

GRANHOLM GENEALOGY

SWEDISH ROYAL ANCESTRY
Book 1 - Mythical to Viking Era (?-1250)

INTRODUCTION

Our Swedish ancestry is quite comprehensive as it covers a broad range of the history. For simplicity the information has been presented in four different books.

Book 1 – Mythical to Viking Era (? – 1250)

Book 2 – Folkunga Dynasty (1250 – 1523)

Book 3 – Vasa Dynasty (1523 – 1751)

Book 4 – Recent Royalty (1751 – Present)

Book 1 begins with a list showing just one of several paths between the earliest and the later generation. Thus it leaves out some intermediate persons. Biographical text is included regarding several ancestors from the mythical Odin's ancestry to King Eric XI (c. 1216 – 1250); the names in the lists are **highlighted** when these persons are referred to. The first part begins by the Swedish mythical ancestry, which ties into the myths of the other Scandinavian countries as well as into the Germanic mythical figures. It blends into the Viking era. The distinction between the two eras cannot be clearly defined, in some cases it is obvious, in others it must be left to the imagination where the myth turns into history.

I have included the story about the Norse creation which is similar to the Finnish ***World Egg*** creation and the ***Chaos***, which both are referred to in the Greek/Roman mythology in my book about the *Early Mythology Ancestry*. Lists below show the mythical descendants, **highlighted** when further described. A different second listing shows the lineage connecting to a third list, which starts with Völsung who is the starting person for also the Danish ancestry described in a separate book.

Lars Granholm
March 2010

Descendants of: Buri First god in Norse mythology As Related to: Lars Erik Granholm

1 Ginnungagap

2 **Buri First god in Norse mythology** (58th great grand father)

3 **Borr Norse mythology** (57th great grand father)

m. **Bestla Norse mythology**

[daughter of Bolthorn Frost giant, grandson of **Ymir**]

4 **Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology** b. 215 (56th great grand father)

m. **Jord**

[daughter of Naglfari (myth) and **Noti** (myth)]

m. **Frigg of Norse Mythology**

[daughter of Fjörgyn Norse mythology]

m. **Aegir's daughter**

[daughter of Aegir (Gymir) King of the sea (Norse mythology) and Ran Norse sea goddess]

m. **Gridr**

m. **Skadi Norse goddess**

[daughter of **Thiazi Norse god**]

[Children of Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology and Jord]

5 **Thor god of Thunder** (56th great uncle)

m. **Järnsaxa Norse giantess**

m. **Sif**

[Children of Thor god of Thunder and Järnsaxa Norse giantess]

6 **Magni** (first cousin, 56 times removed)

6 **Thrud** (first cousin, 56 times removed)

[Children of Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology and Frigg of Norse Mythology]

5 **Baldur god in Norse mythology** (55th great grand father)

m. **Nanna Gevardsdatter goddess in Norse mythology** b. 247

[daughter of Gewar (myth) King of Norway]

6 **Forseti god of justice in Norse mythology** (55th great uncle)

6 **Brond (Brand) of Scandinavia** b. 271 (54th great grand father)

5 **Hermodr the Brave** (56th great uncle)

5 **Bragi Skaldic Norse god** (56th great uncle)

m. **Idunn Goddess with apples**

[Children of Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology and Aegir's daughter]

5 **Heimdall the White God** (56th great uncle)

[Children of Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology and Gridr]

5 **Vidarr** (56th great uncle)

[Children of Odin (Woden) of Norse Mythology and Skadi Norse goddess]

5 **Saemingr King of Norway** (56th great uncle)

5 **Skjöld King (legendary) of the Danes** b. ABT 237 (56th great grand father)

m. **Gefjon Goddess of ploughing**

m. **Alfhild Princess of Saxon**

[Children of Skjöld King (legendary) of the Danes and Alfhild Princess of Saxon]

6 **Gram King of Denmark** (first cousin, 56 times removed)

m. **Signe Princess of Finland** [daughter of Sumbe King of Finland]

7 **Hadingus (Hadding) King of Denmark** (first cousin, 56 times removed)

m. **Harthgrepa** [daughter of Wagnhoftus and Hafliði]

The above list is of some mythical ancestors. The list on the next page of our ancestors are the “legendary” (something between mythical and historical) ancestors ending with Ragnar Lodbrok, a historical Viking ancestor. Next is a list beginning with Völsung, including Ragnar Lodbrok by marriage to Aslaug, descendant of some other mythical ancestors.

The lineage list above continues here

[Children of Skjöld King (legendary) of the Danes and Gefjon Goddess of ploughing]

6 Fridleif King (legendary) of the Danes d. 280 (55th great grand father)

7 Frodi King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 300

8 Fridleif II King (legendary) of the Danes d. 320

9 Havar King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 340

10 Frodi II King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 360

11 Vermund King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 380

12 Olaf the Mild King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 400
m. **Danpi**

13 Dan the Stolte King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 430

14 Frodi III King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 450

15 Fridleif III King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 480

16 Frodi IV King (legendary) of the Danes d. ABT 479

17 Halfdan King of the Danes (legendary) d. 503

18 Hrothgar King of the Danes (legendary)

19 Valdar Viceroy of Denmark

20 Harald the Old

21 Halfdan the Valiant (myth)

22 Ivar Vidfamne King of Scania (myth)

23 Audr the Deep-Minded (Alfhild) Princess (myth)
m. **Rathbarth King of Russia**

24 Randver King of Roeskilde (legendary) d. abt 770
m. **Ingrid Princess of Sweden**

25 Sigurd Ring King of Denmark b. 730 Denmark d. 812 Ruled 770-812
m. **Alfhild Gandolfsdotter Princess of Norway** b. 735 Denmark
[daughter of Gandolf Alfgeirsson King of Norway]

26 Ragnar Lodbrok b. abt 765 Uppsala d. 845 England (36th great grand father)

See list below, generation 4!

m. **Aslaug Sigurdsdotter (Kraka)** b. abt 738

[daughter of Sigurd Norse mythology and Brynhildr Norse mythology]

Direct Lineage from: Völsung Norse mythology to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 1 **Völsung** Norse mythology (39th great grand father)
m. Ljod (39th great grand mother)
- 2 **Sigmund** Norse mythology
m. Hjördis Norse mythology
- 3 **Sigurd** Norse mythology
m. **Brynhildr** Norse mythology
- 4 **Aslaug Sigurdsdotter (Kraka)**
m. **Ragnar Lodbrok**
[son of Sigurd Ring King of Denmark]
- 5 **Björn Ironside King of Sweden**
- 6 **Erik Björnsson King of Sweden**
7. **Björn at Haugi**
- 7 **Anund Uppsala King of Sweden**
- 8 **Eric Weatherhat Anundsson King of Sweden** d. 882
- 9 **Björn III "den gamle" King of Sweden (Uppsala)** b. ABT 867 Uppsala d. 956
- 10 **Erik VII Segersäll King of Sweden and Denmark** b. ABT 945 d. 995
m. **Sigrid (Gunhild) Storråde Princess of Poland**
[daughter of Mieszko I of Poland and Dobrawa Princess of Bohemia]
- 11 **Olof Skötkonung King of Sweden** d. 1022 Husaby, Västergötland, Sweden
m. Edla Princess of the Venden
- 12 **Emund the Old King of Sweden** b. ABT 995 Sweden d. 1060
m. **Astrid Njalsdotter Queen of Sweden** b. ABT 985 Vefsenfjord, Norway d. AFT 1066 Västergötland, Sweden
[daughter of Nial af Sandnes Finnsson and Gunhild Halvdansdotter Storätten Skjalgaätten]
- 13 **Saint Ingamoder Emundsdotter Queen of Sweden** b. 1043 d. 1090
m. **Stenkild Ragnvaldsson King of Sweden** b. ABT 1025 Uppsala d. 1066
[son of Ragnvald "den Gamle" Ulfsson King of Sweden and Astrid Njalsdotter Queen of Sweden]
- 14 **Inge I Stenkilsson King of Sweden** b. ABT 1050 Uppsala d. 1112
m. **Helena Toriltdatter Queen of Sweden**
- 15 **Katarina Ingesdotter Princess of Sweden** b. 1107 Uppsala
m. **Björn Haraldsson "Ironside" Prince of Denmark** b. 1105 Denmark d. 1134
[son of Harald "Kesja" Eriksson Prince of Denmark and Ragnhild Magnusdotter Princess of Norway]
- 16 **Christina Björnsdotter Queen of Sweden** b. 1124
m. **Erik IX the Saint King of Sweden**
- 17 **Canute I Eriksson King of Sweden** b. ABT 1145 Uppsala d. 8 Apr 1196 Eriksberg kungsgård, Sweden
m. Cecilia Johansdotter Queen of Sweden b. ABT 1149 d. 8 Apr 1196 [daughter of Johann Sverkersson Prince of Sweden]
- 18 **Erik X Knutsson King of Sweden** b. 1180 Stockholm, Sweden d. 10 Apr 1216 Visingsö, Sweden
m. **Richiza Valdemarsdotter Princess of Denmark** b. ABT 1178 d. 8 May 1220
[daughter of Valdemar I the Great King of Denmark and Sofiya Vladimirovna Princess of Russia]
19. **Eric XI Eriksson, King of Sweden** b. 1216, d.1250
- 19 **Martha Eriksdotter Princess of Sweden** b. ABT 1213
m. **Nils Sixtensson Sparre av Tofta** b. ABT 1188 Tofta, Uppsala, Sweden
[son of Sixten Sixtensson Sparre of Tofta]
- 20 **Sixten Nilsson Sparre av Tofta** d. 1310
m. **Ingrid Abjörnsdotter** b. Abt 1220 Adelso, Uppsala
- 21 **Abjörn Sixtensson Sparre av Tofta** b. ABT 1240 d. 1310
m. **Ingeborg Ulfsson Ulf** b. ABT 1258 d. AFT 1307
[daughter of Ulf Karlsson Ulv and Karlsdotter Lejonbalk]

Direct Lineage from: Völsung Norse mythology to: Lars Erik Granholm

- 22 **Margarete Abjörnsdotter Sparre of Tofta** b. 1293 Tofta, Adelsö, Uppsala
m. **Gissle Elinasson Sparre of Vik** b. 1276 Wik, Balingsta, Uppsala d. AFT 1343
- 23 **Marta Gisleddotter Sparre of Vik**
m. **Rorik Tordsson Bonde** [son of Tord Petersson till Örbäck Bonde and Margareta Röriksdotter Balk]
- 24 **Tord Röriksson Bonde** b. ABT 1350 Vadstena, Sweden d. 21 Mar 1417 Viborg, Finland
m. **Ramborg Cecilia Nilsdotter Vasa** m. 3 Oct 1376 b. ABT 1352 d. 1439 [daughter of Nils Kettilsson Vasa and Kristina Rickery]
- 25 **Knut Tordsson Bonde** b. ABT 1377 Vadstena, Östergötland, Sweden d. 1413
m. **Margareta Karlsdotter Sparre av Tofta** d. 1428 [daughter of Karl Ulfsson Sparre av Tofta and Cecilia]
- 26 **Karl VIII Knutsson Bonde King of Sweden** b. 29 Sep 1409 Ekholmen, Uppsala d. 15 May 1470 Stockholm Slott
- 27 **Karin Karlsdotter Bonde**
m. **Erengisle Björnsson Djäkn** d. bef 1447 [son of Björn Pedersson Djäkn]
- 28 **Märta Erengisledotter Djäkn**
m. **Johan Henriksson Fleming** b. 1465 Rada, Sverige d. AFT 1514 [son of Henrik Klausson Fleming and Valborg Jönsdotter Tawast]
- 29 **Anna Johansdotter Fleming** b. 1435 d. 1505
m. **Olof Pedersson (Wildeman) Lille** d. 1535
- 30 **Karin Olofsdotter Wildeman** b. 1465 d. 1535
m. **Ludolf Boose** b. 1465 Holstein d. 1535
- 31 **Johan Ludolfsson Boose** b. 1526 d. 1596 Karuna
m. **Ingeborg Henriksdotter**
- 32 **Kirstin Johansdotter Boose** b. 1576 d. 1646 Karuna
m. **Bertil von Nieroht** b. 1582 d. 1652
- 33 **Maria Bertilsdotter von Nieroht** b. 1612 d. 1682
m. **Carl Henriksson Lindelöf** [son of Henrik Hansson Lindelöf and Anna Bengtsdotter Gyllenlood]
- 34 **Carl Carlsson von Lindelöf** b. 1642 d. 1712
m. **N.N. Laurisdotter Laurentz**
- 35 **Anna Maria Carlsdotter von Lindelöf** b. 1670 d. 1 Feb 1747 Suomusjärvi
m. **Ericus Christierni Orenius** b. ABT 1658 d. 2 Mar 1740 Suomusjärvi [son of Krister Matthiae Orenius and Ingeborg]
- 36 **Margareta Eriksdotter Orenia** b. 16 Jan 1710 Suomusjärvi, Laperla
m. **Johan Urnovius**
- 37 **Christina Margareta Urnovia**
m. **Johan Flinck** m. 20 Dec 1781 Åbo
- 38 **Johan (Flinck) Årenius** b. 12 Jan 1787 Pemar Vista d. 6 Nov 1823 Eckois Tyrvää
m. **Ulrika Abrahamsdotter Sevon** m. 15 Mar 1810 b. 9 Jun 1784 [daughter of Abraham Abrahamsson Sevon and Juliana Ulrika Hallonblad]
- 39 **Johan Gustaf Johansson Årenius** b. 5 Jun 1810 Eckois Tyrvää
m. **Johanna Carolina Röring** b. 24 Jun 1802 d. ABT 1839
[daughter of N.N. Röring and Maria Jakobsdotter Tägtström]
- 40 **Charlotta Constantia Renlund** b. 4 Jun 1830 d. 28 Jan 1905
m. **Erik Eriksson Kåll** m. 19 Mar 1854 b. 24 Jun 1829 d. 23 Jan 1905
[son of Erik Persson Lillkåll and Maria Johansdotter Lillkåll]
- 41 **Johanna Karolina Eriksdotter Kåll** b. 9 Jan 1863 d. 8 Nov 1934
m. **Karl-Johan Granholm** m. 24 Mar 1887 b. 14 Mar 1866 d. 22 Jun 1920
[son of Anders Gustaf Johansson Granholm and Brita Andersdotter Djupsjö]
- 42 **Erik Anton Granholm** b. 28 May 1906 d. 29 Jan 1959
m. **Karin Hildegard Kasén** m. 20 Aug 1933 b. 3 Jul 1914
[daughter of Alfred Jakobsson Kasén and Wera Ingeborg Björk]
- 43 **Lars Erik Granholm** b. 28 Jul 1934

Buri

Buri is licked out of a salty ice-block by the cow Audumbla in this illustration from an 18th-century Icelandic manuscript.



Buri was the first god in [Norse mythology](#). He was the father of [Borr](#) and grandfather of [Odin](#). He was formed by the cow [Audumbla](#) licking the salty ice of [Ginnungagap](#). The only extant source of this myth is [Snorri Sturluson's Prose Edda](#).

Buri is licked out of the ice by Audumbla in this 18th-century painting by Nicolai Abraham Abildgaard (1790)



She licked the ice-blocks, which were salty; and the first day that she licked the blocks, there came forth from the blocks in the evening a man's hair; the second day, a man's head; the third day the whole man was there. He is named Buri: he was fair of feature, great and mighty. He begat a son called Borr.

Ymir

Ymir is killed by the sons of Borr in this artwork by Lorenz Frølich.



In [Norse mythology](#), **Ymir**, also named **Aurgelmir** ([Old Norse](#) *gravel-yeller*) among the giants themselves, was the founder of the race of [frost giants](#) and an important figure in [Norse cosmology](#).

[Ginnungagap](#) existed before Heaven and Earth. The Northern region of Ginnungagap became full of ice, and this harsh land was known as [Niflheim](#). Opposite of Niflheim was the southern region known as [Muspelheim](#), which contained bright sparks and glowing embers. Ymir was conceived in Ginnungagap when the ice of Niflheim met with Muspelheim's heat and melted, releasing "eliwaves" and drops of [eitr](#). The eitr drops stuck together and formed a giant of rime frost between the two worlds and the sparks from Muspelheim gave him life. While Ymir slept, he fell

into a sweat and conceived the race of giants. Under his left arm grew a man and a woman, and his legs begot his six-headed son [Brudgelmir](#).

Odin and his brothers create the world out of the body of Ymir in this artwork by Lorenz Frølich.

Ymir fed from the primeval cow [Audhumla](#)'s four rivers of milk, who in turn fed from licking the salty ice blocks. Her licking the rime ice eventually revealed the body of a man named [Buri](#). Buri fathered [Borr](#), and Borr and his wife [Bestla](#) had three sons given the names [Odin](#), [Vili](#) and [Vé](#).

The sons of Borr killed Ymir, and when Ymir fell the blood from his wounds poured forth. Ymir's blood drowned almost the entire tribe of frost giants or jotuns. Only two jotuns survived the flood of Ymir's blood, one was Ymir's grandson [Bergelmir](#), and the other his wife. Bergelmir and his wife brought forth new families of jotuns.

Odin and his brothers used Ymir's body to create [Midgard](#), the earth at the center of Ginnungagap. His flesh became the earth. The blood of Ymir formed seas and lakes. From his bones mountains were erected. His teeth and bone fragments became stones. From his hair grew trees and [maggots](#) from his flesh became the race of dwarfs. The gods set Ymir's skull above Ginnungagap and made the sky, supported by four [dwarfs](#). These dwarfs were given the names East, West, North and South. Odin then created winds by placing one of Bergelmir's sons, in the form of an eagle, at the ends of the earth. He cast Ymir's brains into the wind to become the clouds. Next, the sons of Borr took sparks from Muspelheim and dispersed them throughout Ginnungagap, thus creating stars and light for Heaven and Earth. From pieces of driftwood trees the sons of Borr made men. They made a man named Ask-ash tree and a woman named Embla-elm tree. On the brow of Ymir the sons of Bor built a stronghold to protect the race of men from the giants.





Valhalla (1896) by Max Brückner

In [Norse mythology](#), **Valhalla** (from [Old Norse](#) *Valhöll* "hall of the slain") is a majestic, enormous hall located in [Asgard](#), ruled over by the god [Odin](#). Chosen by Odin, those that die in combat travel to Valhalla upon death, led by [valkyries](#). There, they join the masses of the dead who have died in combat known as [Einherjar](#), as well as various legendary [Germanic heroes](#) and kings, as they prepare to aid Odin during the events of [Ragnarök](#). Before the hall stands the golden tree [Glasir](#), the hall's ceiling is thatched with golden shields, and various creatures live around it, such as the stag [Eikpyrnir](#) and the goat [Heidrun](#), both described as standing atop Valhalla and consuming the foliage of the tree [Laerad](#).

Details are given by Odin about Valhalla: the holy doors of the ancient gate [Valgrind](#) stand before Valhalla, Valhalla has five [hundred](#) and forty doors that eight hundred men can exit from at once (from which the [einherjar](#) will flow forth to engage the wolf [Fenrir](#) at [Ragnarök](#)). Within Valhalla exists [Thor's](#) hall [Bilskirnir](#), and within it exists five hundred and forty rooms, and of all the halls within Valhalla, Odin states that he thinks his son's may be greatest In stanzas 25 through 26, Odin states that the goat Heidrun and the [hart](#) Eikpyrnir stand on top of Valhalla and graze on the branches of the tree Laerad. Heidrun produces vats of [mead](#) that liquor cannot be compared to, and from Eikpyrnir's [antlers](#) drip liquid into the spring [Hvergelmir](#) from which flows forth all waters. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Valhalla>)

Odin

"Odin, the Wanderer" (1886) by Georg von Rosen



Odin, is considered the chief [god](#) in [Norse paganism](#). Homologous with the [Anglo-Saxon Woden](#) and the [Old High German Wotan](#). He is associated with [wisdom](#), [war](#), battle, and death, and also [magic](#), [poetry](#), [prophecy](#), victory, and the hunt.

