#). These sources also deal with his war against [Onela](#), which he won with foreign assistance: in *Beowulf* he gained the throne of Sweden by defeating his uncle [Onela](#) with [Geatish](#) help, and in two Scandinavian sources (*Skaldskaparmál* and *Skjöldunga saga*), he is also helped to defeat Onela in the [Battle on the Ice of Lake Vänern](#), but with Danish help. However, Scandinavian sources mostly deal with his interaction with the [legendary Danish king Hrolfr Kraki](#), and Eadgils is mostly presented in a negative light as a rich and greedy king.

*Eagils pursuing Hrolfr Kraki on the Fyrisvellir*



Yrsa learns of her true father's identity



Eadgils, called *Adillus*, married [Yrsa](#) with whom he had the daughter [Sculda](#). Some years later, the Danish king Helgo ([Halga](#)) attacked Sweden and captured Yrsa, not knowing that she was his own daughter, the result of Helgo raping Olava, the queen of the [Saxons](#). Helgo raped Yrsa as well and took her back to Denmark, where she bore the son Rolfo ([Hroðulf](#)). After a few years, Yrsa's mother, queen Olava, came to visit her and told her that Helgo was her own father. In horror, Yrsa returned to Adillus, leaving her son behind.

## Archaeology

*The mound to the left has been suggested to be the grave where Eadgils was buried. Archaeological finds are consistent with this identification.*



Eadgils was buried in one of the [royal mounds](#) of [Gamla Uppsala](#), and he is believed to be buried in *Adils' Mound*, one of the largest mounds at [Uppsala](#). An excavation in this mound showed that a man was buried there c. 575 on a bear skin with two dogs and rich grave offerings. There were luxurious weapons and other objects, both domestic and imported, show that the buried man was very powerful. These remains include a [Frankish](#) sword adorned with gold and garnets and a board game with Roman pawns of [ivory](#). He was dressed in a costly suit made of Frankish cloth with golden threads, and he wore a belt with a costly buckle.



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yrsa>

## Yrsa

**Yrsa**, *Yrse*, *Yrs* or *Urse* (6th century) was a tragic heroine of Scandinavian legend.

*Yrsa falling in love with Helgi, but she does not know that he is her father, by Jenny Nyström (1895).*

She appears in several versions relating to her husband, the Swedish king Eadgils, and/or to her father and rapist/lover/husband Halga (the younger brother of king Hrodgar who received Beowulf) and their son Hrodulf. In the *Ynglinga saga*, Snorri Sturluson describes her personality as follows:

Yrsa was not one of the slave girls, and it was soon observed that she was intelligent, spoke well, and in all respects was well behaved. All people thought well of her, and particularly the king; and at last it came to this that the king celebrated his wedding with her, and Yrsa became queen of Sweden, and was considered an excellent woman.

Learning that Helgi and Yrsa lived happily together, queen Oluf travelled to Denmark to tell her daughter the truth. Yrsa was shocked and although Helgi wanted their relationship to remain as it was, Yrsa insisted on leaving him to live alone. She was later taken by the Swedish king Aðils (Eadgils) as his queen, which made Helgi even unhappier.



Missing Yrsa, Helgi went to Uppsala to fetch her, but was killed by Aðils in battle. Yrsa was naturally upset that the man who was closest to her was killed by her husband, and promised Aðils that his berserkers would all be slain if she could help it. She was no happier in the king's company and she was not interested in making up with him either. Later, when a young Swedish warrior named Svipdag arrived to test his skills, she greatly supported him in his fights with the berserkers who eventually were all slain. Svipdag chose not to remain with king Aðils and instead he sought service with Yrsa's son Hrólfr who had succeeded Helgi as the king of Denmark.

After some time, when Aðils owed Hrólfr not only the gold he had taken from Helgi during the battle, but also tribute for his help fighting king Áli (i.e. Onela of Beowulf) in the Battle on the Ice of Lake Vänern, Hrólfr arrived at Uppsala to gather his tribute. Aðils did his best to stop Hrólfr through different ruses, but had to go away to gather reinforcements. While the Swedish king was gone, Yrsa provided her son with more gold than was due to him. Then she gave Hrólfr and his men twelve of the Swedish king's best horses (Aðils was famous for his well-bred horses), and all the armour and provisions they needed.

Hrólfr took a fond farewell of his mother and departed over the Fyrisvellir. When they saw Aðils and his warriors in pursuit, they spread the gold behind themselves. Aðils saw his precious Sviágrís on the ground and stooped to pick it up with his spear, whereupon Hrólfr cut his back

with his sword and screamed in triumph that he had bent the back of the most powerful man in Sweden.

*Hrólfr Kraki spreading gold to escape the Swedes, by [Jenny Nyström](#) (1895).*



Later, Hrólfr was killed by his brother-in-law Hjörvarðr through treason and when the battle was over Hrólfr's sister the [half-elven Skuld](#) ruled Denmark. Yrsa exacted revenge by sending a large Swedish army ledd by [Vogg](#) who captured Skuld before she could summon her army. Skuld was tortured to death and Hrólfr's daughters took over the rule of Denmark.

In the [Ynglinga saga](#), Snorri relates that King Adils (Eadgils) fought hard battles with the Norwegian king who was called **Áli hin upplenzki**. They fought on the ice of Lake [Vänern](#), where Áli fell and Adils won. Snorri relates that much is told about this event in the saga of the Sköldungs, and that Adils took *Hrafn* (Raven), Áli's horse.

The [Skjöldunga saga](#) is lost but at the end of the 16th century, [Arngrímur Jónsson](#) saved a piece of information from this saga in Latin. He wrote: *There was animosity between king Adils of Sweden and the Norwegian king Áli of Uppland. They decided to fight on the ice of Lake [Vänern](#). Adils won and took his helmet, chainmail and horse.*

*The battle with Onela is remembered in Norse mythology as a battle on horseback. [Vendel era](#) helmet plate.*



The accounts of the Battle on the Ice contain accurate information about this time and the Swedish [Vendel Age](#). This period was characterized by the appearance of mounted warriors who fought on horseback and by the use of boar-crested helmets.

In the Battle on the Ice, the combatants are described as fighting on horseback, although the later [Vikings](#) and [Anglo-Saxons](#) who told of this battle in their legends would fight on foot. Likewise, Onela's helmet is called the *battle-boar* although the boar-crested helmets were long out of use by the time records of the event were written down.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%96sten>

## Eysteinn

**Eysteinn** (d. ca 600) was the **son of Eadgils and Yrsa of Saxony**. He was the father of **Ingvar**.

**Snorri Sturluson** relates that Eysteinn ruled Sweden at the time when **Hrolf Kraki** died in **Lejre**. It was a troubled time when many **seakings** ravaged the Swedish shores. One of those kings was named Sölve and he was from **Jutland**. At this time Sölve was pillaging in the **Baltic Sea** and so he arrived in Lofond (probably the island of **Lovön** or the **Lagunda Hundred**), where Eysteinn was at a feast. It was night-time and Sölve and his men surrounded the house and set it on fire burning everyone inside to death. Then Sölve arrived at Sigtuna (**Old Sigtuna**) and ordered the Swedes to accept him as king. The Swedes refused and gathered an army that fought against Sölve and his men, but they lost after eleven days. The Swedes had to accept him as king for a while until they rebelled and killed him.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ingvar>

## Ingvar

**Ingvar** or **Yngvar Harra**, **Proto-Norse** \**Ingu-Hariz* (d. early **7th century**) was the son of **Östen** and reclaimed the Swedish throne for the **House of Yngling** after the Swedes had rebelled against **Sölvi**.

**Snorri Sturluson** relates in his ***Ynglinga saga*** that King Ingvar, Östen's son, was a great warrior who often spent time patrolling the shores of his kingdom fighting Danes and pirates from the east. King Ingvar finally came to a peace agreement with the Danes and could take care of the **Estonian pirates**.

He consequently started pillaging in **Estonia** in retribution, and one summer he arrived at a place called Stein. The Estonians assembled a great army in the interior and attacked King Ingvar in a great battle. The Estonian forces were too powerful and Ingvar fell and the Swedish forces retreated. Ingvar was buried in a mound at a place called *Stone* or *Hill fort* (at *Steini*) on the shores of Estonia.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anund>

# Anund

*Anund's mound* in Västerås, a grave associated with Anund. 13 meters (42 ft.) tall

**Bröt-Anundr** meaning *trail-blazer Anund* or *Anund the land-clearer*, was a legendary Swedish king of the **House of Yngling** who reigned in the mid-seventh century

In his *Ynglinga saga*, **Snorri Sturluson** relates that Anund succeeded his father **Ingvar** on the Swedish throne, and after his father's wars against Danish vikings and **Estonian** pirates, peace reigned over Sweden and there were good harvests. Anund was a popular king who became very rich, not only because of the peace and the good harvests but also because he avenged his father in Estonia. That country was ravaged far and wide and in the autumn Anund returned with great riches.

In those days Sweden was dominated by vast and uninhabited forests, so Anund started making roads and clearing land and vast districts were settled by Swedes. Consequently he was named *Bröt-Anund*. He made **a house for himself in every district** and used to stay as a guest in many homes.



One autumn, King Anund was travelling between his **halls** and came to a place called *Himinheidr* between two mountains. He was surprised by a landslide which killed him.



*und's mound with a pair of the five ship-outlines visible.*

*The mound is dated by the C-14 method to be from 210-540*

All sources say that Anund was the father of the infamous **Ingjald** ill-ruler.



# Ingjald

*Ingjald centralizing Sweden*

**Ingjaldr hinn** or **Ingjald illråde** was a legendary [Swedish](#) king of the [House of Ynglings](#). Ingjald may have ruled sometime during the [7th century](#), and he was the son of the former king [Anund](#).

## Youth

The *Ynglinga saga* relates that the [viceroy](#) of [Fjädrundaland](#) was named Ingvar and he had two sons, Alf and Agnar, who were of the same age as Ingjald. Svipdag the Blind was the viceroy of [Tiundaland](#), the province of [Uppsala](#) where the [Tings](#) and the [Yule](#) sacrifices were held.



One Midwinter, when Ingjald and Alf were six years old, many people had assembled at [Uppsala](#) for the sacrifices. Alf and Ingjald played, but Ingjald found that he was the weaker boy and became so angry that he almost started to cry. His foster-brother Gautvid led him to his foster-father Svipdag the Blind and told Svipdag about Ingjald's lack of manliness and strength. Svipdag said that it was a shame and the next day he gave Ingjald a roasted wolf's heart to eat. From that day, Ingjald became a very ferocious person and had a bad disposition.

[Anund](#) arranged a marriage for his son Ingjald with [Gauthild](#), the daughter of the [Geatish king Algaut](#), who was the son of [Gautrek](#) the Mild and the grandson of [Gaut](#). Gautrek consented as he believed that Ingjald had inherited his father's disposition. Gauthild's maternal grandfather was [Olof the Sharp-sighted](#), the king of [Närke](#).

## The deceit

When his father Anund had died, Ingjald became the king of Sweden. The kings at [Uppsala](#) were the foremost among the kings of the various provinces since [Odin](#) ruled the country, and they were the supreme chiefs of the other kingdoms since the death of [Agne](#) and Sweden was divided between [Erik](#) and [Alrik](#). The descendants of these two kings had spread, cleared land and settled new territories, until there were several petty kings.

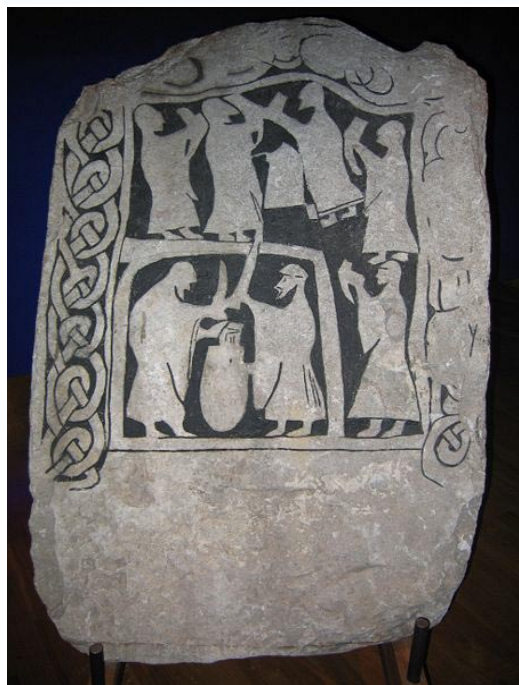
In honour of his own ascendance to the throne, Ingjald invited the kings, the [jarls](#) and other important men to a grand feast in a newly built [hall](#), just as large and sumptuous as the one in Uppsala. It was called the hall of the seven kings and had seven high seats. [Algaut](#) the [Geatish](#)



king of West Götaland, King Ingvar of Fjädrundaland with his two sons Agnar and Alf, King Sporsnjall of Nerike and King Sigvat of Attundaland came but not King Granmar of Södermanland. The kings filled all seven seats but one. All the prominent people of Sweden had seats, except for Ingjald's own court whom he had sent to his old hall in Uppsala.

According to the custom of the time for those who inherited kings and jarls, Ingjald rested at the footstool until the Bragebeaker was brought in. Then he was supposed to stand up, take the beaker and make solemn vows, after which he would ascend his father's high seat. However, when the beaker was brought in, he took a bull's horn and made the solemn vow that he would enlarge his own kingdom by half towards all the four quarters, towards which he pointed his horn, or die.

A drinking scene on an image stone from Gotland



When all the prominent guests were drunk, he ordered Svipdag's sons, Gautvid and Hylvid, to arm themselves and their men and to leave the building. Outside, they set fire to the building which burnt down and those who tried to escape were killed. Thus Ingjald made himself the sole ruler of the domains of the murdered kings.