Odin had three residences in Asgard. First was [Gladseim](#), a vast hall where he presided over the [twelve](#) Diar or Judges, whom he had appointed to regulate the affairs of Asgard. Second, [Valaskjalf](#), built of solid [silver](#), in which there was an elevated place, [Hlidskjalf](#), from his throne on which he could perceive all that passed throughout the whole earth. Third was [Valhalla](#) (the hall of the fallen), where Odin received the [souls](#) of the warriors killed in battle, called the [Einherjar](#).

"Odin's last words to Baldr" (1908) by W.G. Collingwood.

According to the [Prose Edda](#),

Odin, the first and most powerful of the Aesir, was a son of [Bestla](#) and [Borr](#) and brother of [Ve](#) and [Vili](#). With these brothers, he cast down the [frost giant Ymir](#) and made [Earth](#) from Ymir's [body](#).

Odin has fathered numerous children. With his wife, [Frigg](#), he fathered his doomed son [Baldr](#) and fathered the blind god [Hödr](#). By the personification of earth, [Fjörgyn](#), Odin was the father of his most famous son, [Thor](#). By the giantess [Gridr](#), Odin was the father of [Vidar](#), and by [Rinda](#) he was father of [Vali](#). Also, many royal families claimed descent from Odin through other sons.



Odin (1825-1827) by H. E. Freund.

Odin and his brothers, Vili and Ve, are attributed with slaying [Ymir](#), the Ancient Giant, to form [Midgard](#). From Ymir's flesh, the brothers made the earth, and from his shattered [bones](#) and [teeth](#) they made the [rocks](#) and stones. From [Ymir's blood](#), they made the [rivers](#) and [lakes](#). Ymir's [skull](#) was made into the sky, secured at four points by four dwarfs named [East](#), [West](#), [North](#), and [South](#). From Ymir's [brains](#), the three [Gods](#) shaped the [clouds](#), whereas Ymir's eye-brows became a barrier between Jotunheim (giant's home) and Midgard, the place where men now dwell. Odin and his brothers are also attributed with making humans.

After having made earth from Ymir's flesh, the three brothers came across two logs (or an [ash](#) and an [elm tree](#)). Odin gave them breath and [life](#); Vili gave them brains and feelings; and Ve gave them [hearing](#) and [sight](#). The first man was [Ask](#) and the first woman was [Embla](#).

"Odin with Gunnlöd" (1901) by Johannes Gehrts.



The Gotlandic image stone Hammars (III) is held to depict Odin in his eagle fetch (note the eagle's beard), Gunnlöd (holding the mead of poetry) and Suttungr.

Odin's quest for wisdom can also be seen in his work as a farmhand for a [summer](#), for [Baugi](#), and his seduction of [Gunnlod](#) in order to obtain the mead of [poetry](#).



Gunnlöd by Anders Zorn.

In [Norse mythology](#), **Gunnlöd** ([Old Norse](#) "war-foam") is a daughter of [Suttung](#), who was set guard by her father in the cavern where he housed the [mead of poetry](#). Gunnlöd was seduced by [Odin](#), who according to the [Prose Edda](#) bargained three nights of sex for three sips of the mead and then tricked her, stealing all of it. However, the the [Poetic Edda](#) tells the story a bit differently:

Gunnlod sat me in the golden seat,
Poured me precious mead:
Ill reward she had from me for that,
For her proud and passionate heart,
Her brooding foreboding spirit.
What I won from her I have well used:
I have waxed in wisdom since I came back,
bringing to Asgard [Odhroerir](#),
the sacred draught.
Hardly would I have come home alive
From the garth of the grim troll,
Had Gunnlod not helped me, the good woman,
Who wrapped her arms around me.

Nott

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



In [Norse mythology](#), **Nott** (Old Norse "night") is [night](#) personified. In both the [Poetic Edda](#), compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources, and the [Prose Edda](#), written in the 13th century by [Snorri Sturluson](#), Nott is listed as the daughter of a figure by the name of [Nörvi](#) (with variant spellings) 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 [Dellingr](#) and this resulted in their son [Dagr](#), the personified day.

Dagr" (1874) by Peter Nicolai Arbo



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 jötunn 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 Dellingr, 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 a 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

Frigg



*"Frigga Spinning the Clouds" by J. C. Dollman.
A 19th century depiction of Frigg (seated) and Fulla (1874)*



Frigg (or **Frigga**) is a major goddess in [Norse paganism](#), a subset of [Germanic paganism](#). She is said to be the wife of [Odin](#), and is the "foremost among the goddesses". Frigg appears primarily in [Norse mythological stories](#) as a wife and a mother. She is also described as having the power of prophecy yet she does not reveal what she knows. Frigg is described as the only one other than Odin who is permitted to sit on his high seat [Hlidskjalf](#) and look out over the universe. The English term [Friday](#) derives from the [Anglo-Saxon](#) name for Frigg, Frigga

Frigg's children are [Baldr](#) and [Hödr](#), her stepchildren are [Thor](#), [Hermodr](#), [Heimdall](#), [Tyr](#), [Vidar](#), [Vali](#), and [Skjoldr](#). Frigg's companion is [Eir](#), a goddess associated with medical skills. Frigg's attendants are [Hlin](#), [Gna](#), and [Fulla](#).



Frigg on Odin's high seat Hlidskjalf

As the wife of Odin, Frigg is one of the foremost goddesses of Norse mythology. She is the patron of marriage and motherhood, and the goddess of love and fertility. In that aspect she shows many similarities with Freya, of whom she possibly is a different form.

She has a reputation of knowing every person's destiny, but never unveils it. As the mother of Balder, she tried to prevent his death by extracting oaths from every object in nature, but forgot the mistletoe. And by a fig made from mistletoe Balder died.

Her hall in Asgard is Fensalir (water halls).

Skadi

Skadi Hunting in the Mountains (1901) by H. L. M.



In [Norse mythology](#), **Skadi** (sometimes anglicized as **Skade**, or **Skathi**) is a [jötunn](#) and [goddess](#) associated with [bowhunting](#), [skiing](#), winter, and mountains. Skadi is attested in the [Poetic Edda](#), compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources; the [Prose Edda](#) and [Heimskringla](#), written in the 13th century by [Snorri Sturluson](#), and in the works of [skalds](#).

In all sources, Skadi is the daughter of the deceased [Thjazi](#), and Skadi married the god [Njördr](#) as part of the compensation provided by the gods for killing her father Thjazi. In *Heimskringla*, Skadi is described as having split up with Njördr and as later having married the god [Odin](#), and that the two produced many children together. In both the *Poetic Edda* and the *Prose Edda*, Skadi is responsible for placing the serpent that drips venom onto the bound [Loki](#).

Njördr, Skadi, and Freyr as depicted in The Lovesickness of Frey (1908) by W. G. Collingwood.



In the *Poetic Edda* poem [Grímnismál](#), the god [Odin](#) (disguised as [Grímnir](#)) reveals to the young [Agnarr](#) the existence of twelve locations. Odin mentions the location [Thrymheimr](#) sixth in a single stanza. In the stanza, Odin details that the jötunn [Thjazi](#) once lived there, and that now his daughter Skadi does. Odin describes Thrymheimr as consisting of "ancient courts" and refers to Skadi as "the shining bride of the gods". In the prose introduction to the poem [Skírnismál](#), the god [Freyr](#) has become heartsick for a fair girl (the jötunn [Gerdr](#)) he has spotted in [Jötunheimr](#). The god [Njördr](#) asks Freyr's servant [Skírnir](#) to talk to Freyr, and in the first stanza of the poem, Skadi also tells Skírnir to ask Freyr why he is so upset. Skírnir responds that he expects harsh words from their son Freyr.

In the prose introduction to the poem [Lokasenna](#), Skadi is referred to as the wife of Njördr and is cited as one of the goddesses attending [Aegir](#)'s feast. After [Loki](#) has an exchange with the god [Heimdallr](#), Skadi interjects. Skadi tells Loki that he is "light-hearted" and that Loki will not be "playing [...] with [his] tail wagging free" for much longer, for soon the gods will bind Loki to a sharp rock with the ice-cold entrails of his son. Loki responds that, even if this is so, he was "first and foremost" at the killing of Thjazi. Skadi response that, if this is so, "baneful advice" will always flow from her "[sanctuaries](#) and plains". Loki responds that Skadi was more friendly in speech when Skadi was in his bed—an accusation he makes to most of the goddesses in the poem and is not attested elsewhere. Loki's [flying](#) then turns to the goddess [Sif](#).



Skadi's longing for the Mountains (1908) by W. G. Collingwood

In chapter 23 of the *Prose Edda* book [Gylfaginning](#), the enthroned figure of [High](#) details that Njördr's wife is Skadi, that she is the daughter of the jötunn Thjazi, and recounts a tale involving the two. High recalls that Skadi wanted to live in the home once owned by her father called Thrymheimr. However, Njördr wanted to live nearer to the sea. Subsequently, the two made an agreement that they would spend [nine](#) nights in Thrymheimr and then the next three nights in Njördr's sea-side home [Noatun](#).

Skaldskaparmal

Skade (1893) by Carl Fredrik von Saltza



In chapter 56 of the *Prose Edda* book [Skaldskaparmal](#), [Bragi](#) recounts to [Aegir](#) how the gods killed Thjazi. Thjazi's daughter, Skadi, took a helmet, a coat of mail, and "all weapons of war" and traveled to [Asgard](#), the home of the gods. Upon Skadi's arrival, the gods wished to atone for her loss and offered compensation. Skadi provides them with her terms of settlement, and the gods agree that Skadi may choose a husband from among themselves. However, Skadi must choose this husband by looking solely at their feet. Skadi saw a pair of feet that she found particularly attractive and said "I choose that one; there can be little that is ugly about Baldr." However, the owner of the feet turned out to be Njördr.

Skadi also included in her terms of settlement that the gods must do something she thought impossible for them to do: make her laugh. To do so, Loki tied one end of a cord around the beard of a [nanny goat](#) and the other end around his [testicles](#). The goat and Loki drew one another back and forth, both squealing loudly. Loki dropped into Skadi's lap, and Skadi laughed, completing this part of her atonement. Finally, in compensation to Skadi, Odin took Thjazi's eyes, lunged them into the sky, and from the eyes made two stars.

Thjazi

Idunn is carried off by Thjazi in this artwork by H. Theaker, 1920.



In [Norse mythology](#), **Thjazi** (anglicized as **Thiazi** or **Thiassi**) was a [giant](#) and the father of [Skadi](#). His most notable misdeed was the kidnapping of the [goddess Idunn](#) which is related in both the [Prose Edda](#) and the [skaldic poem *Haustlög*](#).

According to [Skaldskaparmál](#), the gods [Odin](#), [Loki](#) and [Hoernir](#) set out one day on a journey, traveling through mountains and wilderness until they were in need of food. In a valley they saw a herd of oxen, and they took one of the oxen and set it in an [earth oven](#), but after a while they found that it would not cook. As they were trying to determine the reason for this, they heard someone talking in the oak tree above them, saying that he himself was the one responsible for the oven not cooking. They looked up and saw that it was Thjazi in the form of a great eagle, and he told them that if they would let him eat from the ox, then he would make the oven cook. To this they agreed, so

he came down from the tree and began devouring a large portion of the meal. He ate so much of it that Loki became angry, grabbed his long staff and attempted to strike him, but the weapon stuck fast to Thjazi's body and he took flight, carrying Loki up with him. As they flew across the land Loki shouted and begged to be let down as his legs banged against trees and stones, but Thjazi would only do so on the condition that Loki must lure Idunn out of [Asgard](#) with her apples of youth, which he solemnly promised to do.

Later, at the agreed time, Loki lured Idunn out of Asgard into a forest, telling her he had found some apples that she might think worth having, and that she should bring her own apples with her to compare them. Thjazi then appeared in his eagle shape, grabbed Idunn and flew away with her to his realm of [Thrymheimr](#), located in [Jötunheimr](#).

The gods, deprived of Idunn's apples, began growing old and grey. When they learned that Idunn was last seen going out of Asgard with Loki, they threatened him with torture and death until he agreed to rescue her. Loki borrowed a magical coat from [Freyja](#) that would allow him to take the shape of a falcon, then flew to Jotunheim until he reached the hall of Thjazi. Finding Idunn alone while Thjazi was out to sea on a boat, Loki transformed her into a nut and carried her back, flying as fast as he could. When Thjazi returned home and discovered she was gone he assumed his eagle form and flew after Loki. When the gods saw Loki flying toward them with Thjazi right behind they lit a fire which burned Thjazi's feathers, causing him to fall to the ground where he was set upon and killed.

Thjazi's daughter Skadi then put on her war gear and went to Asgard to seek vengeance, but the gods offered her atonement and compensation until she was placated. She was also given the hand of [Njord](#) in marriage, and as a further reparation Odin took Thjazi's eyes and placed them in the night sky as stars.

Thor

Thor's Battle Against the Giants (1872) by Mårten Eskil Winge.



Statue of Thor at Mariatorget in Stockholm



Thor is the red-haired and bearded [god](#) of [thunder](#) in [Germanic mythology](#) and [Germanic paganism](#), and its subsets: [Norse paganism](#), [Anglo-Saxon paganism](#) and [Continental Germanic paganism](#). Most surviving stories relating to Germanic mythology either mention Thor or focus on Thor's exploits. Thor was a much revered god of the ancient [Germanic peoples](#) from at least the earliest surviving written accounts of the indigenous Germanic tribes to over a thousand years later in the late [Viking Age](#).



Thor was appealed to for protection on numerous objects found from various Germanic tribes. Miniature replicas of [Mjöllnir](#), the weapon of Thor, became a defiant symbol of Norse paganism during the [Christianization of Scandinavia](#)

*Drawing of an archaeological find from Öland, Sweden
of a gold plated depiction of Mjöllnir in silver.*

Sif

Sif (1893) by Jenny Nyström



In [Norse mythology](#), **Sif** is a [goddess](#) associated with the earth with famously golden hair, and the wife of the god [Thor](#). Sif is attested in the *[Poetic Edda](#)*, compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources. Sif is the wife of the god [Thor](#) and is known for her [golden hair](#).

Sif is named as the mother of the god [Ullr](#) and is told to have once had her hair shorn by [Loki](#). Thor forces Loki to have a golden headpiece made for Sif, resulting in not only Sif's golden tresses but also five other objects for other gods.

Thor once engages in a duel with [Hrungnir](#), there described as the strongest of the [jötnar](#). Prior to this, Hrungnir had been drunkenly boasting of his desire to, amongst other things, kill all of the gods except [Freyja](#) and Sif, whom he wanted to take home with him. However, at the duel, Hrungnir is quickly killed by the enraged Thor.

In *Skaldskaparmál*, Snorri relates a story where Loki cuts off Sif's hair as a prank. When Thor discovers this, he grabs hold of Loki, resulting in Loki swearing to have a headpiece made of gold to replace Sif's locks. Loki fulfills this promise by having a headpiece made by [dwarves](#), the [Sons of Ivaldi](#). Along with the headpiece, the dwarves produced Odin's spear, [Gungnir](#). As the story progresses, the incident leads to the creation of the ship [Skíðbladnir](#) and the boar [Gullinbursti](#) for [Freyr](#), the multiplying ring [Draupnir](#) for Odin, and the mighty hammer [Mjöllnir](#) for Thor.

Sif (1909) by John Charles Dollman



Snorri states that Thor married Sif, and that she is known as "a prophetess called [Sibyl](#), though we know her as Sif". Sif is further described as "the most loveliest of women" and with hair of gold. Although he lists her own ancestors as unknown, Snorri writes that Thor and Sif produced a son by the name of [Loridi](#), who "took after his father". Loridi is attributed an extended genealogical list of descendants, including figures such as [Godwulf](#) and Odin.

Sif has inspired the name of [volcano](#) on the planet [Venus](#) ([Sif Mons](#)) and a [Marvel Comics](#) character, Sif.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/L%C3%B3ri%C3%B0i>

For these reasons Loridi should not be considered the son of the mythical Thor. Loridi is not an actual part of the ancient Norse myths.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/M%C3%B3ði_and_Magni

Modi and Magni

In [Norse mythology](#), **Modi** (anglicized Modi or Mooi) and **Magni** are the sons of [Thor](#). Their names mean "Angry" and "Strong," respectively. Rudolf Simek states that, along with Thor's daughter [Thrudr](#) ("Strength"), they embody their father's features.

Modi and Magni's descent from Thor is attested by the [kennings](#) "Modi's father" and "Magni's father". Magni is the son of Thor and the [Jötunn Jarnsaxa](#). There is no mention of Modi's mother.

Apart from his role after [Ragnarök](#), there is nothing we know about Modi but, in the Prose Edda book *Skaldskaparmál*, Magni plays a role in the myth of Thor's battle with the giant [Hrungnir](#):

But the hammer [Mjöllnir](#) struck Hrungnir in the middle of the head, and smashed his skull into small crumbs, and he fell forward upon Thor, so that his foot lay over Thor's neck. [Thjalfi](#) struck at [Mökkurkalfi](#), and he fell with little glory. Thereupon Thjalfi went over to Thor and would have lifted Hrungnir's foot off him, but could not find sufficient strength. Straightway all the [Aesir](#) came up, when they, learned that Thor was fallen, and would have lifted the foot from off him, and could do nothing. Then Magni came up, son of Thor and Jarnsaxa: he was then three nights old; he cast the foot of Hrungnir off Thor, and spake: 'See how ill it is, father, that I came so late: I had struck this giant dead with my fist, methinks, if I had met with him.' Thor arose and welcomed his son, saying that he should surely become great; 'And I will give thee, he said, the horse [Gold-Mane](#), which Hrungnir possessed.' Then [Odin](#) spake and said that Thor did wrong to give the good horse to the son of a giantess, and not to his father.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%9Er%C3%BA%C3%B0r>

Thrudr

Alvíss and Thrudr, illustration by Lorenz Frølich



Thrudr ([Old Norse](#) "strength"), sometimes anglicized as **Thrud**, is a daughter of the major [god Thor](#) in [Norse mythology](#). Thrudr is also the name of one of the [valkyries](#) who serve ale to the [einherjar](#) in [Valhalla](#). Thor's daughter is engaged to a [dwarf](#), [Alvíss](#). [Alvíss](#) ("All-Wise") was a [dwarf](#) in [Norse mythology](#).

[Thor's](#) daughter, [Thrudr](#), was promised to [Alvíss](#). However, Thor did not want [Alvíss](#) married to his daughter, so he devised a plan to stop [Alvíss](#) from doing so. He told [Alvíss](#) that, because of his small height, he had to prove his wisdom. [Alvíss](#) agreed. Thor made the tests last until after the sun had risen. [Alvíss](#), because he was a dwarf, was petrified when he was exposed to sunlight, and Thrudr remained unmarried.

Hrungnir

Thor slays Hrungnir, illustration by Ludwig Pietsch (1865)



Hrungnir ([Old Norse](#) "brawler") was a [jötunn](#) in [Norse mythology](#), slain by the god [Thor](#) with his hammer [Mjölhnir](#). Prior to his demise, Hrungnir engaged in a wager with [Odin](#) in which Odin stakes his head on his horse, [Sleipnir](#), being faster than Hrungnir's steed [Gullfaxi](#). During the race, which Sleipnir wins, Hrungnir enters [Valhalla](#), and there becomes drunk and abusive. After they grow weary of him, the gods call on Thor to battle Hrungnir.

The fighting and the enchantment afterwards

Thor and his servant [Thjalfi](#) challenge the giant, who hurls his whetstone weapon at Thor. Smashed to smithereens by Thor's hammer [Mjölhnir](#), fragments of the whetstone fall down to earth, while one shard sinks

deep into the god's forehead. Nevertheless, the hammer strikes Hrungnir dead, shattering his skull; but in his fall, Hrungnir's dead body topples over Thor, leaving the god buried under one of his legs.

When both Thjalfi and the combined strength of the [Aesir](#) fail at pushing and pulling the giant's foot off Thor's throat, [Magni](#), Thor's infant son with the giantess [Jarnsaxa](#), passes by and easily lifts the foot, rebuking his father for his weakness. Back in [Asgard](#), the sorceress [Groa](#) is called upon to remove Hrungnir's whetstone from Thor's forehead. As her enchantments are beginning to show an effect, gradually loosening the stone, Thor promises to generously reward her for her services, mentioning that he had recently helped her husband [Aurvandil](#) cross the icy river [Eliwagar](#) and that it would not be long for her to be reunited with him. Rejoicing at these news, Groa, in her excitement, forgets all about her chants, thus leaving the whetstone locked in Thor's forehead.

Baldr

"Each arrow overshot his head" (1902) by Elmer Boyd Smith.



Balder is a [god](#) in [Norse Mythology](#) associated with light and beauty.

Baldr's wife is [Nanna](#) and their son is [Forseti](#). In *Gylfaginning*, Snorri relates that Baldr had the greatest ship ever built, named [Hringhorni](#), and that there is no place more beautiful than his hall, [Breidablik](#).

Apart from this description Baldr is known primarily for the story of his death. His death is seen as the first in the chain of events which will ultimately lead to the destruction of the gods at [Ragnarok](#). Baldr will be reborn in the new world, according to [Völuspa](#).

He had a dream of his own death and his mother had the same dreams. Since dreams were usually prophetic, this depressed him, so his mother [Frigg](#) made every object on earth [vow](#) never to hurt Baldr. All objects made this vow except [mistletoe](#). Frigg had thought it too unimportant and nonthreatening to bother asking it to make the vow.

When [Loki](#), the mischief-maker, heard of this, he made a magical spear from this plant (in some later versions, an arrow). He hurried to the place where the gods were indulging in their new pastime of hurling objects at Baldr, which would bounce off without harming him. Loki gave the spear to Baldr's brother, the blind god [Hödr](#), who then inadvertently killed his brother with it (other versions suggest that Loki guided the arrow himself). For this act, Odin and the giantess [Rindr](#) gave birth to [Vali](#) who grew to adulthood within a day and slew Hödr.

Baldr was ceremonially burnt upon his ship, Hringhorni, the largest of all ships. As he was carried to the ship, Odin whispered in his ear. This was to be a key riddle asked by Odin (in disguise) of the giant [Vafthrudnir](#) (and which was, of course, unanswerable) in the poem *Vafthrudnismal*. The riddle also appears in the riddles of [Gestumblindi](#) in *Hervarar saga*.

The dwarf [Litr](#) was kicked by [Thor](#) into the funeral fire and burnt alive. Nanna, Baldr's wife, also threw herself on the funeral fire to await Ragnarok when she would be reunited with her husband (alternatively, she died of grief). Baldr's horse with all its trappings was also burned on the pyre. The ship was set to sea by [Hyrrokin](#), a [giantess](#), who came riding on a wolf and gave the ship such a push that fire flashed from the rollers and all the earth shook.

Balder



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.

Most of the stories about Balder concern his death. He had been dreaming about his death, so Frigg extracted an oath from every creature, object and force in nature (snakes, metals, diseases, poisons, fire, etc.) that they would never harm Balder. All agreed that none of their kind would ever hurt or assist in hurting Balder. Thinking him invincible, the gods enjoyed themselves thereafter by using Balder as a target for knife-throwing and archery.

The malicious trickster, Loki, was jealous of Balder. He changed his appearance and asked Frigg if there was absolutely nothing that could harm the god of light. Frigg, suspecting nothing, answered that there was just one thing: a small tree in the west that was called mistletoe. She had thought it was too small to ask for an oath.

Loki immediately left for the west and returned with the mistletoe. He tricked Balder's blind twin brother Hod into throwing a mistletoe fig (dart) at Balder. Not knowing what he did, Hod threw the fig, guided by Loki's aim. Pierced through the heart, Balder fell dead.

The others took the dead god, dressed him in crimson cloth, and placed him on a funeral pyre aboard his ship Ringhorn, which passed for the largest in the world. Beside him they lay the body of his wife Nanna, who had died of a broken heart.

Balder's horse and his treasures were also placed on the ship. The pyre was set on fire and the ship was sent to sea by the giantess Hyrrokin. Loki did not escape punishment for his crime and Hod was put to death by Vali, son of Odin and Rind. Vali had been born for just that purpose.

Nanna (Norse deity)

Nanna (1857) by Herman Wilhelm Bissen.



Nanna is a [goddess](#) in [Norse mythology](#), the daughter of [Nepr](#) and wife of [Baldr](#) (Balder). She and Baldr are both [Aesir](#) and live together in the hall of [Bredablik](#) in [Asgard](#). With Baldr, she was the mother of [Forseti](#).

Gylfaginning

According to [Gylfaginning](#), when Baldr was unintentionally slain by the blind god [Hödr](#) through the treachery of [Loki](#), she was overcome with grief and died. She was placed on the funeral [pyre](#) alongside her husband on his ship [Hringhorni](#) which was then launched out to sea. Later, when [Hermod](#) set out on his quest to bring Baldr back from the [underworld](#) and entered the hall of [Hel](#), he saw Baldr there in the seat of honour alongside Nanna who sent back with Hermod gifts for the other gods including a robe for [Frigg](#) and a ring for [Fulla](#) along with the golden arm ring [Draupnir](#) sent back to [Odin](#) by Baldr.

Skaldskaparmal

According to [Skaldskaparmal](#), Nanna is listed among the eight [Asynjur](#) presiding over the banquet held for [Aegir](#) when he was a guest in Asgard, though Baldr is conspicuously absent among the hosting male Aesir.

Baldr sees Nanna for the first time, illustration by Louis Moe

In a [Danish](#) history written by [Saxo Grammaticus](#), Nanna is a beautiful human woman caught up in a love triangle between the human king [Hotherus](#) and the demigod [Balderus](#) who, unlike their counterparts in *Gylfaginning*, are not brothers but rivals for the hand of Nanna.

Setre Comb

The Setre Comb is a comb from the 6th or early 7th century featuring [runic](#) inscriptions. The comb is the subject of an amount of scholarly discourse as most experts accept the reading of the Germanic charm word [alu](#) and [Nanna](#), though there exists questions as to if *Nanna* is the same figure as the goddess from later attestations.



Forseti

Forseti rendering justice (1881) by [Carl Emil Doepler](#)



Forseti ([Old Norse](#) "the presiding one", actually "[president](#)" in Modern [Icelandic](#) and [Faroese](#)) is the [Aesir](#) god of [justice](#), [peace](#) and [truth](#) in [Norse mythology](#). **Fosite** is a god of the [Frisians](#) often identified with Scandinavian Forseti. So [Jacob Grimm](#), *[Teutonic Mythology](#)*, who takes *forseti* "*praeses*" as the original meaning, postulating an (unattested) Old High German equivalent *forasizo* (cf. modern German *Vorsitzender* "one who presides"). Grimm notes that the god's sanctuary at [Heligoland](#) would have made him an ideal candidate of a deity known to both Frisians and Scandinavians, but has to admit it is surprising that he should

remain entirely unmentioned by [Saxo Grammaticus](#).

Norse Forseti

He was the son of [Baldr](#) and [Nanna](#). His home was [Glitnir](#), its name, meaning *shining*, referring to the hall's silver ceiling and golden pillars, which radiated light that could be seen from a great distance.

Forseti was considered the wisest and most eloquent of gods of [Asgard](#). In contrast to his fellow god [Tyr](#), who presided over the bloody affairs of carnal law, Forseti presided over disputes resolved by [mediation](#). He sat in his hall, dispensing justice to those who sought it, and was said to be able to always provide a solution that all parties considered fair. Like his father Baldr, he was a gentle god and favored peace so all judged by him could live in safety as long as they upheld his sentence. Forseti was so respected that only the most solemn oaths were uttered in his name.

Fosite's place of worship was on [Heligoland](#). It was destroyed in [785](#) by [Ludger](#). According to legend, twelve **Asegeir** or *old ones* once wandered all over [Scandinavia](#) gathering local laws. They wanted to get the best laws from all the tribes and compile them into one set of laws applicable to all of them, thus uniting them in peace.

It is said that after gathering laws from all the regions, they embarked on a sea voyage to a remote place where they could safely discuss the process of compilation. However, a vicious storm arose and while at the mercy of sea they invoked the name of Forseti to save them from peril. They noticed that a 13th person appeared in the boat and safely led it to a deserted island. There, the person (presumably Forseti himself) split the earth and a spring was formed. Having [consecrated](#) the place he dictated the unified [code of laws](#) that merged all the best regulations of various local laws and suddenly vanished.

Hermodr

Hermodr rides to Hel on Sleipnir. He meets Hel and Baldr. From the 18th century Icelandic manuscript



Hermodr the Brave ([Old Norse](#) "war-spirit") is a figure in [Norse mythology](#).

Hermodr appears distinctly in section 49 of the [Prose Edda](#) book [Gylfaginning](#). There, it is described that the gods were speechless and devastated at the death of Baldr, unable to react due to their grief. After the gods gathered their wits from the immense shock and grief of Baldr's death, Frigg asked the Aesir who amongst them wished "to gain all of her love and favor" by riding the road to [Hel](#). Whomever agreed was to offer [Hel](#) a ransom in exchange for Baldr's return to Asgard. Hermodr agrees to this and set off with [Sleipnir](#) to Hel.

Hermodr rode Odin's horse Sleipnir for nine nights through deep and dark valleys to the [Gjöll](#) bridge covered with shining gold, the bridge being guarded by

the maiden Modgudr 'Battle-frenzy' or 'Battle-tired'. Modgudr told Hermodr that Baldr had already crossed the bridge and that Hermodr should ride downwards and northwards.

Upon coming to Hel's gate, Hermodr dismounted, tightened Sleipnir's girth, mounted again, and spurred Sleipnir so that Sleipnir leapt entirely over the gate. So at last Hermodr came to Hel's hall and saw Baldr seated in the most honorable seat. Hermodr begged Hel to release Baldr, citing the great weeping for Baldr among the [Aesir](#). Thereupon Hel announced that Baldr would only be released if all things, dead and alive, wept for him.



Baldr gave Hermodr the ring [Draupnir](#) which had been burned with him on his pyre, to take back to Odin. [Nanna](#) gave a linen robe for [Frigg](#) along with other gifts and a finger-ring for [Fulla](#). Thereupon Hermodr returned with his message. In [Norse mythology](#), **Draupnir** is a gold ring possessed by the god [Odin](#) with the ability to multiply itself. Draupnir was forged by the [dwarven](#) brothers [Brokkr](#) and [Eitri](#). Eitri made this ring as one of a set of three gifts which included [Mjöllnir](#) and [Gullinbursti](#).

The ring was placed by Odin on the funeral pyre of his son [Baldr](#). The ring was subsequently retrieved by [Hermodr](#). It was offered as a gift by [Freyr](#)'s servant [Skírnir](#) in the wooing of [Gerdr](#).

The third gift — an enormous hammer (1902) by Elmer Boyd Smith. The ring Draupnir is visible among other creations by the Sons of Ivaldi.

Bragi

Bragi is shown with a harp and accompanied by his wife Idunn in this 19th century painting by Nils Blommer.



Bragi is a [skaldic](#) god in [Norse mythology](#). Bragi is generally associated with *bragr*, the Norse word for [poetry](#).

"Bragi" by Carl Wahlbom (1810-1858).

[Snorri Sturluson](#) writes in the *Gylfaginning* after describing [Odin](#), [Thor](#), and [Baldr](#):

One is called Bragi: he is renowned for wisdom, and most of all for fluency of speech and skill with words. He knows most of skaldship, and after him skaldship is called *bragr*, and from his name that one is called *bragr*-man or -woman, who possesses eloquence surpassing others, of women or of men. His wife



is [Idunn](#).

That Bragi is Odin's son is clearly mentioned only here and in some versions of a list of the sons of Odin. But "wish-son" in stanza 16 of the *Lokasenna* could mean "Odin's son" and is translated by Hollander as *Odin's kin*. Bragi's mother is never named. If Bragi's mother is [Frigg](#), then Frigg is somewhat dismissive of Bragi in the *Lokasenna* in stanza 27 when Frigg complains that if she had a son in [Aegir](#)'s hall as brave as [Baldr](#) then [Loki](#) would have to fight for his life.

"Loki Taunts Bragi" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood.



In that poem Bragi at first forbids Loki to enter the hall but is overruled by Odin. Loki then gives a greeting to all gods and goddesses who are in the hall save to Bragi. Bragi generously offers his sword, horse, and an arm ring as peace gift but Loki only responds by accusing Bragi of cowardice, of being the most afraid to fight of any of the [Aesir](#) and [Elves](#) within the hall. Bragi responds that if they were outside the hall, he would have Loki's head, but Loki only repeats the accusation. When Bragi's wife Idunn attempts to calm Bragi, Loki accuses

her of embracing her brother's slayer, a reference to matters that have not survived. It may be that Bragi had slain Idunn's brother.

Idunn

In [Norse mythology](#), **Idunn** is a goddess associated with [apples](#) and youth. Idunn 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, she is described as the wife of the [skaldic](#) god [Bragi](#), and in the *Prose Edda*, also as a keeper of apples and granter of [eternal youthfulness](#).

The *Prose Edda* relates that [Loki](#) was once forced by the [jötunn Tjazi](#) to lure Idunn out of [Asgard](#) and into a wood, promising her interesting apples. Tjazi, in the form of an eagle, snatches Idunn from the wood and takes her to his home. Idunn's absence causes the gods to grow old and gray, and they realize that Loki is responsible for her disappearance. Loki promises to return her and, in the form of a falcon, finds alone at Tjazi's home, turns her into a [nut](#) and takes her back to Asgard. Tjazi finds that Idunn is gone, turns into an eagle and furiously chases after Loki. The gods build a pyre in Asgard and, after a sudden stop by Loki, Tjazi's feathers catch fire, he falls, and the gods kill him.



Poetic Edda

Idun (1905) by Bernard Evans Ward.

Idunn is introduced as Bragi's wife in the prose introduction to the poem *Lokasenna*, where the two attend a feast held by [Aegir](#).

In this exchange, Loki has accused Idunn of having slept with the killer of her brother. However, neither this brother nor killer are accounted for in any other surviving source. Afterwards, the goddess [Gefjon](#) speaks up and the poem continues in turn.



Idunn, Loki, Heimdallr and Bragi (1906) by Lorenz Frølich.

"Ydun" (1858) by Herman Wilhelm Bissen.



Heimdall

"Heimdallr returns the necklace Bryting to Freya" (1846) by Nils Johan Olsson Blommér.



Heimdall is one of the [Aesir](#) (gods) in [Norse mythology](#), called the "whitest of the gods". Heimdall is the guardian of the gods and of the link between [Midgard](#) and [Asgard](#), the [Bifrost Bridge](#). Legends foretell that he will sound the [Gjallarhorn](#), alerting the [Aesir](#) to the onset of [Ragnarök](#) where the world ends and is reborn.

Heimdall, as guardian, is described as being able to hear [grass](#) growing and single leaves falling, able to see to the end of the world, and so alert that he requires no sleep at all. Heimdall is described as a son of [Odin](#), perhaps a foster son. Heimdall was destined to be the last of the gods to perish at [Ragnarök](#) when he and [Loki](#) would slay one another.

"Heimdall and his Nine Mothers" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood



Heimdall is described as the son of nine different mothers (possibly the nine daughters of [Aegir](#), called billow maidens) and was called the *White God*. His [hall](#) was called *Himinbjörg* and his [horse](#) was [Gulltoppr](#)

Once, [Freyja](#) woke up and found that someone had stolen [Brisingamen](#). Heimdall helped her search for it and eventually found the thief, who turned out to be [Loki](#) and they fought in the form of seals at Vagasker and Singasteinn, wherever they may be. Heimdall won and returned Brisingamen to Freyja.

A depiction of valkyries encountering the god Heimdallr as they carry a dead man to Valhalla (1906) by Lorenz Frølich.

Archeological Evidence

It has been suggested that a figure holding a horn and a sword that is depicted on a damaged [Manx cross](#) from [Jurby](#), [Isle of Man](#), represents Heimdall. There is general agreement that Heimdall holding his horn is also shown on a panel of the [Gosforth Cross](#) in England.



Vidarr

A depiction of Vidarr stabbing Fenrir while holding his jaws apart (1908) by W. G. Collingwood, inspired by the Gosforth Cross.



In [Norse mythology](#), **Vidarr** is a god among the [Aesir](#) associated with vengeance. Vidarr is described as the [son of Odin](#) and the [jötunn Gridr](#), and is foretold to avenge his father's death by killing the wolf [Fenrir](#) at [Ragnarök](#), a conflict which he is described as surviving. Vidarr is attested in the [Poetic Edda](#), compiled in the 13th century from earlier traditional sources, the [Prose Edda](#), written in the 13th century by [Snorri Sturluson](#), and is interpreted as depicted with Fenrir on the [Gosforth Cross](#).

Archaeological record

Detail from the Gosforth Cross.



The mid-11th century [Gosforth Cross](#), located in [Cumbria](#), England, has been described as depicting a combination of scenes from the Christian [Judgement Day](#) and the pagan Ragnarök. The cross features various figures depicted in [Borre style](#), including a man with a spear facing a monstrous head, one of whose feet is thrust into the beast's forked tongue and on its lower jaw, while a hand is placed against its upper jaw, a scene interpreted as Vidarr fighting Fenrir. This depiction has been theorized as a metaphor for Christ's defeat of Satan.



A depiction of Vidarr and Vali (1892) by Axel Kulle.

Saemingr

Saemingr was a king of [Norway](#) according to [Snorri Sturluson](#)'s [euhemerized](#) accounts. He was said to be the son of [Odin](#) or [Yngvi-Freyr](#).

According to the [prologue of the *Prose Edda*](#), Saemingr was one of the [sons of Odin](#) and the ancestor of the kings of Norway and of the [jarls of Hladir](#). Snorri relates that Odin settled in [Sweden](#) and:

After that he went into the north, until he was stopped by the sea, which men thought lay around all the lands of the earth; and there he set his son over this kingdom, which is now called Norway. This king was Saemingr; the kings of Norway trace their lineage from him, and so do also the [jarls](#) and the other mighty men, as is said in the [Haleygjatal](#).
—Prologue of the *Prose Edda* (11) [Brodeur's translation](#)

In the [Ynglinga saga](#), Snorri adds that Saemingr's mother was [Skadi](#):

[Njord](#) took a wife called Skade; but she would not live with him and married afterwards Odin, and had many sons by him, of whom one was called Saeming; and about him [Eyvind Skaldaspiller](#) sings thus: --
"To Asa's son Queen Skade bore
Saeming, who dyed his shield in gore, --
The giant-queen of rock and snow,
Who loves to dwell on earth below,
The [iron pine-tree](#)'s daughter, she
Sprung from the rocks that rib the sea,
To Odin bore full many a son,
Heroes of many a battle won."
To Saeming [Earl Hakon the Great](#) reckoned back his pedigree.
—*The Ynglinga Saga* (8), [Laing's translation](#)

Saemingr is also listed among the sons of Odin.