## Wars

Granmar won allies in his son-in-law the sea-king Hjörvard of the Ylfings and his father-in-law Högne the Geatish king of East Götaland. They successfully withstood Ingjald's invasion where Ingjald realised that the men from the provinces he had conquered were not loyal to him. After a long standstill there was peace for as long as the three kings lived. However, one night Ingjald and his men surrounded a farm where Granmar

and Hjörvard were at a feast and burnt the house down. He later disposed of five more kings, and he thus earned the name *Illråde* (ill-ruler) as he fulfilled his promise.

Snorri Sturluson tells that it was a common saying that Ingjald killed twelve kings by deceiving them that he only wished for peace, and that he thus earned his cognomen *Illråde*.

*Ingjald and his daughter Åsa*

Ingjald had two children, a son Olof Trätälja and a daughter Åsa.



# Olof Trätälja

*Olof Trätälja by Gerhard Munthe.*

**Olaf Tree Feller** (Old Norse: *Olafr trételgja*, Swedish: *Olof Trätälja*, Norwegian: *Olav Tretelgja*) was the son of the Swedish king [Ingjald](#) Ill-ruler of the [House of Yngling](#) according to [Ynglingatal](#).

His mother was [Gauthild](#), a princess of [West Götaland](#), whose maternal grandfather was [Olof the Sharp-sighted](#), the king of [Nerike](#).

His mother sent him to his foster-father Bove in [West Götaland](#), where he grew up with his foster-brother Saxe who was surnamed Flette.



When Olof heard of his father's death, he assembled the men who were willing to follow him and went to his kinsmen in [Nerike](#), because after his father's atrocities, the Swedes had grown hostile towards the [Ynglings](#).

When the Swedes learnt that Olof and his kin had sought refuge in [Nerike](#), they were attacked and had to head west through deep and mountainous forests ([Kilsbergen](#)) to Lake [Vänern](#) and the estuary of [Klarälven](#) (where [Karlstad](#) is presently situated). Here, they settled and cleared land. Soon they had created a whole province called [Värmland](#), where they could make good living.

When the Swedes learnt that Olof was clearing land, they were amused and called him the Tree-feller. Olof married a woman named Solveig who was a daughter of [Halfdan Guld tand](#) of [Soleyar](#). Olof and Solveigh had two sons, [Ingjald Olofsson](#) and [Halfdan Hvitbeinn](#), who were brought up in [Soleyar](#) in the house of his mother's uncle Sölve.

Because of king [Ivar Vidfamne](#) and his harsh rule many Swedes emigrated to [Värmland](#), and they became so numerous that the province could not sustain them. The land was afflicted by famine of which the Swedes accused the king. It was an old tradition in Sweden of holding the king responsible for the wealth of the land (see [Domalde](#)). The Swedes accused Olof of neglecting his sacrifices to the gods and believed that this was the cause of the famine.

The Swedish settlers thus rebelled against Olof, surrounded his house on the shores of lake [Vänern](#) and burnt him inside it. Thus he was sacrificed to [Odin](#), like his ancestor [Domalde](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halfdan\\_Hvitbeinn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halfdan_Hvitbeinn)

# Halfdan Hvitbeinn

**Halfdan Hvitbeinn** (Old Norse: *Halfdan hvitbeinn*) was a mythical petty king in Norway, described in [Ynglinga saga](#). The following description is based on the account in *Ynglinga saga*, written in the 1220s by [Snorri Sturluson](#). The historicity of the kings described in that saga is generally not accepted by modern historians.

He was the son of [Olof Trätälja](#) of the [House of Yngling](#). His father was sacrificed to [Odin](#) by the [Swedish](#) settlers in [Värmland](#) because of a famine. Some Swedes, however, realised that the famine was brought by overpopulation and not by the fact that the king had been neglecting his religious duties.

Consequently, they resolved to cross the [Ed Forest](#) and settle in [Norway](#) and happened to end up in [Soleyar](#) where they killed king [Sölve](#) and took Halfdan prisoner. The Swedish expatriates elected Halfdan king as he was the son of their old king, Olof. Halfdan subjugated all of Soleyar and took his army into [Romerike](#) and subjugated that province as well.

Halfdan was to become a great king, who married Åsa, the daughter of king Eystein, the ruler of [Oppland](#) and [Hedmark](#). They had two sons, [Öystein Halfdansson](#) and [Gudröd](#).

Halfdan conquered a large part of [Hedemark](#), [Toten](#), [Hadeland](#) and a part of [Vestfold](#). When his brother [Ingjald Olofsson](#) died, he inherited [Värmland](#). Halfdan died of old age in [Toten](#) and was transported to Vestfold where he was buried under a mound in [Skiringssal](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eystein\\_Halfdansson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eystein_Halfdansson)

# Eystein Halfdansson

**Eystein Halfdansson** (Old Norse: *Eysteinn Halfdansson*) was the son of [Halfdan Hvitbeinn](#) of the [House of Yngling](#) according to [Heimskringla](#). He inherited the throne of [Romerike](#) and [Vestfold](#).

His wife was Hild, the daughter of the king of [Vestfold](#), Erik Agnarsson. Erik had no son, so Eystein inherited Vestfold.

Eystein died while pillaging in [Varna](#). King Skjöld of Varna, a great [warlock](#), arrived at the beach and saw the sails of Eystein's ships. He waved his cloak and blew into it which caused a boom of one ship to swing and hit Eystein so that he fell overboard and drowned. His body was salvaged and buried in a mound. Eystein was succeeded by his son [Halfdan the Mild](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halfdan\\_the\\_Mild](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halfdan_the_Mild)

## Halfdan the Mild

**Halfdan the Mild** (Old Norse: *Halfdan hinn mildi*) was the son of king [Eystein Halfdansson](#), of the [House of Yngling](#) and he succeeded his father as king, according to [Heimskringla](#). He was king of [Romerike](#) and [Vestfold](#).

He was said to be generous in [gold](#) but to starve his men with food. He was a great warrior who often pillaged and gathered great booty.

His wife was Liv, the daughter of king Dag of [Vestmar](#). Halfdan the Mild died of illness.

He was succeeded by his son, [Gudröd the Hunter](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gudr%C3%B8d\\_the\\_Hunter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gudr%C3%B8d_the_Hunter)

## Gudröd the Hunter

**Gudröd the Hunter** (Norwegian: *Gudröd Veidekonge*) was a semi-legendary king in south-east Norway, during the early [Viking Age](#). He is mentioned in the [skaldic](#) poem *Ynglingatal*. [Snorri Sturluson](#) elaborates on Gudröd's story in *Heimskringla*, written c. 1230; however, this is not considered to be a historical account by modern historians. The following account is taken from *Heimskringla*.