The late [Saga of Halfdan Eysteinsson](#) also reports that Saemingr was Odin's son. The saga adds that he reigned over [Hålogaland](#). He married Nauma and had a son called Prandr.

Skjöldr

Skjöld is proclaimed king.



Skjöldr (Latinized as **Skioldus**, sometimes Anglicized as **Skjold** or **Skiold**) was among the first [legendary Danish kings](#).

In the [Skjöldunga](#) and the [Ynglinga sagas](#), Odin came from Asia and conquered Northern Europe. He gave Sweden to his son Yngvi and Denmark to his son Skjöldr. Since then the kings of [Sweden](#) were called [Ynglings](#) and those of [Denmark](#) Skjöldungs ([Scyldings](#)).

This man was famous in his youth among the huntsmen of his father for his conquest of a monstrous beast: a marvellous incident, which augured his future prowess. For he chanced to obtain leave from his guardians, who were rearing him very carefully, to go and see the hunting. A bear of extraordinary size met him; he had no spear, but with the girdle that he commonly wore, he contrived to bind it, and gave it to his escort to kill. More than this, many champions of tried prowess were at the same time of his life vanquished by him singly; of these Attal and Skat were renowned and famous. While but fifteen years of age he was of unusual bodily size and displayed mortal strength in its perfection, and so mighty were the proofs of his powers that the rest of the kings of the Danes were called after him by a common title, the Skjöldungs.



Skjöldr ties up the bear, illustration by Louis Moe

Gefjon

Gefjon and King Gylphi (1906) by Lorenz Frølich



In [Norse mythology](#), **Gefjon** or **Gefjun** is a goddess associated with [ploughing](#), the [Danish](#) island of [Zealand](#), the legendary early [Swedish](#) king [Gylfi](#), the king [Skjöldr](#), and [virginity](#).

The *Prose Edda* and *Heimskringla* both report that Gefjon plowed away what is now lake [Mälaren](#), [Sweden](#), and with this land formed the island of Zealand, Denmark. In addition, the *Prose Edda* describes that not only is Gefjon a virgin herself, but that all who die a virgin become her attendants. *Heimskringla*

notes that Gefjon married king [Skjöldr](#).

The *Prose Edda* book [Gylfaginning](#) begins with a prose account stating that King [Gylfi](#) was once the ruler of "what is now called Sweden," and that he was said to have given "a certain vagrant woman, as reward for his entertainment, one plough-land in his kingdom, as much as four oxen could plow up in a day and night." This woman was "of the race of the Aesir" and her name was Gefjun. Gefjun took four oxen from [Jötunheimr](#) in the north. These oxen were her sons from an unnamed jötunn. Gefjun's plough "cut so hard and deep that it uprooted the land, and the oxen drew the land out into the sea to the west and halted in a certain sound. Where the land had been taken from a lake stands. The lake is now known as [Lake Mälär](#), located in Sweden, and the inlets in this lake parallel the headlands of Zealand.

The [Ynglinga saga](#) relates that Odin sent Gefjun from [Odense](#), [Funen](#) "north over the sound to seek for land." There, Gefjun encountered king Gylfi "and he gave her ploughland." Gefjun went to the land of Jötunheimr, and there bore four sons to a jötunn. Gefjun transformed these four sons into [oxen](#), attached them to a plough, and drew forth the land westward of the sea, opposite to Odense. The saga adds that this land is now called Zealand, and that Gefjun married [Skjöldr](#) (described here as "a son of Odin"). The two dwelled in [Lejre](#) thereafter.



The Gefjon fountain (1908) by Anders Bundgård, the largest monument in Copenhagen and used as a wishing well.

Gefjon ploughs the earth in Sweden by Lorenz Frølich



Gram of Denmark

Gram kills king Henry, illustration by Louis Moe



Gram was one of the earliest [legendary Danish kings](#) according to [Saxo Grammaticus](#)' *Gesta Danorum*. His history is given in more detail than those of his predecessors. [Georges Dumézil](#) argued that Gram was partially modelled on the god [Thor](#), in particular his defeat of [Hrungnir](#) and subsequent encounter with [Groa](#).

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gr%C3%B3a>

Groa

"Awake Groa Awake Mother" Illustration by John Bauer

In [Norse mythology](#), **Groa** is a [völva](#) and practitioner of [seidr](#), the

wife of [Aurvandil the Bold](#). **Groa** is a woman saved from marrying a giant by King [Gram](#).

"Groa's Incantation" (1908) by W. G. Collingwood.



Groa is also a [völva](#), summoned from beyond the grave, in the [Old Norse](#) poem [Grogaldr](#), by her son [Svipdagr](#). In death she has lost none of her prophetic powers, and is able to assist him in a successful conclusion of the task which he has been set by his cruel [stepmother](#).



Gro and Gram, illustration by Louis Moe



Svipdagr

Freyja and Svipdag illustrated by John Bauer in 1911 for Our Fathers' Godsaga by Viktor Rydberg.



Svipdagr ([Old Norse](#) "sudden day") is the hero of the two [Old Norse Eddaic poems](#), [Grogaldr](#) and [Fjölsvinnsmal](#), which are contained within the body of one work; [Svipdagsmal](#). Svipdagr is set a task by his [stepmother](#) to meet the goddess [Menglöd](#), who is his "fated bride." In order to accomplish this seemingly impossible task he summons, by means of [necromancy](#) the shade of his dead mother, [Groa](#), a [völva](#) who also appears in the Prose Edda, to cast nine spells for him. This she does and the first poem abruptly ends.

At the beginning of the second poem, Svipdagr arrives at Menglöd's castle where he is interrogated in a game of riddles by the watchman, from whom he conceals his true name. The watchman is named Fjölsvidr, a name of

Odin in [Grímnismal](#). He is accompanied by his wolf-hounds Geri and Gifr. After a series of eighteen questions and answers concerning the castle, its inhabitants, and its environment, Ultimately, Svipdagr learns that the gates will only open to one person: Svipdagr. On revealing his identity, the gates of the castle open and Menglöd rises to greets her expected lover, welcoming him "back" to her.

In most scholarship, Menglöd has been identified with Freyja since the early part of the 19th century, following [Jacob Grimm](#). In his *Our Fathers' Godsaga*, the Swedish scholar [Viktor Rydberg](#) identifies Svipdagr with Freyja's husband Odr/Ottar.

Hadingus

Hadingus (**Hading**) was one of the earliest [legendary Danish kings](#) according to [Saxo Grammaticus](#)' *Gesta Danorum* where he has a detailed biography.

Hadingus is the son of Gram and Signe, the daughter of Finnish King Sumle. Gram steals Signe from her wedding, kills the husband (Henry, King of Saxony) and takes her to Denmark, where Hadingus is born. When Gram is killed by Swipdag, King of Norway, Hadingus is taken to Sweden and is fostered by the giant Wagnofthus and his daughter [Harthgrepa](#). He is eager to become a warrior but Harthgrepa tries to dissuade him from it in favor of entering into a quasi-incestuous love-relationship with herself.

Hadingus meets the one-eyed old man, illustration by Louis Moe



Why doth thy life thus waste and wander? Why dost thou pass thy years unwed, following arms, thirsting for throats? Nor does my beauty draw thy vows. Carried away by excess of frenzy, thou art little prone to love. Steeped in blood and slaughter, thou judgest wars better than the bed, nor refreshest thy soul with incitements. Thy fierceness finds no leisure; dalliance is far from thee, and savagery fostered. Nor is thy hand free from blasphemy while thou loathest the rites of love. Let this hateful strictness pass away, let that loving warmth approach, and plight the troth of love to me, who gave thee the first breasts of milk in childhood, and helped thee, playing a mother's part, duteous to thy needs.

Hadingus accepts Harthgrepa's embraces and when he wants to travel back to Denmark she accompanies him. After raising a man from the dead to obtain information, Harthgrepa is killed by supernatural beings. At this point

Hadingus acquires a new patron, [Odin](#), who predicts his future and gives him advice.

The death of Hadingus, illustration by Louis Moe



Hadingus wages wars in the Baltic and achieves victory and renown. He then returns to Scandinavia, defeats Suibdagerus, his father's slayer, and becomes king of Denmark. As king he has an eventful career ahead of him. He wars with Norwegians and Swedes, offends a god by killing a divine animal and atones for it by a [sacrifice](#) to [Freyr](#), he rescues the princess Regnilda from giants and takes her as a wife, visits the underworld, participates in more wars and dies by hanging himself in front of his subjects.

The story of Hadding is retold in fictionalized form by [Poul Anderson](#) in the novel *War of the Gods*.

Hardgreipr

Harthgrepa or **Hardgreip** in [Old Norse](#) (« Hard-grip ») is a [giantess](#) who appears in the [legend](#) of the Norse hero [Hadingus](#), which is reported by [Saxo Grammaticus](#) in his [Gesta Danorum](#).

Hadingus and Harthgrepa, illustration by Louis Moe



Nursemaid, lover and companion of Hadingus

After killing king [Gram](#), the king of Norway Suibdagerus occupied Denmark and Gram's two sons, Guthormus and [Hadingus](#), had to flee. They were brought up by the giants [Wagnhoftus](#) and Haphlius.

When Hadingus was adolescent, fighting was all he ever thought about. Harthgrepa, Wagnhoftus's daughter, tried to make him discover love and made repeated attempts to seduce him. Finally, she sang him a song ending by:

Tie with me the bond of passion.
For I first gave you the milk of my breast,
tended you as a baby boy,
performing all a mother's duties,
rendering every necessary service.

Hadingus put forward that the big size of the giantess hindered this project. Harthgrepa replied that she had the ability to change size at will: "I become huge to fright the fierce, but small to lie with men". She then became Hadingus' lover.

When Hadingus decided to go back to his country, she came with him, dressed like a man. They spent one night in a house whose host had just died. Harthgrepa practised magic, making Hadingus put a wood stick carved with spells under the corpse's tongue, thus compelling him to speak. He cursed them and predicted their future, especially Harthgrepa's death.

Another night, while they were sleeping in a wood, a huge hand entered their shelter. Harthgrepa then got bigger and, holding firmly the hand, pulled it so that Hadingus could chop it off.

A short time after, she was killed, torn apart by giants.

Völsung

Synopsis

Völsung was the great-grandson of [Odin](#) himself, and it was Odin who made sure that Völsung would be born. Völsung's parents, who were the king and queen of [Hunaland](#) could not have any children until Odin and his consort [Frigg](#) sent them a giantess named [Ljod](#) carrying the apple of fertility. Völsung's father died shortly after this, but his wife was pregnant for six years, until she had had enough. She commanded that the child be delivered by [caesarian](#), an operation that in those days cost the life of the mother. Völsung was a strong child and he kissed his mother before she died.

He was immediately proclaimed king of Hunaland and when he had grown up he married the giantess [Ljod](#). First they had twins, the girl [Signy](#) and her twin brother named [Sigmund](#) then nine more sons.

Völsung built himself a great hall in the centre of which stood a large apple tree. [Siggeir](#), the [King of the Geats](#), soon arrived and proposed to Signy. Both Völsung and his sons approved, but Signy was less enthusiastic.

A great wedding was held in the hall, when suddenly a stranger appeared. He was a tall old man with only one eye and could not be anybody else but [Odin](#). He went to the apple tree, took his sword and stuck it deep into the trunk. [Odin](#) told everyone that the sword was meant for the man who could pull the sword from the apple tree. Then he vanished.

Everyone at the wedding tried to pull the sword but only Sigmund succeeded, and he did so effortlessly. The sword was named [Gram](#) and it proved to be an excellent weapon. Siggeir, his brother-in-law, offered thrice its weight in gold for the sword, but Sigmund scornfully said no. This greatly angered Siggeir, who returned home the next day.

Three months later, Völsung and his sons were invited to banquet with Siggeir. They were met by Signy, who warned them that Siggeir intended to ambush them. They refused to turn back whereupon Signy cried and implored them to go home. Soon they were attacked by the [Geats](#), Völsung fell and his ten sons were taken captive.

Signy

Signy and Hagbard



Signy or **Signe** (sometimes known as **Sieglinde**) is the name of two heroines in two connected legends from [Scandinavian mythology](#) which were very popular in medieval Scandinavia. Both appear in the [Völsunga saga](#), which was adapted into other works such as [Wagner's Ring](#), including its famous opera [The Valkyrie](#).

The first **Signe** was the daughter of king [Völsung](#). She was married to the villainous [Geatish king Siggeir](#) who has her whole family treacherously murdered, except for her brother [Sigmund](#). She saves her brother, has an incestuous affair with him and bears the son [Sinfjötli](#). She burnt herself to death with her hated husband.

The second Signe is the daughter of king [Siggeir](#)'s nephew [Sigar](#). She fell in love with the [sea-king Hagbard](#), and promised him that she would not live if he died. They were discovered and Hagbard was sentenced to be hanged. Hagbard managed to signal this to Signy who set her house on fire and died in the flames whereupon Hagbard hanged himself in the gallows, see [Hagbard and Signy](#) for more.

Siggeir

Siggeir is the king of Gautland (i.e. [Götaland](#)), in the *Völsunga saga*. In *Skaldskaparmál* he is given as a [Sikling](#) and a relative of [Sigar](#) who killed the hero [Hagbard](#). *Hversu Noregr byggdist* specifies that the last Sigar was Siggeir's nephew.

According to the *Völsunga saga*, Siggeir married [Signy](#), the sister of [Sigmund](#) and the daughter of king [Völsung](#). At the banquet [Odin](#) appears in disguise wearing a cape and a hood and sticks a sword in the tree Branstock. Then he said that whoever managed to pull the sword out could keep it. Siggeir and everyone else tried but only Sigmund succeeded. Siggeir generously offered three times the sword's value, but Sigmund mockingly refused. Siggeir was offended and went home the next day thinking of revenge.

Consequently, Siggeir invited Sigmund, his father Völsung and Sigmund's nine brothers to a visit in Gautland to see the newlyweds three months later. When the Völsung clan had arrived they were attacked by the Gauts ([Geats](#)) and king Völsung was killed and his sons captured. Signy beseeched her husband to spare her brothers and to put them in stocks instead of killing them. As Siggeir thought that the brothers deserved to be tortured before they were killed, he agreed.

He then let his [shape-shifting](#) mother turn into a [wolf](#) and each night devour one of the brothers, until only Sigmund remained. Signy had a servant smear honey on the face of Sigmund and when the she-wolf arrived she started licking the honey off Sigmund's face. As she licked, she stuck her tongue into Sigmund's mouth, whereupon Sigmund bit her tongue off, killing her. Sigmund then hid in the forests of Gautland and Signy brought him everything he needed.

Signy gave Siggeir two sons and when the oldest one was ten years old, she sent him to Sigmund to train him to avenge the Völsungs. The boy did not stand a test of courage so Signy asked Sigmund to kill her worthless son. The same thing happened to Siggeir's second son.

Signy came to Sigmund in the guise of a witch and she and her brother committed incest and had the son [Sinfjotli](#). After some adventures Sigmund and Sinfjotli killed Siggeir.

Sigmund

In [Norse mythology](#), **Sigmund** is a hero whose story is told in the [Volsunga saga](#). He and his sister, [Signy](#), are the children of [Völsung](#) and his wife [Ljod](#). Sigmund is best known as the father of [Sigurd](#) the dragon-slayer.

A depiction of Sigmund by Arthur Rackham



"Sigmund's Sword" (1889) by Johannes Gehrts.

visited by a [one-eyed, very tall man](#) whom they do not recognize. The stranger is wearing a hooded, mottled cape, linen breeches tied around his legs, and is barefooted. Sword in hand, the man walks towards Barnstokkr and his hood hangs low over his head, gray with age. The man brandishes the sword and thrusts it into the trunk of the tree, and the blade sinks to its hilt. Words of welcome fail the crowd.

The tall stranger says that he who draws the sword from the trunk shall receive it as a gift, and he who is able to pull free the sword shall never carry a better sword than it. The old man leaves the hall, and nobody knows who he was, or where he went. Everyone stands, trying their hand at pulling free the sword from the trunk of Barnstokkr. The noblest attempt to pull free the sword first followed by those ranked after them. Sigmund, son of King Völsung, takes his turn, and—as if the sword had lay loose for him—he draws it from the trunk.

[Siggeir](#) is smitten with envy and desire for the sword. Siggeir invites Sigmund, his father Völsung and Sigmund's [nine](#) brothers to visit him in in Gautland to see the newlyweds three months later. When the Völsung clan arrive they are attacked by the Gauts; king Völsung is killed and his sons captured. Signy beseeches her husband to spare her brothers and to put them in [stocks](#) instead of killing them. As Siggeir thinks that the brothers deserve to be tortured before they are killed, he agrees.

He then lets his [shape-shifting](#) mother turn into a wolf and devour one of the brothers each night, until only Sigmund remains. Signy has a servant smear [honey](#) on Sigmund's face and when the she-wolf arrives she starts licking the honey off Sigmund's face. She licks and sticks her tongue into Sigmund's mouth whereupon Sigmund bites her tongue off, killing her. Sigmund then hides in the forests of [Gautland](#) and Signy brings him everything he needs.

Sigmund escapes his bonds and lives underground in the wilderness on Siggeir's lands. While he is in hiding, Signy comes to him in the guise of a [Völva](#) (sorceress) and conceives a child by him, [Sinfjötli](#). Bent on revenge for their father's death, Signy sends her sons to Sigmund in the wilderness, one by one, to be tested. As each fails, Signy urges Sigmund to kill them. Finally, Sinfjötli (born of the [incest](#) between Signy and Sigmund) passes the test.

Sigmund and his son/nephew, Sinfjötli, grow wealthy as outlaws. In their wanderings, they come upon men sleeping in cursed wolf skins. Upon killing the men and wearing the wolf skins, Sigmund and Sinfjötli are cursed to a type of [lycanthropy](#). Eventually, Sinfjötli and Sigmund avenge the death of Volsung.



After the death of Signy, Sigmund and Sinfjötli go harrying together. Sigmund marries a woman named [Borghild](#) and has two sons, one of them named Helgi. Helgi and Sinfjötli rule a kingdom jointly. Helgi marries a woman named Sigrun after killing her father. Sinfjötli later kills Sigrun's brother in battle and Sigrun avenges her brother by poisoning Sinfjötli.

Later, Sigmund marries a woman named [Hjördis](#). After a short time of peace, Sigmund's lands are attacked by King Lyngi. While in battle, Sigmund matches up against an old man ([Odin](#) in disguise). Odin shatters Sigmund's sword, and Sigmund falls at the hands of others. Dying, Sigmund tells Hjördis that she is pregnant and that her son will one day make a great weapon out of the fragments of his sword. That son was to be [Sigurd](#). Sigurd himself had a son named Sigmund who was killed when he was three years old by a vengeful Brynhild.

"Odin in the Hall of the Völsungs" (1905) by Emil Doepler.

Sinfjötli

Odin taking the dead Sinfjötli to Valhalla



Sinfjötli in [Norse mythology](#) was born out of the incestuous relationship between [Sigmund](#) and his sister [Signy](#). He had the half-brothers [Sigurd](#), [Helgi Hundingsbane](#) and [Hamund](#).

Sinfjötli's mother, Signy, had married the [Geatish king Siggeir](#) who treacherously murdered her whole [clan](#) until only Sigmund was left. She dressed up as a young [Völva](#) ([witch](#), [shaman](#)) who visited Sigmund and slept with him. Then she gave Sigmund a son, Sinfjötli, who would avenge their clan together with Sigmund by killing Siggeir.

Sigmund and Sinfjötli went to [Hunaland](#) where Sigmund was proclaimed king of the Huns. Sigmund married [Borghild](#) and had the sons [Helgi Hundingsbane](#) and [Hamund](#). Borghild was jealous and hated Sinfjötli, which Sinfjötli knew. In order to dispose of him, she gave Sigmund three cups of wine of which the last contained poison. After having seen his father drink two of the cups, Sinfjötli drank the third and died.

Sigmund brought his son's corpse to the [fjords](#), where he met [Odin](#) disguised as a ferryman. Odin said that he could only take one passenger at a time and took Sinfjötli's body first. Out on the water, Odin and Sinfjötli disappeared, and went to [Valhalla](#).



"Odin takes the corpse of Sinfjötli" (1883) by Johannes Gehrts.

Helgi Hundingsbane

Helgi returns to Valhalla

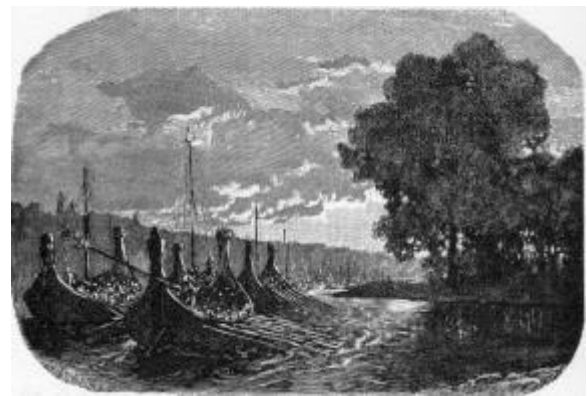


Helgi Hundingsbane is a hero in [Norse sagas](#). Helgi and his mistress [Sigrun](#) were Helgi Hjörvardsson and [Svava](#) of the [Helgakvida Hjörvardssonar](#) [reborn](#).

Helgi appears to be the son of [Sigmund](#) and [Borghild](#), and only fifteen years old he avenges his father by slaying [Hunding](#), the king of the [Saxons](#). This gives him the cognomen *Hunding's bane*. He continues with his warlike feats and one day, as he stands aboard his longship, he is visited by a [valkyrie](#) named [Sigrun](#), who can ride through the air and over the sea and who knows well about his feats. She embraces him and kisses him, and he immediately falls in love with her.

Battle at Brandey

However, her father king [Högne](#) of [Östergötland](#) has promised her to [Hothbrodd](#), the son



of king [Granmar](#) of [Södermanland](#). Helgi collects a force at Brandey and goes to Granmarr's kingdom. It is retold in detail about the gathering of the forces and of how, in a great battle, Helgi and his brother [Sinfjötli](#) fight with [Högne](#), his son [Dag](#), [Granmar](#) and all of Granmar's sons [Hothbrodd](#), [Starkad](#) and [Gudmund](#). Everyone dies but Helgi, Sinfjötli and Högne's youngest son Dag. Sigrun bids an angry farewell to the dying Hothbrodd and cries with happiness when she learns that her whole family is dead but Dag, who swears allegiance to Helgi.

Sigrun and Helgi marry and they have several sons. Dag is, however, tormented by the fact that honour demands that he avenge his father. Somehow, [Odin](#) lends him a spear, and he dutifully pierces Helgi with it. Then he goes to Sigrun to give his condolences, which makes her curse him:

The wind would stop every time he entered a ship.

The fastest horse would not carry him if he is hunted.

His sword would wound no one but himself.



Sigrun waiting by Helgi's barrow

She tells Dag to flee into the woods and to thenceforth live on carrion. Then she buries Helgi in a [barrow](#), but Helgi's soul is already in [Valhalla](#), where Odin tells him to make himself comfortable. Helgi gladly obeys and orders Hunding to feed the pigs, to wash the [einherjars'](#) feet and to do other menial chores.

Sigrun

A depiction of Sigrun with Helgi Hundingsbane (1919) by Robert Engels.



Sigrun ([Old Norse](#) "victory [rune](#)") is a [valkyrie](#) in [Norse mythology](#). Her story is related in [Helgakvida Hundingsbana I](#) and [Helgakvida Hundingsbana II](#), in the [Poetic Edda](#). The original editor annotated that she was [Svafa](#) reborn. The hero [Helgi Hundingsbane](#) first meets her when she leads a band of [nine](#) Valkyries:

15. Then glittered light
from Logafjoll,
And from the light
the flashes leaped;

-
High under helms
on heaven's field;
Their byrnies all
with blood were red,
And from their spears
the sparks flew forth.

"Helgi and Sigrun" (1901) by Johannes Gehrts.



The two fall in love, and Sigrun tells Helgi that her father [Högni](#) has promised her to [Hödbroddr](#), the son of king [Granmarr](#). Helgi invades Granmar's kingdom and slays anyone opposing their relationship. Only Sigrun's brother Dagr is left alive on condition that he swears fealty to Helgi.

Dagr is however obliged by honour to avenge his brothers and after having summoned [Odin](#), the god gives him a spear. In a place called [Fjoturlund](#), Dagr kills Helgi and goes back to his sister to tell her of his deed. Sigrun puts Dagr under a powerful curse after which he is obliged to live on carrion in the woods.

Helgi is put in a [barrow](#), but returns from Valhalla one last time so that the two can spend a night together.

Sigrun died early from the sadness, but was reborn again as a Valkyrie. In the next life, she was [Kara](#) and Helgi was [Helgi Haddingjaskati](#), whose story is related in [Hromundar saga Gripssonar](#).

Hamundr

Hamundr is a minor character in [Norse mythology](#).

Hamundr is known for two roles. Firstly, he was the son of [Sigmund](#) (15467) and the brother of [Sigurd](#), [Helgi Hundingsbane](#) and [Sinfjötli](#). Secondly, he was the father of [Haki](#) and [Hagbard](#), two legendary [sea-kings](#). His son [Hagbard](#) fell in love with [Signy](#), a relative of [Sigmund](#)'s enemy [Siggeir](#) (see [Hagbard and Signy](#)).

Appearances

Hamundr makes only a [cameo appearance](#) in the *[Poetic Edda](#)*, figuring only in "[Fra dauda Sinfjötla](#)", where his family is discussed. According to this passage, he was the youngest of the three sons of [Sigmund](#), "king over Frankland"; his oldest brother was [Sinfjötli](#), and [Helgi](#) was the middle of the three.

Hamundr's role in the *[Völsunga saga](#)* is similarly minimal, appearing only in the 26th chapter of only some modern editions. One translation includes him in a quote by [Brynhildr](#), speaking of [Haki](#) and [Hagbard](#) as his sons. This reference, however, is not in the original, being supplied by the translator from the writings of [Saxo Grammaticus](#).

In Saxo's *[Gesta Danorum](#)* book 7, he is referred to as a petty king and as the father of Hagbard and Haki, and of two other sons who were killed early in the feud with Sigar, Helwin and Hamund (a namesake of his father's).

Hagbard

"Hagbard's gallows", a megalithic monument in Alsige, Halland, Sweden.



Hagbard, the brother of [Haki](#) and son of [Hamund](#), was a famous [Scandinavian sea-king](#), in [Norse mythology](#).

Hagbard remained well-known until recent times in the legend of [Hagbard and Signy](#). This famous legend tells that Hagbard fell in love with [Signy](#) the daughter of king [Sigar](#), the nephew of king [Siggeir](#) (of the [Völsunga saga](#)), a love affair which ended tragically in their deaths, when Sigar wanted to have Hagbard hanged.

However, most legends surrounding Hagbard are probably lost. In the [Völsunga saga](#), [Gudrun](#) and [Brynhild](#) have a discussion on the "greatest of men" referring to a legend now lost, where Hagbard is mentioned together with Haki's sons, who have not yet avenged their sisters by killing the evil [Sigar](#) (the feud with Sigar is still going on and Hagbard not yet hanged):

“ "Good talk," says Gudrun, "let us do even so; what kings deemest thou to have been the first of all men?" Brynhild says, "The sons of Haki, and Hagbard withal; they brought to pass many a deed of fame in the warfare." Gudrun answers, "Great men certes, and of noble fame! Yet [Sigar](#) took their one sister, and burned the other, house and all; and they may be called slow to revenge the deed; why didst thou not name my brethren who are held to be the first of men as at this time?" ”

[Snorri Sturluson](#) wrote in the [Ynglinga saga](#) that Hagbard occasionally plundered together with his brother Haki. Concerning, the adventures and death of the Swedish king [Jorund](#) (whom Snorri makes a successor of Haki), he cites the poem *Haleygjatal*.

Haki

Hake, **Haki** or **Haco**, the brother of [Hagbard](#), was a famous [Scandinavian sea-king](#), in [Norse mythology](#). He would have lived in the 5th century and he is mentioned in [Ynglinga saga](#).

When Haki had amassed a great force of warriors, and occasionally plundered together with his brother [Hagbard](#) (who himself was the hero of one of the most popular legends of ancient Scandinavia, see [Hagbard and Signy](#)). Haki considered that he had amassed enough wealth and followers to make himself the king of Sweden. He consequently went with his army against the Swedish royal seat at [Uppsala](#). Haki was a brutal warrior and he had twelve champions among whom was the legendary warrior [Starkad](#) the Old.

The Swedish king [Hugleik](#) (17750) had also gathered a large army and was supported by the two champions [Svipdag](#) and [Geigad](#). On the [Fyrisvellir](#), south of Uppsala, there was a great battle in which the Swedish army was defeated. Haki and his men captured the Swedish champions Svipdag and Geigad and then they attacked the *shield-circle* around the Swedish king and slew him and his two sons.

After the Battle of the Fyrisvellir, by Mårten Eskil Winge (1888).



Haki and his warriors subdued the Swedish provinces and Haki made himself the king of Sweden. Then he happily sat in peace for three years while his warriors travelled far and wide and amassed fortunes.

The previous king Hugleik had two cousins named Eric and [Jorund](#)

(15521, 46th ggf) who had become famous by killing [Gudlög](#), the king of [Hålogaland](#). When they learnt that king Haki's champions were gone plundering, they assembled a large force and steered towards Sweden. They were joined by many Swedes who wanted to reinstall the [Yngling](#) dynasty on the Swedish throne.

The two brothers entered [Mälaren](#), went towards [Uppsala](#), and landed on the [Fyrisvellir](#). There, they were met by king Haki who had a considerably smaller force. Haki was, however, a brutal enemy who killed many men and lastly Erik who held the banner of the two brothers. Jorund and his men fled to the ships, but Haki was mortally wounded.

Haki asked for a [longship](#) which was loaded with his dead warriors and their weapons. He had the sails hoisted and set fire to a piece of [tar-wood](#), which he asked to be covered with a pile of wood. Haki was all but dead when he was laid on top of the pile. The wind was blowing towards the water and the ship departed in full flame between the small islands out into the sea. This was much talked about and it gave him great fame.

Alrek (48th great grand father) and Eirík

Alrek and Erik fighting with their horse bridles.



Alrek and **Eirík** ([Old Norse](#) *Alrekr* and *Eiríkr*), were two [legendary kings of Sweden](#). According to the *Ynglinga saga*, Alrek and Eirík 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.

[Saxo Grammaticus](#) in Book 5 of his *Gesta Danorum* introduces *Ericus Desertus*, that is Erik the Eloquent, son of a champion named *Regnerus* (Ragnar), both Norwegians in the service of King *Gøtarus* (Götar) of Norway, a monarch otherwise unknown. This Erik is likely to be the Eirík the Eloquent or Eiríkr the Wise in Speech mentioned by Snorri Sturluson in the *Skaldskaparmál* as being of [Ylfing](#) lineage. But he otherwise has left no clear record in surviving Norse literature.

Saxo makes up for it by telling at great length of Erik's amusing deeds. He relates how Erik outwitted all foes with clever tricks and became the counselor of [Frodi](#) (15141, 54th ggf) son of Fridleif, king of [Denmark](#). Erik's expeditions on Frodi's behalf always went well because of Erik's cunning and way with words. Erik finally married Frodi's sister Gunvara and Erik's elder half-brother *Rollerus* (Roller) was made king of Norway.

Saxo then brings in a king of the Swedes named Alricus (Alrik) who corresponds to Alrek of the Norse tradition. Alrik was at war with [Gestiblandus](#) king of the [Gautar](#) (Geats) and Gestiblandus now sought Frodi's aid.

Erik and Skalk the [Scanian](#) pursued the war and slew Alrik's son Gunthiovus leader of the men of [Vermland](#) and [Solongs](#). 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 [Laplands](#), [Finland](#), and [Estonia](#)** as dependencies paying annual tribute.

Hugleik

Hugleik or **Ochilaik** (a namesake of [Hygelac](#)) was a [Swedish](#) king of the [House of Yngling](#), according to the [Ynglinga saga](#). He was the son of [Alf](#) and [Bera](#).

Some commentators assimilate Hugleik with his namesake, the [Geatish king Hygelac](#). However, although both kings were killed in battle, Chlochilaicus/Hygelac was killed near the coast of [France/Frisia](#), while Hugleik was killed at [Fyrisvellir](#) in Sweden.

When Hugleik's father and uncle had killed each other, Hugleik inherited the Swedish throne. Like his father, he was not a warrior, but preferred to stay at home. He was reputed to be as greedy as he was rich and, he preferred to be in the company of [jesters](#), [seidmen](#) and [völvas](#) who entertained him.

[Haki](#) and [Hagbard](#) (the hero of the legend of [Hagbard and Signy](#)) were two famous [sea-kings](#) who had amassed a great force of warriors, and they occasionally plundered together. Haki arrived in Sweden with his troops to assault [Uppsala](#). Haki was a murderous fighter and around himself he had his twelve hirdmen of whom one was the legendary old warrior [Starkad](#) (who had been in the service of [Hugleik's grandfather Erik](#) and great-uncle [Alrik](#)).

Hugleik had also mustered a large army and he was aided by two famous warriors named [Svipdag](#) and [Geigad](#).

The two armies met on the [Fyrisvellir](#) (Fyris Wolds) and a great battle ensued. The Swedish army was defeated, but the two champions Svipdag and Geigad pushed onwards even though Haki's champions were six times as many. They were both captured by Haki, and then Haki attacked the *shield-circle* around Hugleik and killed him together with both his sons.

Saxo writes that Starkad and Haki brought their fleet to Ireland where lived the rich and greedy king Hugleik. Hugleik was never generous to an honourable man, but spent all his riches on [mimes](#) and [jugglers](#). In spite of his avarice, Hugleik had the great champions Geigad and Svipdag.

When the battle began, the jugglers and mimes panicked and fled, and only Geigad and Svipdag remained to defend Hugleik, but they fought like an entire army. Geigad dealt Starkad a wound on the head, which was so severe that Starkad would later sing songs about it.

Starkad killed Hugleik and made the Irish flee. He then had the jugglers and mimes whipped and beaten, in order to humiliate them. Then the Danes brought Hugleik's riches out to Dublin to be publicly looted, and there was so much of it that none cared for its strict division.

Sigurd

"Siegfried Tasting the Dragon's Blood" by Arthur Rackham



Sigurd is a legendary hero of [Norse mythology](#), as well as the central character in the [Völsunga saga](#). The earliest extant representations for his legend come in pictorial form from seven [runestones](#) in [Sweden](#) and most notably the [Ramsund carving](#) (c. 1000) and the [Gök Runestone](#) (11th century).

As **Siegfried**, he is the hero in the German [Nibelungenlied](#), and [Richard Wagner](#)'s operas [Siegfried](#) and [Götterdämmerung](#)

In the [Völsunga saga](#), Sigurd is the posthumous son of [Sigmund](#) and his second wife, [Hiordis](#). Sigmund dies in battle when he attacks [Odin](#) (who is in disguise), and Odin shatters Sigmund's sword. Dying, Sigmund tells Hiordis of her pregnancy and bequeaths the fragments of his sword to his unborn son.

Hiordis marries King [Alf](#), and then Alf decided to send Sigurd to [Regin](#) as a foster. [Regin](#) tempts Sigurd to greed and violence by first asking Sigurd if he has control over Sigmund's gold. When Sigurd says that Alf and his family control the gold and will give him anything he desires, Regin asks Sigurd why he consents to a lowly position at court. Sigurd replies that he is treated as an equal by the kings and can get anything he desires. Then Regin asks Sigurd why he acts as stableboy to the kings and has no horse of his own. Sigurd then goes to get a horse. An old man (Odin in disguise) advises Sigurd on choice of horse, and in this way Sigurd gets [Grani](#), a horse derived from Odin's own [Sleipnir](#).

Grani and the sword Gram, 2001 Faroese stamp



Finally, [Regin](#) tries to tempt Sigurd by telling him the story of the Otter's Gold. Regin's father was [Hreidmar](#), and his two brothers were [Otr](#) and [Fafnir](#). Regin was a natural at smithing, and Otr was natural at swimming. Otr used to swim at Andvari's waterfall, where the dwarf [Andvari](#) lived. Andvari often assumed the form of a pike and swam in the pool.

One day, the [Aesir](#) saw [Otr](#) with a fish on the banks, thought him an [otter](#), and [Loki](#) killed him. They took the carcass to the nearby home of [Hreidmar](#) to display their catch. [Hreidmar](#), [Fafnir](#), and Regin seized the Aesir and demanded compensation for the death of Otr. The compensation was to stuff the body with gold and cover the skin with fine treasures. Loki got the net from the sea giantess [Ran](#), caught Andvari (as a pike), and demanded all of the dwarf's gold.

Andvari gave the gold, except for a ring. Loki took this ring, too, although it carried a curse of death on its bearer. The Aesir used this gold and stuffed Otr's body with gold and covered its skin in gold and covered the last exposed place (a whisker) with the ring of Andvari. Afterward, Fafnir killed Hreidmar and took the gold.

"Sigurd proofs the sword Gram" (1901) by Johannes Gehrts.

Sigurd agrees to kill Fafnir, who has turned himself into a dragon in order to be better able to guard the gold. Sigurd has Regin make him a sword, which he tests by striking the anvil. The sword shatters, so he has Regin make another. This also shatters. Finally, Sigurd has Regin make a sword out of the fragments that had been left to him by [Sigmund](#). The resulting sword, [Gram](#), cuts through the anvil. To kill Fafnir the dragon, Regin advises him to dig a pit, wait for Fafnir to walk over it, and then stab the dragon. Odin, posing as an old man, advises Sigurd to dig trenches also to drain the blood, and to bathe in it after killing the dragon; bathing in Fafnir's blood confers invulnerability. Sigurd does so and kills Fafnir; Sigurd then bathes in the dragon's blood, which touches all of his body except for one of his shoulders where a leaf was stuck. Regin then asked Sigurd to give him Fafnir's heart for himself. Sigurd drinks some of Fafnir's blood and gains the ability to understand the [language of birds](#). Birds advise him to kill Regin, since Regin is plotting Sigurd's death. Sigurd beheads Regin, roasts Fafnir's heart and consumes part of it. This gives him the gift of "wisdom" (prophecy).