Gudröd was the son of [Halfdan the Mild](#) of the [House of Yngling](#) and [Liv Dagsdotter](#) of [Vestmar](#). He married Alfild, a daughter of Alfarin the king of [Alfheim](#) ([Bohuslän](#)), which was the name of the area between [Glomma](#) and [Göta älv](#), and inherited half the province of [Vingulmark](#). They had a son, [Olaf Gudrødsson](#).

When Alfild died, Gudröd sent his warriors to [Agder](#) and its king, Harald, to propose a marriage with his daughter Åsa. However, Harald declined, so Gudröd decided to take his daughter by force.

They arrived at night. When Harald realised that he was being attacked, he assembled his men and fought well, but died together with his son Gyrd. Gudröd carried away Åsa and married her. He raped her and she gave him a son named Halfdan who would be called [Halfdan the Black](#).

In the fall, when Halfdan was a year old, Gudröd was having at a feast in [Stiflesund](#). He was very drunk and in the evening, as he was walking on the gangway to leave the ship, an assassin thrust a spear through Gudröd, killing him. Gudröd's men instantly killed the assassin, who turned out to be Åsa's page-boy. Åsa admitted that the page-boy had acted on her behalf.

# Åsa Haraldsdottir of Agder

**Åsa Haraldsdottir of Agder** (Floruit 834), was a semi-legendary Norwegian **Viking age Queen regnant** of the kingdom Agder, mother of **Halfdan the Black** and grandmother of **Harald Fairhair**.

Åsa was the daughter of King **Harald Granraude** of **Agder** and a reputed beauty. King **Gudrød the Hunter** of Borre in **Vestfold** proposed marriage to her after the death of his first wife, but her father refused the marriage. Gudrød Veidekonge then killed her father and her brother, abducted her and married her. One year later, she became the mother of **Halfdan the Black**. One year after this, Åsa took her revenge and had her servant kill her husband. She left the kingdom of Borre to her step-son **Olaf Geirstad-Alf** and took her own son with her to the kingdom of Agder, her birth country, where she took power. Åsa ruled Agder for twenty years, and after this she left the throne to her son. He also demanded half of his father's kingdom from his halfbrother.

There are theories that queen Åsa is the woman buried with the famous **Oseberg ship** from 834, but this is not confirmed.

*The Oseberg ship (Viking Ship Museum, Norway)*



The **Oseberg ship** is a well-preserved **Viking ship** discovered in a large **burial mound** at the **Oseberg** farm near **Tønsberg** in **Vestfold** county, **Norway**. The burial mound contained numerous **grave goods** and two female human **skeletons**. The ship's interment into its burial mound dates from 834, but parts of the ship date from around 800, and the ship itself is thought to be older. This ship is widely celebrated and has been called one of the finest finds to have survived the **Viking Age**.

The **skeletons** of two women were found in the grave. One, aged 60-70, suffered badly from **arthritis** and other maladies; the second was aged 25-30. It is not clear which one was the more important in life or whether one was sacrificed to accompany the other in death. The opulence of the burial rite and the grave-goods suggests that this was a burial of very high status. One woman wore a very fine red wool dress with a lozenge twill pattern (a luxury commodity), and a fine white linen veil in a gauze weave, while the other wore plainer blue wool dress with a wool veil, showing some stratification in their social status. Neither woman wore anything entirely made of silk, although small silk strips were **appliqued** onto a tunic worn under the red dress. Analysis of timbers in the grave chamber dates the burial to the autumn of 834. Although the high-ranking woman's identity is unknown, it has been suggested that it is the burial of **Queen Åsa** of the **Ynglinge** clan, mother of **Halfdan the Black** and grandmother of **Harald Fairhair**. There were also the skeletal remains of 14 horses, an ox and three dogs found on the ship as well.

Still, recent tests of the women suggest that they lived in **Agder** in Norway, just as **Queen Åsa** of the **Ynglinge** clan.



# Halfdan the Black

**Halfdan the Black** Gudrödsson (c. 810 – c. 860) (Old Norse: *Halfdan svart*, Norwegian: *Halvdan Svarte*) was the father of the first King of Norway **Harald Fairhair** and belonged to the **House of Yngling**.

Halfdan was the son of King **Gudröd the Hunter**. *Heimskringla* also names his mother, as Åsa, daughter of King Harald of **Agder**, and his half-brother as **Olaf Geirstad-Alf**. *Heimskringla* relates that when Halfdan's father was killed, Åsa took the 1 year-old Halfdan and returned to **Agder**, where Halfdan was raised. When he was 18 or 19 years old, Halfdan became king of Agder. He quickly began adding to his kingdom, through political negotiation and military conquest. He divided the kingdom of **Vestfold** with his brother Olaf and, through military action, persuaded **King Gandalf** of **Vingulmark** to cede half his kingdom.

Next, Halfdan subdued an area called **Raumarike**. To secure his claim to Raumarike, Halfdan first defeated and killed the previous ruler, **Sigtryg Eysteinsson**, in battle. He then defeated Sigtryg's brother and successor **Eystein**, in a series of battles. This established Halfdan's claim not only to Raumarike, but also to half of **Hedmark**, the core of Sigtryg and Eystein's kingdom.

Halfdan's first wife was Ragnhild, daughter of King **Harald Gulskeg** (Goldbeard) of **Sogn**. Halfdan and Ragnhild had a son named "Harald" after his grandfather, and they sent him to be raised at his grandfather's court. Harald Gulskeg, being elderly, named his grandson as his successor, shortly before his death. Ragnhild died shortly after her father, and the young king Harald fell sick and died the next spring. When Halfdan heard about his son's death, he travelled to Sogn and laid claim to the title of king.

Halfdan's second wife was also named Ragnhild. **Ragnhild Sigurdsdotter** was the daughter of **Sigurd Hjort**, king of **Ringerike**. She was kidnapped from her home by Hake, a "**berserker**" who encountered her father in **Hadeland** and killed him. In turn, Halfdan had her kidnapped from Hake, so that he could marry her. Ragnhild was the daughter of **Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye**, who in *Heimskringla*'s version is her great-grandfather. Ragnhild and Halfdan had a son who was also named **Harald**.

Halfdan drowned when he fell through the ice of lake **Randsfjorden** on his return home from Hadeland. He was buried in a mound at Stein in **Ringerike**. *Heimskringla*'s narrative adds that each of the districts of his kingdom wanted to claim his grave, and that it was agreed to divide his body into four pieces so each district could bury a piece of it, resulting in four different **Halfdan's Mounds**. According to this version, only his head is buried in Ringerike.

# Ragnhild Sigurdsdotter

Queen Ragnhild's dream.



**Ragnhild Sigurdsdotter** was the daughter of [Sigurd Hart](#) of the [Dagling clan](#)

## Family

According to the [Ragnarssona þátrr](#), Ragnhild was a daughter of [Sigurd Hart](#) and his wife Ingeborg ("Ingibjorg"). Her paternal grandparents were [Helgi the Sharp](#) and Aslaug. Her maternal grandfather was [Harald Klak](#). The identity of her maternal grandmother is not mentioned. The [Heimskringla](#) changes the name of Harald Klak's daughter but the given lineage remains the same. "Ragnhild's mother was Thorny, a daughter of Klakharald king in Jutland, and a sister of [Thrye Dannebod](#) who was married to the Danish king, [Gorm the Old](#), who then ruled over the Danish dominions."