Fafnir guards the gold hoard in this illustration to Richard Wagner's Siegfried.

Sigurd met [Brynhildr](#), a "[shieldmaiden](#)," after killing Fafnir. She pledges herself to him but also prophesies his doom and marriage to another.

Sigurd went to the court of Heimar, who was married to Bekkhild, sister of Brynhild, and then to the court of [Gjuki](#), where he came to live. Gjuki had three sons and one daughter by his wife, [Grimhild](#). The sons were [Gunnar](#), Hogni and Guttorm, and the daughter was [Gudrun](#). Grimhild made an "Ale of Forgetfulness" to force Sigurd to forget Brynhild, so he could marry Gudrun. Later, Gunnar wanted to court Brynhild. Brynhild's bower was surrounded by flames, and she promised herself only to the man daring enough to go through them. Only Grani, Sigurd's horse, would do it, and only with Sigurd on it. Sigurd exchanged shapes with Gunnar, rode through the flames, and won Brynhild for Gunnar.



Kriemhild and Gunther, Johann Heinrich Füssli, 1807

Gudrun (Krimhild) is a major figure in the early Germanic literature centered on the hero [Sigurd](#), son of [Sigmund](#). In [Norse mythology](#), Gudrun was the sister of [Gunnar](#). Gudrun fell in love with [Sigurd](#), who did not care for her, because he was in love with the [valkyrie Brynhild](#), to whom he gave the ring [Andvarinaut](#). Gudrun's brother Gunnar, however, wished to marry [Brynhild](#), but this was impossible because Brynhild, knowing that only Sigurd could do so, had sworn to marry only the man who could defeat her in a fair fight.

Sigurd stones

The **Sigurd stones** form a group of seven or eight [runestones](#) and one [image stone](#) that depict imagery from the legend of [Sigurd](#) the dragon slayer. They were made during the [Viking Age](#) and they constitute the earliest Norse representations of the matter of the [Nibelungenlied](#) and the Sigurd legends in the [Poetic Edda](#), the [Prose Edda](#) and the [Völsunga saga](#).



This runestone is in [runestone style Pr2](#). It was found in Drävle, but it was moved to the courtyard of the [manor house](#) Göksbo in the vicinity where it is presently raised. It has an image of Sigurd who thrusts his sword through the serpent, and the dwarf [Andvari](#), as well as the [Valkyrie Sigdrífa](#) who gives Sigurd a [drinking horn](#).

English translation:

"Vidbjörn and Karlungr and Eringeirr/Eringerdr and Nasi/Nesi had this stone raised in memory of Erinbjörn, their able father."

The illustration on the bottom part of this side of the stone is held to depict Sigurd's brother-in-law Gunnar.

This runestone is located on the cemetery of the church of Västerljung, but it was originally found in the foundation of the church tower. It is classified as being carved in runestone style [Pr2](#) and it was made by the [runemaster](#) Skamhals. Another runestone, Sö 323, is signed by a Skamhals, but that is believed to be a different person with the same name. This runestone depicts [Gunnar](#) playing the harp in the [snake pit](#).

English translation:

"Honefr raised (the stone) in memory of Geirmarr, his father. He met his end in [Thustr](#). Skammhals cut these runes."



The Ramsund carving is not quite a [runestone](#) as it is not carved into a stone, but into a flat rock close to [Ramsund](#), [Eskilstuna Municipality](#), [Södermanland](#), [Sweden](#). It is believed to have been carved around year [1000](#). It is generally considered an important piece of [Norse art](#) in runestone [style Pr1](#).



The Ramsund carving in [Sweden](#) depicts 1) how Sigurd is sitting naked in front of the fire preparing the dragon heart, from [Fafnir](#), for his foster-father [Regin](#), who is [Fafnir](#)'s brother. The heart is not finished yet, and when Sigurd touches it, he burns himself and sticks his finger into his mouth. As he has tasted dragon blood, he starts to understand the birds' song. 2) The birds say that

Regin will not keep his promise of reconciliation and will try to kill Sigurd, which causes Sigurd to cut off Regin's head. 3) Regin is dead beside his own head, his smithing tools with which he reforged Sigurd's sword [Gram](#) are scattered around him, and 4) Regin's horse is laden with the dragon's treasure. 5) is the previous event when Sigurd killed Fafnir, and 6) shows [Otr](#) from the saga's beginning.

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

Brynhildr

"Brynhild" (1897) by G. Bussière



Brynhildr is a [shieldmaiden](#) and a [valkyrie](#) in [Norse mythology](#). Under the name *Brünnhilde* she appears in the *Nibelungenlied*. Brynhildr is probably inspired by the [Visigothic](#) princess *Brunhilda of Austrasia*, married with the [Merovingian](#) king *Sigebert I* in [567](#).

Sigurd and Brynhild's funeral



According to the [Volsunga saga](#), Brynhildr is the daughter of [Budli](#). She was ordered to decide a fight between two kings: Hjalmgunnar and Agnar. The valkyrie knew that [Odin](#) himself preferred the older king, Hjalmgunnar, yet Brynhildr decided the battle for Agnar. For this [Odin](#) condemned the valkyrie to live the life of a mortal woman, and imprisoned her in a remote castle behind a wall of shields on top of mount [Hindarfjall](#) in the Alps, and cursed her to sleep on a couch (while being surrounded by fire) until any man would rescue and marry her. The hero [Sigurdr Sigmundson](#), heir to the clan of [Völsung](#) and slayer of the dragon [Fafnir](#), entered the castle and awoke Brynhildr by removing her helmet and cutting off her chainmail armour. He immediately fell in love with the shieldmaiden and proposed to her with the magic ring [Andvarinaut](#).

Faroese stamp depicting Brynhild & Budli



Gjuki's wife, the sorceress [Grimhild](#), wanting Sigurdr married to her daughter [Gudrun](#), prepared a magic potion that made Sigurdr forget about Brynhildr. Sigurdr soon married Gudrun. Hearing of Sigurdr's encounter with the valkyrie, Grimhild decided to make Brynhildr the wife of her son [Gunnar](#). Gunnar then sought to court Brynhild but was stopped by a ring of fire around the castle. He tried to ride through the flames with his own horse and then with Sigurdr's horse, [Grani](#), but still failed. Sigurdr then exchanged shapes with him and entered the ring of fire. Sigurdr (disguised as Gunnar) and Brynhildr married, and they stayed there three nights, but Sigurdr laid his sword between them (meaning that he did not take her virginity before giving her to the real Gunnar). Sigurdr also took the ring Andvarinaut from her finger and later gave it to Gudrun. Gunnar and Sigurdr soon returned to their true forms, with Brynhildr thinking she married Gunnar.

However, Gudrun and Brynhild later quarreled over whose husband was greater, Brynhildr boasting that even Sigurdr was not brave enough to ride through the flames. Gudrun revealed that it was actually Sigurdr who rode through the ring of fire, and Brynhildr became enraged. Sigurdr, remembering the truth, tried to console her, but to no avail. Brynhildr plotted revenge by urging Gunnar to kill Sigurdr, telling him that he slept with her in Hidarfjall, which he swore not to do. Gunnar and his brother [Hogni](#) were afraid to kill him themselves, as they had sworn oaths of brotherhood to Sigurdr. They incited their younger brother, [Gutthorm](#) to kill Sigurdr, by giving him a magic potion that enraged him, and he murdered Sigurdr in his sleep. Dying, Sigurdr threw his sword at Gutthorm, killing him. Brynhildr herself killed Sigurdr's three-year-old son, and then she willed herself to die. When Sigurdr's funeral pyre was aflame, she threw herself upon it – thus they passed on together to the realm of [Hel](#).

According to the Völsunga saga, Brynhildr bore Sigurdr a daughter, [Aslaug](#), who later married [Ragnar Lodbrok](#).

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

Aslaug

Aslaug, *Aslög*, *Kraka*, *Kraka* or *Randalin*, was a queen of [Scandinavian mythology](#) who appears in [Snorri's Edda](#), the [Völsunga saga](#) and the saga of [Ragnar Lodbrok](#).

The Fictional Aslaug

Aslaug was the daughter of [Sigurd](#) and the [shieldmaiden Brynhildr](#), but was raised by Brynhild's fosterfather Heimer. At the death of Sigurd and Brynhild, Heimer was concerned about Aslaug's security, so he made a harp large enough to hide the girl. He then travelled as a poor harpplayer carrying the harp containing the girl.

Once they arrived at [Spangereid](#) at [Lindesnes](#) in [Norway](#), where they could stay for the night in the house of Åke and Grima. Åke believed that he saw precious items stick out from the harp, which he told his wife Grima. Grima then convinced him of murdering Heimer as he was sleeping. However, when they broke the harp, they discovered a little girl, who they raised as their own, calling her Kraka (Crow). In order to hide her noble origins, they forced the girl always to be dirty and to walk in dirty clothes.

King Heimer and Aslaug





Kraka by Mårten Eskil Winge, 1862

However, once as she was bathing, she was discovered by some of [Ragnar Lodbrok](#)'s men, who had been sent ashore to bake bread. Confused by Kraka's beauty, they allowed the bread to be burnt, and when Ragnar enquired about this mishap, they told him about the girl. Ragnar then sent for her, but in order to test her wits, he commanded her neither to arrive dressed nor undressed, neither hungry nor full and neither alone nor in company. Kraka arrived dressed in a net, biting an onion and with only the dog as a companion. Impressed, Ragnar married her and she gave him the sons, [Ivar the Boneless](#), [Björn Ironside](#), [Hvitserk](#) and [Ragnvald](#).

Once Ragnar visited viceroy [Östen Beli](#) of Sweden and Östen convinced Ragnar of marrying the Swedish princess Ingeborg and of rejecting Kraka. At his return home, three birds had already informed Kraka of Ragnar's plans, and so she reproached him and told him of her true noble origins. In order to prove that she was the daughter of Sigurd who had slain [Fafnir](#), she said that she would bear a child whose eye would bear the image of a serpent. This happened and she bore the son [Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye](#). When Östen learnt of Ragnar's change of mind, he rebelled against Ragnar, but was slain by Ragnar's sons at Kraka's behest.

When Ragnar was about to undertake his fated expedition to England, his failure was due to his not heeding Kraka's warnings about the bad condition of the fleet. When Ragnar had been thrown into the snake pit by king Ella, he was protected by an enchanted shirt that Kraka had made. It was only when this shirt had been removed that the snakes could bite Ragnar and kill him.

Ragnar Lodbrok

Ragnar Lodbrok (Ragnar "Hairy-Breeks",) was a [Norse](#) legendary hero from the [Viking Age](#) who was thoroughly reshaped in [Old Norse poetry](#) and [legendary sagas](#).

Aella murdering Ragnar Lodbrok



The namesake and subject of “Ragnar’s Saga”, and one of the most popular Viking heroes among the Norse themselves, Ragnar was a great Viking commander and the scourge of France. A perennial seeker after the Danish throne, he was briefly ‘king’ of both Denmark and a large part of Sweden, (possibly from around 860 AD until his death in 865 AD). A colorful figure, he claimed to be descended from Odin, married the famous shield-maiden [Lathgertha](#), and told people he always sought greater adventures for fear that his sons who included such notable vikings as [Björn Ironside](#) and [Ivar the Boneless](#) would

eclipse him in fame and honor. Ragnar raided France many times, using the rivers as highways for his fleets of longships. By remaining on the move, he cleverly avoided battles with large concentrations of heavy Frankish cavalry, while maximizing his advantages of mobility and the general climate of fear of Viking unpredictability. His most notable raid was probably the raid upon Paris in 845 AD, which was spared from burning only by the payment of 7,000 lbs of silver as Danegeld by Charles the Fat. To court his second wife, the Swedish princess Thora, Ragnar traveled to Sweden and quelled an infestation of venomous snakes, famously wearing the hairy breeches whereby he gained his nickname. He continued the series of successful raids against France throughout the mid 9th century, and fought numerous civil wars in Denmark, until his luck ran out at last in Britain. After being shipwrecked on the English coast during a freak storm in 865, he was captured by Saxon king Aella and put to death in an infamous manner by being thrown into a pit of vipers.

A historic Ragnar Lodbrok is held to have been a [jarl](#) at the court of the [Danish](#) king [Horik I](#) (814-854), and this Ragnar participated in the [Viking](#) plunderings of [Paris](#) in 845.

A certain *Reginheri* attacked Paris with a fleet of 120 ships. The warriors belonging to the army of [Charles the Bald](#), were placed to guard the monastery in [St. Denis](#), but fled when the Danish Vikings executed their prisoners ferociously in front of their eyes.

Contemporary sources

Ragnar apparently spent most of his life as a [pirate](#) and raider, invading one country after another. One of his favorite tactics was to attack [Christian](#) cities on church [feast days](#), knowing that many soldiers would be in church. He would generally accept a huge payment to leave his victims alone, only to come back later and demand more riches in exchange for leaving.

But as the extent of his supposed realm shows, he was also a gifted military leader. By 845, he was a powerful man and most likely a contemporary of the first ruler of [Russia](#), the Viking [Rurik](#). It is said he was always seeking new adventures because he was worried that his freebooting sons would do things that would outshine his own achievements.

France

In 845 he sailed southward, looking for new worlds to conquer. With an alleged force of 120 ships and 5,000 Viking warriors, he landed in what is now [France](#), probably at the [Seine](#) estuary, and ravaged West Francia, as the westernmost part of the [Frankish Empire](#) was then known. [Rouen](#) was ravaged and then [Carolivenna](#), a mere 20 km from St. Denis. The raiders then attacked and captured [Paris](#). The traditional date for this is 28 March, which is today referred to as Ragnar Lodbrok Day by certain followers of the [Asatru](#) religion. The King of West Francia, [Charlemagne](#)'s grandson [Charles the Bald](#), paid Ragnar a huge amount of money not to destroy the city. Ragnar Lodbrok, according to Viking sources, was satisfied with no less than 7,000 pounds of [silver](#) in exchange for sparing the city. However, that did not stop Ragnar from attacking other parts of France, and it took a long time for the [Franks](#) to drive him out.

England

After he was done with France he turned his attention to [England](#). In 865, he landed in [Northumbria](#) on the north-east coast of England. It is claimed that here he was defeated in battle for the only time, by King [Aelle II of Northumbria](#) (15472 35th ggf).

Aelle's men captured Ragnar, and the King ordered him thrown into a pit filled with poisonous snakes. As he was slowly being bitten to death, he is alleged to have exclaimed "How the little pigs would grunt if they knew the situation of the old boar!" referring to the vengeance he hoped his sons would wreak when they heard of his death.

As he was thrown into the snake pit, Ragnar was said to have uttered his famous death song: "It gladdens me to know that Balder's father makes ready the benches for a banquet. Soon we shall be drinking ale from the curved horns. The champion who comes into Odin's dwelling does not lament his death. I shall not enter his hall with words of fear upon my lips. The Aesir will welcome me. Death comes without lamenting... Eager am I to depart. The Disir summon me home, those whom Odin sends for me from the halls of the Lord of Hosts. Gladly shall I drink ale in the high-seat with the Aesir. The days of my life are ended. I laugh as I die."

Paris at the time of Ragnar's attack.



Björn Ironside

The barrow of Björn Ironside (Björn Järnsidas hög) on the island of Munsö, in lake Mälaren, Sweden. The barrow is crowned by a stone containing the fragmented Uppland Rune Inscription 13.

Björn Ironside ([Old Norse](#) and [Icelandic](#) : *Björn Jarnsida*, [Swedish](#): *Björn Järnsida*) was a legendary Swedish king who would have lived sometime in the 9th century. Björn Ironside is said to have been the first ruler of [a new dynasty](#), and in the early 18th century a barrow named after a king Björn on the island of [Munsö](#) was claimed by antiquarians to be Björn Ironside's grave.



A powerful Viking chieftain and naval commander, Bjorn and his brother [Hastein](#) conducted many (mostly successful) raids in France in a continuation of the tradition initiated by their (possibly adoptive) [father Ragnar Lodbrok](#). In 860 AD Bjorn led a large Viking raid into the Mediterranean. After raiding down the Spanish coast and fighting their way through Gibraltar, Bjorn and [Hastein](#) pillaged the south of France, where his fleet over-wintered, before landing in Italy where they captured the coastal city of Piza. Proceeding inland to the town of Luna, which they believed to be Rome at the time, Bjorn found himself unable to breach the town walls. To gain entry, he sent messengers to the Bishop that he had died, had a deathbed conversion, and wished to be buried on consecrated ground within their church. He was brought into the chapel with a small honor guard, then amazed the dismayed Italian clerics by leaping from his coffin and hacking his way to the town gates, which he promptly opened letting his army in. Flush with this victory and others around the Med (including in Sicily and North Africa) he returned to the Straits of Gibraltar only to find the Saracen navy waiting. In the desperate battle which followed Bjorn lost 40 ships, largely to Greek fire launched from Saracen catapults. The remainder of his fleet managed to return to Scandinavia however, where he lived out his life as a rich man.

Ragnarssona pattr

Ragnarssona pattr tells that Björn was the son of the Swedish king [Ragnar Lodbrok](#) and [Aslaug](#), the daughter of [Sigurd](#) and [Brynhild](#), and that he had the brothers [Hvitserk](#), [Ivar the Boneless](#) and [Sigurd Snake-in-the-Eye](#), and the half-brothers Eric and Agnar.

Björn and his brothers left Sweden to conquer [Zealand](#), [Reidgotaland](#) (here [Jutland](#)), [Gotland](#), [Öland](#) and all the minor islands. They then settled at [Lejre](#) with Ivar the Boneless as their leader.

Ragnar was jealous with his sons' successes, and set [Eysteinn Beli](#) as the jarl of [Sweden](#), telling him to protect Sweden from his sons. He then went east across the [Baltic Sea](#) to pillage and to show his own skills.

Ragnar's sons Eric and Agnar then sailed into Lake [Mälaren](#) and sent a message to king Eysteinn that they wanted him to submit to Ragnar's sons, and Eric said that he wanted Eysteinn's daughter Borghild as wife. Eysteinn said that he first wanted to consult the Swedish chieftains. The chieftains said no to the offer, and ordered an attack on the rebellious sons. A battle ensued and Eric and Agnar were overwhelmed by the Swedish forces, whereupon Agnar died and Eric was taken prisoner.

Eysteinn offered Eric as much of [Uppsala öd](#) as he wanted, and Borghild, in [wergild](#) for Agnar. Eric proclaimed that after such a defeat he wanted nothing but to choose the day of his own death. Eric asked to be impaled on spears that raised him above the dead and his wish was granted.

In [Zealand](#), [Aslaug](#) and her sons Björn and [Hvitserk](#), who had been playing [tafl](#), became upset and sailed to Sweden with a large army. Aslaug, calling herself Randalin rode with cavalry across the land. In a great battle they killed Eysteinn.

Ragnar was not happy that his sons had taken revenge without his help, and decided to conquer England with only two [knarrs](#). King [Ella](#) of Northumbria defeated Ragnar and threw him into a snake pit where he died.

Björn and his brothers attacked Aella but were beaten back. Asking for peace and wergild, Ivar the Boneless tricked Aella into giving him an area large enough to build the town of [York](#). Ivar made himself popular in England and asked his brothers to attack again. During the battle Ivar sided with his brothers and so did many of the English chieftains with their people, in loyalty to Ivar. Ella was taken captive and in revenge they carved [blood eagle](#) on him.