The "Ragnarssona þátrr" identifies Aslaug as a daughter of [Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye](#) and Blaeja. Aslaug was also a twin sister of [Harthacnut of Denmark](#). Blaeja is earlier identified as a daughter of [Aella of Northumbria](#).

## Life accounts

According to the [Ragnarssona þátrr](#), "Sigurd Hart. Of all the men ever seen, he was the fairest, and the biggest, and the strongest. They were the same age, Gorm Knutsson and Sigurd Hart. When Sigurd was twelve, he killed the [berserk](#) Hildibrand in a duel, and he single-handedly slew twelve men in that fight. After that [Klakk-Harald](#) gave him his daughter, who was called Ingibjorg. They had two children: Gudthorm and Ragnhild."

"Then Sigurd learnt that King Frodi, his father's brother, was dead. He went north to [Norway](#) and became king over [Ringerike](#), his inheritance. There is a long story told of him, as he did all manner of mighty deeds. But it's said of his passing, that he rode out hunting in the wilderness, as was his custom, and Haki Hadaberserk came at him with thirty fully armed men and they fought with him." The name of his opponent means "Haki, [berserker](#) from [Hadeland](#)". Nothing else is mentioned of his past. "Sigurd fell there, after first killing twelve men, but King Haki had lost his right hand and received three other wounds besides. Afterwards Haki and his men rode to Ringerike, to Stein, where Sigurd's dwelling was, and took away Ragnhild his daughter, and his son Gudthorm, and plenty of goods too, and carried them off home with him to Hadeland. And soon after that, he had a great feast prepared and meant to celebrate his wedding, but it was put

off because his wounds weren't healing. Ragnhild was fifteen years old then, and Gudthorm fourteen. Autumn passed, and Haki was laid up with his wounds till [Yule](#)."

"At this time, King [Halfdan the Black](#) was staying at his estate in [Hedmark](#). He sent Harek Gand with a hundred and twenty men, and they marched over the frozen Lake [Mjosa](#) to Hadeland one night and came the next morning to King Haki's home and seized all the doors of the [hall](#) where the retainers were sleeping. And then they went to King Haki's bedroom and took Ragnhild and Gudthorm, her brother, and all the treasure that was there, and carry it off with them. They burnt all the retainers in their hall and then leave. But King Haki got up and got dressed and went after them for a while. But when he came to the ice, he turned down his sword-hilt to the ground and fell on the point and met his death there, and he's buried on the bank of the lake."

"King Halfdan saw them coming over the ice with a covered wagon and guessed their mission had gone exactly as he wished. He had a message sent then to all the settlements and invited to all the important people in Hedmark to a big feast that very day. There he celebrated his wedding to Ragnhild, and they lived together for many years after.

"Ragnhild, who was wise and intelligent, dreamt great dreams. She dreamt, for one, that she was standing out in her herb-garden, and she took a thorn out of her shift; but while she was holding the thorn in her hand it grew so that it became a great tree, one end of which struck itself down into the earth, and it became firmly rooted; and the other end of the tree raised itself so high in the air that she could scarcely see over it, and it became also wonderfully thick. The under part of the tree was red with blood, but the stem upwards was beautifully green and the branches white as snow. There were many and great limbs to the tree, some high up, others low down; and so vast were the tree's branches that they seemed to her to cover all Norway, and even much more."

"Queen Ragnhild gave birth to a son, and water was poured over him, and the name of Harald given him, and he soon grew stout and remarkably handsome. As he grew up he became very expert at all feats, and showed also a good understanding. He was much beloved by his mother, but less so by his father."

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olaf\\_Geirstad-Alf](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olaf_Geirstad-Alf)

# Olaf Geirstad-Alf

**Olaf Gudrødsson**, or as he was named after his death **Olaf Geirstad-Alf**, was a legendary Norwegian king of the [House of Yngling](#) from the [Ynglinga saga](#). He was the son of [Gudrød the Hunter](#) and the brother of [Halfdan the Black](#). Gudrød and Olaf conquered a large part of [Raumarike](#).

Gudrød died when Olaf was twenty years old and he and Halfdan divided their kingdom between them. Olaf took the southern part and resided in Geirstad. They only inherited [Vestfold](#) because Alfgeir took [Vingulmark](#) for himself and made his son [Gandalf Alfgeirsson](#) its king.

The [Ynglinga saga](#) relates that Olaf was a skillful man and a great warrior. He was also handsome, big and strong. He was the father of [Ragnvald the Mountain-High](#). During the reigns of Olaf and Halfdan the Black, [Värmland](#) started to pay tribute to the Swedish king [Erik Anundsson](#) instead.

He died of illness. [Tjodolf of Hvin](#) sang about him:

*Long while this branch of Odin's stem  
Was the stout prop of Norway's realm;  
Long while King Olaf with just pride  
Ruled over Westfold far and wide.  
At length by cruel gout oppressed,  
The good King Olaf sank to rest:  
His body now lies under ground,  
Buried at Geirstad, in the mound.*

After his death, he was worshipped as an [elf](#), and was called the *Geirstad-alf* (the "elf of Geirstad"). A hypothesis identifies Geirstad with Gjerstad near Gokstad, and his burial with the [Gokstad Ship](#).

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gokstad\\_Ship](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gokstad_Ship)



*The Gokstad ship at the [Viking Ship Museum](#) in [Oslo](#), [Norway](#)*

The **Gokstad ship** is a [Viking ship](#) found beneath a [burial mound](#) at Gokstad farm in [Sandar](#), [Sandefjord](#), [Vestfold](#), [Norway](#). Excavation of *Gokstadhaugen* or *Kongshaugen* (from the Old Norse words *kóngr* meaning king and *haugr* meaning mound) revealed a [ship burial](#) dating back to the 9th century. The site was excavated in 1880 by [Nicolay Nicolaysen](#).

Side view of the ship

The Gokstad ship is [clinker-built](#), constructed largely of [oak](#). The ship was not intended for long voyages but for warfare, trade, and transportation of people and cargo. The ship is 23.24 m long and 5.20 m wide. It is the largest in the [Viking Ship Museum](#) in [Oslo](#). The ship was steered by a quarter rudder fastened to a large block of wood attached to the outside of the hull and supported by an extra stout rib. The block is known as the wart, and is fastened by osiers, knotted on the outside passed through both the rudder and wart to be firmly anchored in the ship.



The ship was built to carry 32 oarsmen, and the oar holes could be hatched down when the ship was under sail. It utilized a square sail of c. 110 square meters, which, it is estimated, could propel the ship to over 12 knots. The mast could be raised and lowered. While the ship was traveling in shallow water, the rudder could be raised very quickly by undoing the fastening. [Dendrochronological dating](#) suggests that the ship was built of timber that was felled around 890 AD. The Gokstad ship was commissioned during the reign of [Harald Fairhair](#) at the end of the 9th century. The ship could carry a crew of 40 men but could carry a maximum of 70.

*Gokstad Viking ship excavation. Photographed in 1880*



The ship's design has been demonstrated to be very seaworthy. *The Viking*, an exact replica of the Gokstad ship, crossed the [Atlantic Ocean](#) from [Bergen, Norway](#) to be exhibited at the [World's Columbian Exposition](#) in [Chicago](#) during 1893.

During the excavations, the skeleton of a male aged between 50–70 years was recovered. The skeleton was found in a bed inside a timber-built burial chamber. Although the identity of the person buried is unknown, it has been suggested that it is that of [Olaf Geirstad-Alf](#), a petty king of Vestfold. He was of the [House of Yngling](#), and died about this time, according to the *Heimskringla*.

The grave was furnished with grave goods. Apart from the ship itself, they consisted of three small boats, a tent, a sledge and riding equipment. It is believed that the mound was plundered in ancient times. The excavation in 1880 showed that valuables of gold and silver had been removed. In the Viking period, weapons were considered an important part of a man's grave goods. In the case of the Gokstad ship, any such weapons were probably taken by grave robbers.



*Gokstad ship replica [Viking](#) at the [World's Columbian Exposition](#) Chicago in 1893*

Currently the ship, the reconstructed burial chamber, two of the small boats and two tent boards from the burial chamber are displayed in the [Viking Ship Museum](#) in [Oslo](#).



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N%C3%B3r>

# Nór

**Nór** (Old Norse **Nórr**) or **Nori** is firstly a merchantile title and secondly a Norse man's name. It is in Norse sources stated that Nór is the founder of [Norway](#), from whom the land supposedly got its name. (The name in fact probably derives from *\*norðvegr*, 'the route north')

## About Thorri

King Thorri (*Þorri* 'frozen snow'), king of [Götaland](#), [Finland](#), and [Kvenland](#), was son of Snær ('Snow') the Old, a descendant of Fornjót (ruler of Finland and Kvenland). Both accounts state that great sacrifice was made yearly at mid-winter, either offered by Thorri or offered by the [Kvens](#) to Thorri, whence was derived both the name of the mid-winter sacrifice and the name of the winter month Thorri corresponding to late January and early February in the [Roman calendar](#)..

Thorri was father of two sons named Nór and Gór (*Górr*) and a daughter named Gói ('thin snow, track-snow').

## The story of Nór

One year, at the time of Thorri's Sacrifice, Gói the daughter of King Thorri suddenly vanished. Thorri held a second feast the following month hoping to learn what had become of Gói. That sacrifice was afterward also observed regularly and known as Gói's Sacrifice and the name of the month was thence named Gói.

When Gói was still not found after three years, her brothers Nór and Gór set out separately in search of her with many folk in their following, Nór and his folk going by land on skies while Gór went by ship and searched the islands and skerries.

Eventually Nór and his following came to the Kjölen Mountains (the Keel) and passed into was later to be called Norway, defeating any who opposed him. F relates in particular that Nór defeated the folk around what as later called the [Trondheimsfjord](#), that Nór also took possession of the eastern lands near Lake Mjors, then slew King Sokni, the eponym of Sokna Dale and Sognefjörd and took possession of his kingdom, after a defeat of four kings named Véi, Vei, Hunding, and Heming.

Then, in Heidemark (approximately the modern region of Hedemarken in the more extensive province of [Hedmark](#)), Nór met with King Hrólf of the Hill (*Hrólfur í Bergr*). Hrólf was son of the giant Svadi (*Svaði*) from [Dovre](#) Mountain in the north. Hrólf's mother was Áshild (*Áshildir*) daughter of King Eystein of Heidemark. It was this Hrólf who had taken Gói captive and had then made her his wife. Nór and Hrólf came to terms (after a long single combat). Hrólf kept Gói as his wife and Nór afterwards married Hrólf's sister (called Hödd) and became Nór's man.

Both accounts relate that Górr eventually joined Nórr and the two brothers made an agreement that Nórr would rule the mainland but Górr would rule all islands around the mainland, that he would be lord over any island that was separated from the mainland by a channel through which a ship with a fixed rudder was able to pass. The mainland was then named Norway (*Noregr*) after Nórr. Nórr's new kingdom is now said to have been what is south-eastern Norway today, as it extended from *Jötunheim* mountains in the north to what was later known as *Álfheim* (roughly the modern Swedish *Bohuslän*) in the south, the southern border of Nórr's land being what is now the *Glomma* river whose southwestern course is not very far inside the southeastern border of modern Norway.

The sons and grandsons and later descendants of Nórr continually divided their inheritances among themselves so that Norway became filled with many small kingdoms and lordships.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kvenland>

## Kvenland

**Kvenland**, known as *Cwenland*, *Kænland* or similar in sources, is an ancient name for an area in *Fennoscandia*. Kvenland is only known from an *Old English* account written in the 9th century, and from Icelandic sources written in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Since the 17th century most historians have located Kvenland somewhere around or near the *Bothnian Bay*, in the present-day regions of Swedish *Norrbottnen* and Finnish *Ostrobothnia*. The traditional East Finnish name of this area was *Kainuu*, and it has been suggested that the Scandinavian name of Kvenland and Kainuu share etymological roots.

In spite of the frame being legendary, *Orkneyinga* contains a realistic description of *Nórr* traveling from Kvenland to Norway. Based on saga's chronologies, this would have happened around the 6th or 7th century. Location of Kvenland/Finland/Gotland is given rather exactly:



-- to the east of the gulf that lies across from the White Sea; we call that the *Gulf of Bothnia*.

The saga does not say that Kvenland was on the coast, but just east of the Gulf.

*A possible location of Kvenland and Nórr's route to the fjord of Trondheim. Note that Kvenland can be placed elsewhere east of Gulf of Bothnia as well. The selected location on the map is the one with most archaeological finds. Most interpretations locate Kvenland in the less well researched northern coastal area on the Bothnian Bay.*

This is how Nór started his journey to Norway:

But Nor, his brother, waited until snow lay on the moors so he could travel on snow-shoes. He went out from Kvenland and skirted the Gulf, and came to that place inhabited by the men called Sami (Lapps); that is beyond Finnmark.

Having travelled for a while, Nór was still "beyond Finnmark". After a brief fight with Sami people (Lapps), Nór continued:

But Nor went thence westward to the Kjolen Mountains and for a long time they knew nothing of men, but shot beasts and birds to feed to themselves, until they came to a place where the rivers flowed west of the mountains. -- Then he went up along the valleys that run south of the fjord. That fjord is now called Trondheim.