Hervarar saga

The *[Hervarar saga](#)* tells that [Eysteinn Beli](#) was killed by Björn and his brothers as told in *Ragnar Lodbrok's saga*, and they conquered all of Sweden. When Ragnar died Björn Ironside inherited Sweden. He had two sons, [Refil](#) and [Erik Björnsson](#), who became the next king of Sweden.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erik_Bj%C3%B6rnsson

Erik Björnsson

Erik Björnsson was one of the sons of [Björn Ironside](#) and a [semi-legendary king of Sweden](#) of the [House of Munsö](#), who would have lived in the early [9th century](#). One of the few surviving Scandinavian sources that deal with Swedish kings from this time is [Hervarar saga](#). It says:

“

The sons of [Björn Ironside](#) were [Eric](#) and [Refil](#). The latter was a warrior-prince and sea-king. King Eric ruled the Swedish Realm after his father, and lived but a short time. Then [Eric](#) the son of Refil succeeded to the Kingdom

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bj%C3%B6rn_at_Hauge

Björn at Hauge

[King Björn's barrow](#) in Håga ([Old Norse](#) name: *Haug*) near [Uppsala](#). This location has a very strong connection with Björn at Hauge. First, the [Nordic Bronze Age](#) barrow gave its name to the location *Håga* ("the barrow"), which became part of the cognomen of the king, *at Hauge* ("at the barrow"), and the mound was later named after the king.

Björn at Hauge ("Björn at the Barrow"), **Björn på Håga**, **Björn II** or **Bern** was according to [Hervarar saga](#) a Swedish king and the son of [Erik Björnsson](#), and Björn ruled together in [diarchy](#) with his brother [Anund Uppsala](#):



“

The sons of [Björn Ironside](#) were [Eric](#) and [Refil](#). The latter was a warrior-prince and sea-king. King Eric ruled the Swedish Realm after his father, and lived but a short time. Then [Eric the son of Refil](#) succeeded to the Kingdom. He was a great warrior and a very powerful King. The sons of Eric Björnsson were [Önund of Upsala](#) and King Björn. Then the Swedish Realm again came to be divided between brothers. They succeeded to the Kingdom on the death of Eric Refilsson. King Björn built a house called 'Barrow,' and he himself was called Björn of the Barrow. [Bragi the poet](#) was with him. King Önund had a son called [Eric](#), and he succeeded to the throne at Upsala after his father. He was a mighty King. In his days [Harold the Fair-haired](#) made himself [King of Norway](#). He was the first to unite the whole of that country under his sway.

”

Anund Uppsale

Anund Uppsale or **Anoundus** ([Old Norse](#): *Önundr Uppsali*) ruled [Sweden](#) together with his brother [Björn at Hauge](#), according to [Rimbert](#) and [Hervarar saga](#) (he and Björn are also mentioned by [Adam of Bremen](#)). He is probably called **Uppsale** because he stayed at [Gamla Uppsala](#), the religious centre.

[Rimbert](#) recounts that *Anoundus* and his brother Björn, succeed king Erik and that Anund was driven away from his country. The reason is unknown.

Sometime in the 840s, Anund returns to Sweden with a large Danish host of 21 [longships](#) and 11 of his own, because Anund had promised them rich plunder in [Birka](#), and they arrived when [Björn at Hauge](#) was far away. Anund demanded one hundred marks of silver, which was granted. The [Danes](#) felt tricked and wanted to make a surprise attack on [Birka](#) in order to burn it and plunder it, but then Anund tried to avert their plans. He asked them to draw lots about whether it was the will of the [Aesir](#) that Birka should be destroyed. The outcome was that the destruction of Birka would bring bad luck to the Danes. They then asked where to go for plunder and the answer was to go to a Slavic town. The Danes left Birka but returned with rich booty.

Anund then stayed to seek reconciliation with his people and his son **Erik** succeeded him on the Swedish throne.

Eric Anundsson

Eric Anundsson/Eymundsson (d. 882) was a [Swedish king](#) who ruled during the 9th century. The Swedish encyclopedia [Nordisk familjebok](#) identifies Eric with the legendary Swedish king [Erik Weatherhat](#).

He is given as the son of [Anund Uppsala](#) in [Hervarar saga](#):

Eric was the son of king Anund, and he succeeded his father at [Uppsala](#); he was a rich king. During his reign, [Harald Fairhair](#) came to power in Norway, Harald was the first of his kin to reign as a monarch in Norway.

According to *Hervarar saga*, he was preceded by his father Anund Uppsala and uncle [Björn at Hauge](#) and he was succeeded by [Björn](#) (the father of [Eric the Victorious](#) and [Olof Björnsson](#)). [Landnamabok](#) informs that Eric and his son Björn ruled during the time of the [Pope Adrian II](#) and [Pope John VIII](#), i.e. in the period 867-883, the time of the first settlement of Iceland. *Harald Fairhair's saga* relates that Erik died when Harald Fairhair had been king of all Norway for ten years, i.e. 882.

When King Harald Fairhair arrived at [Tonsberg](#) (in Viken, and at the time a trading town) from [Trondheim](#) he learnt of this and became very angry. He assembled the [ting](#) at [Fold](#) and accused the people of treason after which some had to accept his rule, while others were punished. He then spent the summer forcing Viken and [Raumarike](#) to accept his rule.

When the winter arrived Harald learnt that the Swedish king was in Vermland, after which he crossed the [Ed forest](#) and ordered the people to arrange a feast in his tribute.

The most powerful man in the province was a man named Åke, who had formerly been one of [Halfdan the Black](#)'s men, and he invited both the Norwegian king and the Swedish king to his [halls](#). Åke had built a new hall instead of his old one, which was ornamented in the same splendid manner, but the old hall only had old ornaments and hangings.

When the kings arrived, the Swedish king was placed in the old hall, whereas the Norwegian king was placed in the new one. The Norwegian king found himself in a hall with new gilded vessels carved with figures and shining like glass, full of the best liquor.

The next day, the kings prepared to leave. Bidding his farewell Åke gave to Harald's service his own twelve year old son Ubbe. Harald thanked Åke and promised him is friendship.

Then Åke talked to the Swedish king, who was in a bad mood. Åke gave him valuable gifts and followed the king on the road until they came to the woods. Erik asked Åke why he, who was his man, had made such a difference between him and the Norwegian king. Åke answered that there was nothing to blame Erik for but that he had got the old things and the old hall because he was old whereas the Norwegian king was in the bloom of his youth. Åke also answered the he was no less the Swedish king's man than the Swedish king was his man. Hearing the words of treason, Erik had no other choice but to slay the impudent and treacherous Åke.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bj%C3%B6rn_\(III\)_Eriksson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bj%C3%B6rn_(III)_Eriksson)

Björn III Eriksson

Björn (ruled [882-932](#)) was the father of [Olof \(II\) Björnsson](#) and [Eric the Victorious](#), and he was the grandfather of [Styrbjörn the Strong](#), according to the *[Hervarar saga](#)* and *[Harald Fairhair's saga](#)*. According to the two sagas, he was the son of an Erik who fought [Harald Fairhair](#) and who succeeded the brothers [Björn at Hauge](#) and [Anund Uppsala](#):

King [Önund](#) had a son called [Eric](#), and he succeeded to the throne at [Upsala](#) after his father. He was a rich King. In his days Harold the Fair-haired made himself King of Norway. He was the first to unite the whole of that country under his sway. Eric at Upsala had a son called Björn, who came to the throne after his father and ruled for a long time. The sons of Björn, Eric the Victorious, and Olaf succeeded to the kingdom after their father. Olaf was the father of Styrbjörn the Strong. (*Hervarar saga*)

The latter saga relates that he ruled for 50 years:

There were disturbances also up in [Gautland](#) as long as King [Eirik Eymundson](#) lived; but he died when King Harald Harfager had been ten years king of all Norway. After Eirik, his son Bjorn was king of Svithjod for fifty years. He was father of Eirik the Victorious, and of Olaf the father of Styrbjorn. (*Harald Fairhair's saga*)

When Björn died, Olof and Eric were elected to be co-rulers of Sweden. However, Eric would disinherit his nephew Styrbjörn.

Eric the Victorious

Eric praying to Odin before the Battle of the Fyrisvellir, c 985, by Jenny Nyström.



The Sjörup Runestone near Ystad commemorating a dead son "who did not flee at Uppsala".

Runestone DR 295 near Lund for Loki; "he did not flee at Uppsala".

Eric I the Victorious [Old Norse](#): *Eiríkr inn sigraæli*, Modern Swedish: *Erik Segersäll*, (945?- c 995), was the first [Swedish king](#) (970-995) about whom anything definite is known.

His original territory lay in [Uppland](#) and neighbouring provinces. He was victorious over an invasion from the south in the [Battle of the Fyrisvellir](#) close to Uppsala.

According to the [Fateyjarbok](#), his success was due to the fact that he allied with the peasants against the nobility, and it is obvious from archeological findings that the influence of the latter diminished during the last part of the tenth century.



Styrbjörn is lifted into a wagon after the Battle of Fyrisvellir, by Mårten Eskil Winge (1888).



According to [Adam of Bremen](#), Eric allied himself with the [Polish prince Boleslav](#) to conquer Denmark and chase away its king [Sweyn Forkbeard](#). He proclaimed himself the king of [Sweden](#) and [Denmark](#) which he ruled until his death which would have taken place in 994 or 995. Adam says that Eric was baptised in [Denmark](#), but later returned to the [Norse gods](#).

In all probability he founded the town of [Sigtuna](#), which still exists and where the first Swedish coins were stamped for his son and successor [Olof Skötkonung](#).

Sagas

The [Norse sagas](#) relate that he was the son of [Björn Eriksson](#) and that he ruled together with his brother Olof. He married [Sigrid the Haughty](#), the daughter of the legendary Viking [Skagul Toste](#), but would later divorce her and give her [Götaland](#) as a fief. According to [Eymund's saga](#) he took a new queen, Aud, the daughter of [Haakon Sigurdsson](#), the ruler of [Norway](#).

Before this happened, his brother Olof died, and a new co-ruler had to be appointed, but the Swedes refused to accept his rowdy nephew Styrbjörn the Strong as his co-ruler. Styrbjörn was given 60 longships by Eric and sailed away to live as a Viking. Styrbjörn would become the ruler of [Jomsborg](#) and an ally and brother-in-law of the Danish king [Harold Bluetooth](#). Styrbjörn returned to Sweden with a major [Danish](#) army, which Eric defeated in the [Battle of the Fyrisvellir](#) at [Old Uppsala](#).

Sigrid the Haughty

Sigrid the Haughty, also known as **Sigrid Storråda**, was a Nordic queen of contested historicity.

She has been variously identified as **Swietosława**, **Saum-Aesa**, **Gunnhilda**, daughter of [Mieszko I](#), sister to [Bolesław I Chrobry](#), King of Poland.

She is a character who appears in many [sagas](#) and historical chronicles. It is unclear if she was a real person or a compound person (with several real women's lives and deeds attributed to one compound person).

Sigrid married the first time, wedding Eiríkr the Victorious ([King Eiríkr VI Sigrsaell](#)) of Sweden. She had one son by this marriage: King Olaf II Eiríksson of Sweden, also called [Olof Skotkonung](#). It was in 994 she wed Sweyn Forkbeard under her Scandinavian name, Sigrid Storråda, and the marriage bore five daughters, half-sisters of Danish princes [Harald](#) and [Canute the Great](#).

The most commonly-held understanding is that [Harald](#) and [Canute](#) brought back Swietosława from Poland after their stepmother **Sigrid** left upon the death of their father.

Refusal to marry Olaf Trygvasson

[Olaf Tryggvason](#) proposes marriage to **Sigrid the Haughty**, imposing the condition that she must convert to Christianity. When Sigrid rejects this, Olaf strikes her with a glove. She warns him that this might lead to his death.

In 998, when it was proposed that Sigrid, daughter of the Swedish king, marry [Olaf Trygvasson](#), the king of [Norway](#), she rebelled because it would have required that she convert to Christianity. She told him to his face, "I will not part from the faith which my forefathers have kept before me." In a rage, Olaf hit her. It is said that Sigrid then calmly told him, "This may some day be thy death." [1] Sigrid proceeded to avoid the marriage, and created instead a coalition of his enemies to bring about his downfall. She accomplished this by allying [Sweden](#) and [Denmark](#) against [Norway](#). She achieved her purpose when Olaf fell fighting against Sweden and Denmark in the year 1000 during the [Battle of Svold](#). Queen Sigrid won her vengeance that day, for King Olaf saw his Norwegian forces defeated and he himself leapt into the sea to drown rather than face capture by his enemies.



Olof Skötkonung

Coin minted for Olof Skötkonung in Sigtuna

Olof Skötkonung was the son of [Eric the Victorious](#) and [Sigrid the Haughty](#). He was born around [980](#) and he succeeded his father in [995](#). Sweyn Forkbeard was forced to defend his Danish kingdom from attacks by Olof who claimed the Danish throne. The conflict was resolved by Sweyn's marriage with Olaf's mother and the two kings were thereafter allies. Also Snorri Sturluson describes Sweyn and Olof as equal allies when they defeated the Norwegian king Olav Tryggvason in the [battle of Svolder](#) 1000, and thereafter divided Norway between themselves.



In a Viking expedition to [Wendland](#), he had captured [Edla](#), and she gave him the son [Emund](#) and the daughter Astrid -later wife of [Olaf II of Norway](#)-. He later married [Estrid of the Obotrites](#), a Christian girl and she bore him the son [Anund Jacob](#) and the daughter [Ingegerd Olofsdotter](#).

In [1000](#), he allied with [Sweyn Forkbeard](#), who was married to Olof's mother, and with the Norwegian [Jarls Eric](#) and [Sven](#), against the Norwegian King [Olaf Tryggvason](#). Olaf Tryggvason died in the [Battle of Svolder](#) and Olof gained a part of [Trondelag](#) as well as modern [Bohuslän](#)

When the Norwegian kingdom was reestablished by [Olaf II of Norway](#), a new war erupted between Norway and Sweden. Many men in both [Sweden](#) and [Norway](#) tried to reconcile the kings. In [1018](#), Olof's cousin, the [earl](#) of [Västergötland](#), [Ragnvald Ulfsson](#) and the Norwegian king's emissaries [Björn Stallare](#) and [Hjalte Skeggiason](#) had arrived at the [thing](#) of [Uppsala](#) in an attempt to sway the Swedish king to accept peace and as a warrant marry his daughter [Ingegerd Olofsdotter](#) to the king of Norway. The Swedish king was greatly angered and threatened to banish Ragnvald from his kingdom, but Ragnvald was supported by his foster-father [Thorgny Lawspeaker](#).

Thorgny delivered a powerful speech in which he reminded the king of the great Viking expeditions in the East that predecessors such as [Erik Eymundsson](#) and [Björn](#) had undertaken, without having the hubris not to listen to his men's advice. Thorgny, himself, had taken part in many successful pillaging expeditions with Olof's father [Eric the Victorious](#) and even Eric had listened to his men. The present king wanted nothing but Norway, which no Swedish king before him had desired. This displeased the Swedish people, who were eager to follow the king on new ventures in the East to win back the kingdoms that paid tribute to his ancestors, but it was the wish of the people that the king make peace with the king of Norway and give him his daughter Ingegerd as queen.

Thorgny finished his speech by saying: if you do not desire to do so, we shall assault you and kill you and not brook anymore of your warmongering and obstinacy. Our ancestors have done so, who at [Mula thing](#) threw five kings in a well, kings who were too arrogant as you are against us.

His death is said to have taken place in the winter of [1021-1022](#). According to a legend he was martyred at Stockholm after refusing to sacrifice to pagan gods. He's venerated as a saint in the Catholic Church.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emund_of_Sweden

Emund the Old

Emund the Old, *Emund den gamle*, [Old Swedish](#): *Aemundaer slemae* (king of Sweden [1050-1060](#))^[1] was an illegitimate son of [Olof Skötkonung](#). Emund succeeded his brother Anund Jakob ca 1050 which rendered him the cognomen, the Old. He was also called the "Slemme" as he actively opposed the priests from the Archbishopric of Bremen in favour of the English missionary [Osmundus](#).

The [Westrogothic law](#) says that he was a disagreeable man when wanting to pursue a goal, and that he marked the border between Sweden and Denmark.

He was the last king of the [House of Munsö](#). [Adam of Bremen](#) relates in his work *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum* (Deeds of Bishops of the Hamburg Church) that his son Anund Emundsson died when leading a Swedish attack against [Terra Feminarum](#) and the attack ended in Swedish defeat. Emund was to be succeeded by Stenkil and his house.

The [Hervarar saga](#) says that Emund was king only a short time:

Eymundr het annarr sonr Olafs sAenska, er konungdom tok eptir brodur sinn. Um hans daga heldu Svjar illa kristnina. Eymundr var litla hrid konungr. ^[2]	Olaf the Swede had another son called Eymund, who came to the throne after his brother . In his day the Swedes neglected the Christian religion, but he was King for only a short time. ¹
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http://sv.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astrid_Nialsdotter

Astrid Nialsdotter

Astrid Nialsdotter av Skjalgaätten från [Hålogaland](#) i [Norge](#), död [1060](#), var en svensk drottning, gift med kung [Emund den gamle](#), mor till [Ingamoder Emundsdotter](#) och svärmor till kung [Stenkil](#).

Astrid föddes som barn av den norske [stormannen Nial Finnsson](#) och [Gunhild Halvdansdotter](#) i storätten [Skjalgaätten](#) i Hålogaland i Norge. Hon var gift med först (ca 1035) jarlen [Ragnvald Ulfsson](#) och sedan med kung Emund den gamle (ca 1042). Hon har ibland uppfattats som mor till Stenkil, eftersom Ulfsson uppfattats som hans far. I själva verket var hon hans svärmor.

Hon var Sveriges drottning på [1050-talet](#), från [1050](#) till 1060, och efterträddes som drottning av sin egen dotter.

Saint Ingamoder Emundsdotter of Sweden

Saint Ingamoder Emundsdotter of Sweden, (1043-1090), was a Swedish Princess, [queen consort](#) and Saint, [child of king Emund the Old](#), married to king [Stenkil of Sweden](#) and mother of king [Inge the Elder](#) of Sweden. Her real name is not known; the name "Ingamoder" was her name as a Saint, which ment "Mother of Inge".

Princess Ingamoder Emundsdotter of Sweden was born child of king Emund the Old of Sweden and his queen consort Astrid Nialsdotter from [Norway](#). Her brothers, Emund and [Ingvar](#), both died before her father. She married Stenkil Rangvaldsson, who replaced her father on the throne in 1061; it is considered, that the marriage made her husband more acceptable for the throne, and Ingamoder, born as Princess of Sweden, then became queen of Sweden in her own home country.



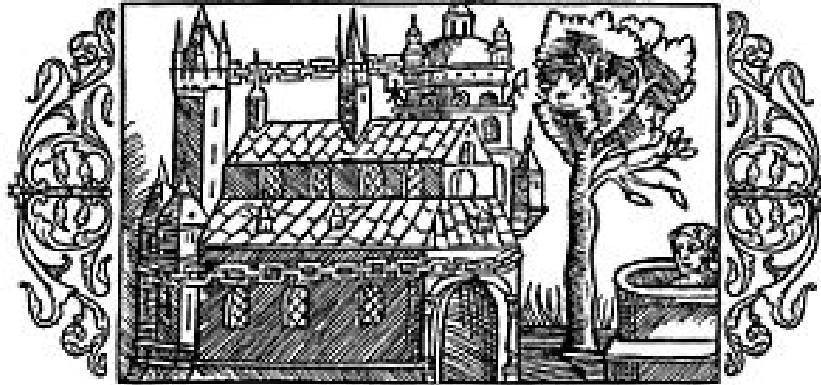
An 11th century Nordic pin such as well may have been worn by King Steinchetel's mysterious and nameless spouse, mother of kings.