Starting somewhere on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Bothnia, Nór had either went all the way up and around the Gulf, or skied across - it was winter, and the Gulf might have been frozen. Nór ended up attacking the area around [Trondheim](#) in central Norway and later the lake district in the south, conquering the country and uniting it under his rule. There is no mention of Kvenland after that any more. Again only a handful of words had been reserved for Kvenland mainly telling where it was or had been.

## **Descendants of Nór**

### **Sons of Nór**

Nór's sons by Hödd were Thránd and Gard Another son of Nór was named Raum. Presumably either Raum had another mother than Hödd or Raum's name has accidentally dropped out from the earlier listing of Hödd's sons.

# Halfdan the Old

**Halfdan the Old** (Old Norse *Hálfðanr gamli* and *Hálfðanr inn gamli*) was an ancient, legendary king from whom descended many of the most notable lineages of legend. A second Halfdan the Old is the purported great-grandfather of [Ragnvald Eysteinnsson](#).

## Halfdan and his sons

The *Ættartölur*, the genealogies appended to the *Hversu Noregr byggdist* in the *Flatey Book* introduce Halfdan the Old as the ruler of Ringiríki (a territory including modern [Ringerike](#) and Valdres in [Oppland](#)). Halfdan is here the son of King Hring (eponym of Ringeríki) by the daughter of a sea-king named Vífil (*Vífill*). Hring was son of **Raum the Old** (eponym of [Raumaríki](#)) by Hild (*Hildr*) the daughter Gudröd the Old (*Guðrøðr inn gamli*). Raum the Old was son of Nór (*Nórr*) (the eponym of Norway).

In his sacrifice Halfdan requested a lifetime of 300 years like that of his ancestor **Snær**. The form *Tiggi* appears instead of *Tyggi* in the list of the first nine sons. The list of the second nine sons has Skelfir instead of Yngvi and the form Næfil (*Næfill*) instead of Nefir. The order of the names is the same and it is explained that Hildir, Sigar, and Lofdi were war-kings; Audi, Budli, and Næfil were sea-kings, while Dag, Skelfir, and Bragi remained on their lands.

## Bragnings

Bragi the Old [*Bragi gamli*] was king of Valdres and father of Agnar, father of Álf, father of Eirík (*Eiríkr*), father of Hild (*Hildr*) the mother of Halfdan the Generous, the father of [Gudröd](#) (*Guðrøðr*) the Hunter, father of Halfdan the Black, father of **Harald Fairhair**.

## Skilfings or Skjöldungs

Skilfir was king of Vörs (*Vörs*, modern [Voss](#) in northern [Hordaland](#) in southwestern Norway. Skelfir was father of Skjöld (*Skjöldr*), father of Eirík, father of Alrek (*Alrekr*), father of Eirík the Eloquent, father of Alrek the Bold (*Alrekr inn frækni*), father of Víkar (*Víkarr*), father of Vatnar (*Vatnarr*), father of two sons: Ímald (*Ímaldr*) and Eirík, this Eirik being father of Gyða (*Gyða*) who was one of the wives of **Harald Fairhair**. They were called the Skilfing lineage or Skjöldung lineage. For commentary on this lineage and variant traditions on those listed here as belonging to it see [Scylfing](#) and [Víkar](#).

# Rognvald Eysteinnsson

**Rognvald "The Wise" Eysteinnsson** (son of [Eystein Ivarsson](#)) is the founder of the [Earldom of Orkney](#) in the [Norse Sagas](#). Three quite different accounts of the creation of the [Norse](#) earldom on [Orkney](#) and [Shetland](#) exist. The best known is that found in the *[Heimskringla](#)*, but other older traditions are found in the *[Historia Norvegiae](#)* and the *[Fragmentary Annals of Ireland](#)*.

## Sagas

The saga accounts are the best known, and the latest, of the three surviving traditions concerning Rognvald and the foundation of the Earldom of Orkney. Recorded in the 13th century, their views are informed by [Norwegian](#) politics of the day. Once, historians could write that no-one denied the reality of [Harald Fairhair](#)'s expeditions to the west recounted in *Heimskringla*, but this is no longer the case. The Norwegian contest with the [Kings of Scots](#) over the [Hebrides](#) and the [Isle of Man](#) in the middle 13th century underlies the sagas.

In the *Heimskringla*, Rognvald is Earl of [Møre](#). He accompanies Harald Fairhair on his great expeditions to the west, to [Ireland](#) and to [Scotland](#). Here, Rognvald's son Ivarr is killed. In compensation King Harald grants Rognvald the Orkneys and Shetlands. Rognvald himself returns to [Norway](#), giving the northern isles to his brother [Sigurd Eysteinnsson](#).

The *Heimskringla* recounts other tales of Rognvald. It tells how he causes Harald Finehair to be given his byname Fairhair by cutting and dressing his hair, which had been uncut for ten years on account of Harald's vow never to cut it until he was ruler of all Norway,<sup>[3]</sup> and it makes him the father of Ganger-Hrólf, identified by saga writers with the [Rollo](#) (Hrólf), ancestor of the [Dukes of Normandy](#), who was said to have been established as Count of [Rouen](#) by King [Charles the Simple](#) in 931.

Earl Rognvald is killed by Harald's son Halfdan Hålegg. Rognvald's death is avenged by his son, Earl [Turf-Einar](#), from whom later Orkney earls claimed descent, who kills Halfdan on [North Ronaldsay](#).<sup>[5]</sup>

The *Historia Norvegiae*'s account of Rognvald and the foundation of the Orkney earldom is the next oldest, probably dating from the 12th century. This account contains much curious detail on Orkney, including the earliest account of the [Picts](#) as small people who hid in the daytime, but it has little to say about Rognvald.

In the days of Harald Fairhair, king of Norway, certain pirates, of the family of the most vigorous prince Ronald, set out with a great fleet, and crossed the Solundic sea..., and subdued the islands to themselves. And being there provided with safe winter seats, they went in summer-time working tyranny upon the English, and the Scots, and sometimes also upon the Irish, so that they took under their rule, from England, [Northumbria](#); from Scotland, [Caithness](#); from Ireland, [Dublin](#), and the other sea-side towns.



# Rollo

*Rollo on the Six Dukes statue in Falaise town square.*



**Rollo**, occasionally known as **Rollo the Viking**, (c. 860 - c. 932) was the founder and first ruler of the **Viking** principality in what soon became known as **Normandy**. He is also in some sources known as *Robert of Normandy*, using his baptismal name.

**Norwegian** and **Icelandic** historians identified this Rollo with a son of **Rognvald Eysteinnsson**, Earl of **Møre**, in **Western Norway**, based on medieval Norwegian and Icelandic sagas that mention a **Ganger Hrolf** (Hrolf, the Walker). The oldest source of this version is the Latin **Historia Norvegiae**, written in Norway at the end of the 12th century. This Hrolf fell foul of the Norwegian king **Harald Fairhair**, and became a **Jarl** in Normandy. The nickname of that character came from being so big that no horse (or at least not the Norwegian ponies of that era) could carry him.

## *Invasion of France*

In **885**, Rollo was one of the lesser leaders of the Viking fleet which **besieged Paris** under **Sigfred**. Legend has it that an emissary was sent by the king to find the chieftain and negotiate terms. When he asked for this information, the Vikings replied that they were all chieftains in their own right. In **886**, when Sigfred retreated in return for tribute, Rollo stayed behind and was eventually bought off and sent to harry **Burgundy**.

Later, he returned to the **Seine** with his followers (known as Danes, or Norsemen). He invaded the area of northern **France** now known as **Normandy**.

In 911 Rollo's forces were defeated at the **Battle of Chartres** by the troops of King **Charles the Simple**. In the aftermath of the battle, rather than pay Rollo to leave, as was customary, **Charles the Simple** understood that he could no longer hold back their onslaught, and decided to give Rollo the coastal lands they occupied under the condition that he defend against other raiding Vikings. In the **Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte** (911) with King Charles, Rollo pledged **feudal** allegiance to the king, changed his name to the Frankish version, and converted to **Christianity**, probably with the **baptismal** name Robert. In return, King Charles granted Rollo the lower **Seine** area (today's upper Normandy) and the titular rulership of Normandy, centred around the city of **Rouen**. There exists some argument among historians as to whether Rollo was a "**duke**" (*dux*) or whether his position was equivalent to that of a "**count**" under **Charlemagne**. According to

legend, when required to kiss the foot of King Charles, as a condition of the treaty, he refused to perform so great a humiliation, and when Charles extended his foot to Rollo, Rollo ordered one of his warriors to do so in his place. His warrior then lifted Charles' foot up to his mouth causing him to fall to the ground.

*Rollo and Poppa, captured daughter of Berenger Count of Bayeaux became his wife*



## Settlement

Initially, Rollo stayed true to his word of defending the shores of the Seine river in accordance to the [Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte](#), but in time he and his followers had very different ideas. Rollo began to divide the land between the Epte and Risle rivers among his chieftains and settled there with a *de facto* capital in Rouen. With these settlements, Rollo began to further raid other Frankish lands,

now from the security of a settled homeland, rather than a mobile fleet. Eventually, however, Rollo's men intermarried with the local women, and became more settled as Frenchmen. At the time of his death, Rollo's expansion of his territory had extended as far west as the [Vire River](#).

## Death

*Rollo's grave at the [cathedral of Rouen](#)*



Sometime around [927](#), Rollo passed the [fief in Normandy](#) to his son, [William Longsword](#). Rollo may have lived for a few years after that, but certainly died before [933](#). According to the historian [Adhemar](#), 'As Rollo's death drew near, he went mad and had a hundred Christian prisoners beheaded in front of him in honour of the [gods whom he had worshipped](#), and in the end distributed a hundred pounds of gold around the churches in honour of the true God in whose name he had accepted baptism.' Even though Rollo had converted to [Christianity](#), some of his [pagan](#) roots surfaced at the end.

Rollo is a direct ancestor of [William the Conqueror](#). Through William, he is a [direct ancestor and predecessor of the present-day British royal family](#).

# Prince Frederick Charles of Hesse

**Frederick Charles Louis Constantine**, Prince and [Landgrave](#) of [Hesse](#) (May 1, 1868, Gut Panker – May 28, 1940, Kassel), *Friedrich Karl Ludwig Konstantin Prinz und Landgraf von Hessen-Kassel* in German, was the brother-in-law of the German Emperor [William II](#) and the elected **King of Finland** from October 9 to December 14, 1918.

*King Elect of Finland*



## Early life

Frederick was born at his family's manor, Gut Panker, in [Plön](#), [Holstein](#). He was the third son of [Frederick William of Hesse](#), the then [Landgrave of Hesse](#), and his wife [Princess Anna of Prussia](#), daughter of [Prince Charles of Prussia](#) and [Princess Marie Louise of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach](#). The elder Frederick, a Danish military officer, had been one (and perhaps the foremost) of the candidates of [Christian VIII of Denmark](#) in the 1840s to succeed to the Danish throne if the latter's male line died out, but renounced his rights to the throne in 1851 in favor of his sister, [Louise](#). The elder Frederick was of practically Danish upbringing, having lived all his life in Denmark, but in 1875, when the senior branch of Hesse-Kassel became extinct, he settled in northern Germany, where the House had substantial landholdings.

Eighteen days after his own birth, the baby Frederick's first cousin, the then [Tsarevna Maria Fyodorovna of Russia](#), daughter of his aunt [Queen Louise of Denmark](#), gave birth in [Saint Petersburg](#) to [Nicholas II of Russia](#), who would become Frederick Charles' predecessor as the monarch of Finland (1894–1917).

On [January 25, 1893](#), Frederick married [Princess Margaret of Prussia](#), the youngest daughter of the late [Frederick III, German Emperor](#) and [Victoria, Princess Royal](#), eldest daughter of [Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom](#) and her consort [Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha](#). They had six children, including two sets of twins:

- Friedrich Wilhelm Sigismund (1893–1916), died in [World War I](#)
- Maximilian Friedrich Wilhelm Georg (1894–1914), died in [World War I](#)
- [Philipp](#) (1896–1980) married to [Princess Mafalda of Savoy](#) (1902–1944, [Buchenwald](#)), had issue.
- [Wolfgang Moritz](#) (1896–1989)
- [Prince Christoph Ernst August of Hesse](#) (1901–1943) married [Princess Sophie of Greece and Denmark](#), had issue.
- Richard Wilhelm Leopold (1901–1969), unmarried

Upon their father's death in 1884, Frederick's eldest brother Frederick William became the head of the House of Hesse, and afterwards his next brother Alexander.

## ***The Finnish throne***

*The crown planned for the King of Finland*



Frederick Charles was elected as the *King of Finland* by the [Parliament of Finland](#) on [9 October 1918](#). However, with the end of [World War I](#), in light of his German birth and the abdication of Emperor [William II of Germany](#) ending monarchies in Germany, the arrangement was quickly considered untenable by influential Finns of the time and by Frederick himself. Not much is known of the official stance of the [victorious allies](#). Frederick Charles renounced the throne on [14 December 1918](#), without ever arriving in the country, much less taking up his

position. Finland subsequently adopted a [republican constitution](#).

## ***Later life***

Landgrave Alexander of Hesse abdicated as the head of the House of Hesse on [March 15, 1925](#), and was succeeded by Frederick, his younger brother.

At Frederick's death, his eldest surviving son, Philipp, succeeded him as head. However, according to certain family documents and correspondence, his successor as King of Finland would have been his second surviving son [Prince Wolfgang of Hesse](#) (1896–1989), apparently because Wolfgang was with his parents in 1918 and ready to travel to [Finland](#), where a wedding to a Finnish lady was already in preparation for the coming [Crown Prince](#). Philipp was in the military and unable to be contacted at the time.