Children

- [Eric VII Stenkilsson](#), king of Sweden.
- [Halsten Stenkilsson](#), king of Sweden.
- [Inge the Elder](#), king of Sweden.

Stenkil

Stenkil (*Old Icelandic*: *Steinkel*, *Old Swedish*: *StAenkil*) was [King of Sweden](#) who ruled c. 1060 until 1066. He succeeded [Emund the Old](#) and became the first king from the [House of Stenkil](#). He was not from Uppsala, but probably from [Västergötland](#) and related to the previous dynasty by marriage to [Emund's daughter](#).



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 [Olaus Magnus' *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus* \(1555\)](#).

He supported the Christianization of Sweden and cooperated with bishops from the [Archbishopric of Hamburg-Bremen](#). However, when [Adalvard the Younger](#) at [Sigtuna](#) wanted to destroy the [Temple at Uppsala](#), Stenkil stopped Adalvard's plans, as he feared a pagan insurgence. The fears were probably motivated. According the [Hervarar saga](#), Stenkil's son [Inge the Elder](#) was deposed and exiled for wanting to cancel the pagan sacrifices at the temple.

Stenkil resided mainly in [Västergötland](#) where he was long remembered as the king who "loved West Geats before all his other subjects", and he was lauded as a great archer whose hit marks were long shown with admiration.

According to a legend Stenkil was buried in the "royal hill" near [Levene](#) in [Västergötland](#). His two sons [Halsten](#) and [Inge the Elder](#) would both become kings of Sweden.

Inge I of Sweden

Inge Stenkilsson (Old Norse *Ingi Steinkelsson*) was a [king of Sweden](#). He was the son of the former [king Stenkil](#) and died c. 1100. He shared the rule of the kingdom with his probably elder brother [Halsten Stenkilsson](#), but little is known with certainty of Inge's reign^[2]. According to the contemporary chronicler [Adam of Bremen](#) and the writer of his [scholion](#), the former king [Stenkil](#) had died and [two kings named Eric](#) had ruled and been killed^[2]. Then an [Anund Gårdske](#) was summoned from [Kievan Rus'](#), but rejected due to his refusal to administer the [blots](#) at the [Temple at Uppsala](#). A hypothesis suggests that Anund and Inge were the same person, as several sources mention Inge as a fervent Christian, and the [Hervarar saga](#) describes how Inge also was rejected for refusing to administer the blots and that he was exiled in [Västergötland](#):

“ Steinkel had a son called Ingi, who became King of Sweden after Haakon. Ingi was King of Sweden for a long time, and was popular and a good Christian. He tried to put an end to heathen sacrifices in Sweden and commanded all the people to accept Christianity; yet the Swedes held to their ancient faith. King Ingi married a woman called MAer who had a brother called Svein. King Ingi liked Svein better than any other man, and Svein became thereby the greatest man in Sweden. The Swedes considered that King Ingi was violating the ancient law of the land when he took exception to many things which Steinkel his father had permitted, and at an assembly held between the Swedes and King Ingi, they offered him two alternatives, either to follow the old order, or else to abdicate. Then King Ingi spoke up and said that he would not abandon the true faith; whereupon the Swedes raised a shout and pelted him with stones, and drove him from the assembly. [...] They drove King Ingi away; and he went into Vestergötland. Svein the Sacrificer was King of Sweden for three years ”

In a letter to Inge from [Pope Gregory VII](#), from 1080, he is called "king of the Swedes", but in a later letter probably dated to 1081, to Inge and his brother Halsten, they are called kings of the West [Geats](#). Whether this difference reflects a change in territory is not certain since the two letters concern the spreading of Christianity in Sweden and the paying of tithe to the Pope.

However, he returned after three winters to kill [Blot-Sweyn](#) and reclaim the throne:

“ King Ingi set off with his retinue and some of his followers, thought it was but as small force. He then rode eastwards by Småland and into Östergötland and then into Sweden. He rode both day and night, and came upon Svein suddenly in the early morning. They caught him in his house and set it on fire and burned the band of men who were within. There was a baron called Thjof who was burnt inside. He had been previously in the retinue of Svein the Sacrificer. Svein himself left the house, but was slain immediately. Thus Ingi once more received the Kingdom of Sweden; and he reestablished Christianity and ruled the Kingdom till the end of his life, when he died in his bed. ”

Helena, Queen of Sweden

Queen **Helena** (or **Elin**), also known as *Maer*, *Mär* or *Mö* (Old Nordic; "Maiden") (born in the 11th century, dead after 1110), was a [Swedish](#) queen, consort to [King Inge I of Sweden](#) and sister of King [Blot-Sweyn](#) of Sweden.

King Inge was king of Sweden and parts of Sweden several times between 1067 and 1110, but the exact years are uncertain, and he is famous for being the king who defeated the [pagans](#) in the religious wars who took place in Sweden between 1022 and 1088 and abolished freedom of religion, requiring everyone to profess the [Christian faith](#). His greatest opponent and enemy in this fight was the pagan king [Blot-Sweyn](#).

King Inge was said to have married Blot-Sweyn's sister Maer, or Mö, but in official sources, she is referred to as queen Helena. The marriage between king Inge and the sister of Blot-Sweyn is well pointed out in history, where Sweyn is always talked about as being the [brother-in-law](#) of Inge, and Inge's wife is also said to have been of the old Swedish royal family, a sideline of Ynglingaätten.

A 17th century gravestone in [Vreta Abbey](#) with a partially incorrect inscription mentions an Ingi and a Helen - their burial somewhere in the church has been accepted as fact.



Not many things are known about her, but she was most likely a pagan like her brother when she married, and convinced, willingly or by force, to submit to the Christian faith; she may have received the name Helena by her christening, as her daughters also were given Christian names from Europe. It is not known which side she favoured between the Pagans and Christians; perhaps she mourned her brothers' and the paganism's death in 1087-1088, but to the end of her life, she was, or gave the impression to be a Christian; after the defeat of the pagans, she founded Sweden's first [nunnery](#), the Benedictine [Vreta Abbey](#), in 1090 or in 1100, and as a widow, she became a nun there herself in 1110.

Children

1. Kristina, married Grand Duke [Mstislav I of Kiev](#), and ancestress of several Kievan and [Novgorod](#) princes.
2. Ragnvald, who died before his father and who was father of [Ingrid](#), who first was married to the Danish prince [Eric Skatellar](#), and later to the Norwegian king [Harald Gille](#). She was the mother of pretender (and alleged murderer) [Magnus Henriksson](#).
3. [Margaret Fredkulla](#), married (1) [Magnus Barefoot](#), king of Norway, and later king [Niels of Denmark](#); through her second marriage, she was the mother of King [Magnus the Strong](#) of Västergötland and claimant of Denmark. ^[*citation needed*]
4. [Katarina](#), married a Danish "Son of King", [Björn Ironside Haraldsson](#),^[1] with whom she had a daughter [Christina Bjornsdatter](#) who married the future [Eric IX of Sweden](#).

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bj%C3%B6rn_Ironside_Haraldsson

Björn Ironside Haraldsson

Björn Ironside Haraldsson was one of [Harald Kesja](#)'s 15 sons. Björn married [Katarina Ingesdotter](#) the daughter of King [Inge I of Sweden](#). Björn was the father of [Christina Björnsdatter](#), a Swedish queen.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christina_Björnsdatter

Christina Björnsdotter

Christina (Kristina) Björnsdotter of Denmark (c. 1120/1125-1170), was a [Swedish queen consort](#) in the 12th century, married to [king Eric the Saint of Sweden](#) and mother of [king Canute I of Sweden](#).

Biography

According to the *Knytlinga saga*, she was the daughter of [Björn Haraldsson Ironside](#), the son of the Danish prince [Harald Kesja](#), and his consort, the Swedish Princess [Katarina Ingesdotter of Sweden](#), the daughter of [Inge I of Sweden](#). She was made fatherless in 1134, when her father Prince Björn was murdered by orders from his uncle king Eric Emune of Denmark.

Kristina was married to her cousin [Eric the Saint](#), then pretendent in Uppland, in 1149 or 1150; six years later, her husband became king, and she became queen; she was the queen of Sweden for four years, from 1156 to 1160.

Queen Kristina became notable for her animosity toward the newly founded [convent](#) in [Varnhem](#), [Västergötland](#), which forced the monks to leave the country and seek refuge in Denmark, a conflict for which the [pope](#) contemplated to have her excommunicated.

Queen Kristina was widowed at the deposition of the king outside the curhc in [Uppsala](#) in 1160, and according to legend, she fled with her son and her followers with the crowned head of her husband.

In 1167, her son became king as Canute I. Queen dowager Kristina is believed to have died in the beginning of her son king Knuts reign in 1170, but neither the date of her birth or death is completely clear.

Children:

1. [Canute I of Sweden](#), King of Sweden 1167-1196.
2. Filip
3. [Katarina Eriksdotter](#), married to [Nils Blake](#).
4. [Margareta Eriksdotter](#), married in 1185 [Sverre I of Norway](#), died in 1202.

Eric IX of Sweden

The third seal of the City of Stockholm, depicting the crowned head of Eric the Saint, attested for the first time in 1376.



Eric IX of Sweden (or *Erik the Lawgiver* or *Erik the Saint*. In Swedish he is simply known as *Erik den helige* or *Sankt Erik* which translates as *Erik the Holy* and *Saint Erik* respectively) (c. 1120 – May 18, 1160) was a [Swedish king](#) c.1150 – 1160. No historical records of Eric have survived, and all information about him is based on later legends that were aimed at having him established as a saint.

Casket of Eric the Saint in Uppsala Cathedral.

As later kings from the [House of Eric](#) were consistently buried to [Varnhem Abbey](#) near [Skara](#) in [Västergötland](#), the family is considered to have [Geatish](#) roots like other medieval ruling houses in Sweden. Based on the information that his possible brother Joar was a son of Jedvard (*Edward*), modern sources call him also Eric Jedvardson, but this remains speculative. He was a rival king, from 1150, to [Sverker the Elder](#) who had ascended the throne c.1130 and was murdered 1156, after which Eric was recognized in most or all provinces.



Eric's reign ended when he was murdered in [Uppsala](#). He's said to have been murdered by Emund Ulvbane, an assassin who was hired by people working for the Sverker dynasty, in order for them to regain the control of the kingdom, or alternatively by [Magnus Henriksson](#), another claimant, who is said in some sources to have succeeded him briefly as king. People from Sweden recognized a miracle after Eric's death, since a fountain was told to have sprung from the earth where the king's head fell after being chopped off.

He would later be made a [saint](#) whose [feast day](#) in the [Roman Catholic Church](#) and [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America](#) is [18 May](#), although he was never formally canonized by the Catholic Church. The [relic](#) casket of Eric is on display in [Uppsala cathedral](#) (*Uppsala domkyrka*). The casket contains bones of a male, with traces of injury to the neck. Eric is the [patron saint](#) of [Stockholm](#) and depicted in the city's coat of arms.

According to legends, Eric did much to consolidate Christianity in his realm and spread the faith into [Finland](#). In an effort to conquer and convert them, he allegedly led the [First Swedish Crusade](#) against the native Finns and persuaded an English [Bishop Henry](#) of [Uppsala](#) to remain in Finland to evangelize the natives, later becoming a martyr there.

Rötger Ingesson Jägerhorn, (17152, 20th ggf) född ca. 1130, Vapendragare för kung Erik IX, död efter 1160. Vapendragare hos Konung Erik IX, den helige. Förfäderna till Jägerhornarne har för sanning berättat, att stamfadern skall ha varit Rötger Ingesson, vilken, för sin ansenliga växt, mandom och styrka, skall blivit tagen till vapendragare av Konung Erik IX, den Helige, under dennes vistelse i Finland på 1150-talet, och sedan följt honom till Sverige, varefter han i en drabbning emot de Danske anförde en trupp ryttare och haft, efter tidens sed, med sig ett horn, varmed tecken gavs. Han drev därvid en trupp Danskar tillbaka och förföljde dem med sådan häftighet, att han kom tätt bakom ryggen på deras krigshär, då han blåste segerljud i hornet, varav Danskarna förskräckt togo flykten, lämnande segervinnaren ett stort byte, därav Danmarks kyrka, en halv mil från Uppsala, blivit uppbyggd. Han själv blev kallad Jägerhorn; och såsom bevis på denna berättelses sannfärdighet, anföres, att ett stort buffelhorn, med några runstäver kring kanten, i flera hundra år åtföljt huvudmannen för ätten.

In reaction to Eric's insistence that tithes be paid to support the Church as they were elsewhere in Europe, some Swedish nobles joined forces with Magnus Henrikson, great great grand son of the at that time late king [Sweyn Estridson](#) of Denmark. [Magnus the Strong](#) son of the Danish king [Niels of Denmark](#) (c. 1064 - 1134) has been confused with Magnus Henrikson but he did not outlive his father. Eric was accosted near Uppsala at Ostra Aros as he was leaving church after hearing Mass on Ascension Day by the rebelling Swedish nobles. He was thrown to the ground from his horse, tortured, ridiculed, then beheaded.

The king was buried in the church of Old Uppsala, which he had rebuilt around the burial mounds of his pagan predecessors. In 1167, his body was enshrined; and his relics and regalia were translated to the present cathedral of Uppsala, built on the site of Eric's martyrdom, in 1273.

In an effort to consolidate his position, Eric's son Knud encouraged the worship of his father as a martyr. Facts and fiction about his life were inseparably mixed together. The translation of Eric's relics extended the depth of his religious following. Saint Eric is portrayed in art as a young king being murdered during Mass with the bishop Henry of Uppsala. In Uppsala cathedral there is a series of late medieval paintings depicting Eric and Henry of Uppsala.

Archaeological evidence

According to the legend, King Erik the Saint was slain while he attended the mass at the ecclesia Sancte trinitatis – Trinity church - at Mons Domini. Since the now existing Trinity church in Uppsala was founded in the late 13th century, scholars have discussed different locations of this older Trinity church, but the presence of pre-cathedral graves in the vicinity of the cathedral might suggest that the original Trinity church was located at the same spot as the cathedral.

Married to Kristina from the [House of Stenkil](#).

Children

1. [Canute I of Sweden](#), King of Sweden 1167-1196.
2. [Filip](#)
3. [Katarina Eriksdotter](#), married to [Nils Blake](#).
4. [Margareta Eriksdotter](#), married in 1185 [Sverre I of Norway](#), died in 1202.

Canute I of Sweden



Seal of Canute I

Canute I Eriksson ([Old Norse](#): *Knutr Eiríksson*) or *Knut Eriksson* in modern [Swedish](#) (born before 1150 - died 1195/96) was king over all of [Sweden](#) from [1173](#) to [1195](#) (rival king since 1167). He was a son of king [Eric the Saint](#) and Kristina (probably a granddaughter of [Inge the Elder](#)).

After killing [Charles Sverkerson](#) in 1167, Canut, who had just returned home after ten years in exile, started fighting for power against [Sverker the Elder](#)'s sons [Kol](#) and [Boleslaw Sverkerson](#). Only in 1173 could he call himself king of the whole country.

Canute's able jarl from 1174 was [Birger Brosa](#) (died in 1202)

Canute built a castle on the island of [Stockholm](#) in [1187](#), one of many such fortifications made necessary by heathen incursions from the Baltic lands.

Married around 1160, name of [his wife](#) is unknown

Children:

1. Jon Knutsson (slain November 1205 at Älgårås)
2. Knut Knutsson (slain November 1205 at Älgårås)
3. Joar Knutsson (slain November 1205 at Älgårås)
4. [Erik Knutsson](#), who would defeat [Sverker the Younger](#) and become [King of Sweden](#) in [1208](#).
5. daughter, NN Knutsdotter (possibly Sigrid, or Karin), who is said to have married either jarl Knut Birgersson (and become mother of Magnus Broka), or married Magnus Broka himself (and with Magnus had a son Knut Magnusson, or, Knut Katarinason, claimant of Swedish throne and killed in 1251). Existence of this daughter is based on unclear mentions in old saga and chronicle material, and is to an extent accepted in research literature, to explicate [Knut Magnusson](#)'s hereditary claim to the throne. This daughter was by necessity born in 1170s or 1180s. She is also proposed by old romantical-looking genealogies as mother of a Duke's daughter [Cecilia Knutsdotter](#) (by necessity born near 1208 at earliest), whose parentage however is fully shrouded in mists of history

Eric X of Sweden

The seal of king Erik.



Erik Knutsson, sometimes anachronistically numbered as **Eric X** (c. 1180 – 1216) was the [King of Sweden](#) between 1208 and 1216. He was the son of [Knut Eriksson](#) and his queen, whose name is unknown, but who very probably was a high-born Swedish noblewoman. He was born around 1180 in Eriksberg royal manor.

When his father, King Canute I, died peacefully in 1195, all his sons were only children. Eric apparently was not the eldest of them. Due to the influence of the mighty second-of-the-realm, Jarl [Birger Brosa](#), Sverker II, the head of the rival dynasty was chosen as King of Sweden, over the

underaged boys.

King Canute's sons continued to live in the Swedish royal court, until 1203, when his brothers and family brought forward claims to the throne, and Sverker did not acquiesce, at which point Eric and his brothers escaped to Norway. In 1205, the brothers returned to Sweden with Norwegian support, but lost the [Battle of Älgarås](#), where three of Eric's brothers were killed.

In 1208 Eric returned to Sweden with Norwegian troops and defeated Sverker in the [Battle of Lena](#). Eric became thus chosen the king of Sweden.

Sverker attempted to reconquer the throne, but was defeated and killed in [Battle of Gestilren](#) in 1210. The banner under which King Eric's troops fought, was preserved by his kinsman the [lawspeaker Eskil Magnusson](#) of the Bjelbo clan in [Skara](#), who in 1219 gave it as honorary to his visiting Icelandic colleague [Snorre Sturlasson](#).

At that time, king Eric X married princess [Richeza of Denmark](#), daughter of the late [Valdemar I of Denmark](#), and sister of the then reigning Valdemar II the Victorious. This was to make up relations with Denmark, which had traditionally supported the Sverker dynasty, against the Norwegian-supported dynasty of Eric.

Eric X was the first Swedish king who was crowned.

He died suddenly in fever in 1216 in the castle of Näs on the island of Visingsö. He was buried in the Varnhem Abbey Church.

His marriage produced several daughters, at least three and possibly as many as five, and one and only son, born posthumously, the future [Eric XI of Sweden](#). Daughters: Helena?, Sophia?, Marianna?,

1. [Märta of Sweden](#), married with [Marshal Nils Sixtensson \(Sparre\)](#)
2. [Ingeborg of Sweden](#), possibly the youngest daughter.

Rikissa of Denmark

Queen **Rikissa Valdemarsdotter** (born in 1190/1191, d. 1220) was [queen consort](#) of [Sweden](#), married to king Eric X of Sweden and mother of king Eric XI of Sweden.

Biography

She was a daughter of [Valdemar I of Denmark](#) and [Sofia of Minsk](#). Rikissa of Denmark received her first name, originally a [Lotharingian-Burgundian](#) female name, in honor of her maternal grandmother, the late [Rikissa of Poland](#), queen of Sweden.

In c 1210 the new [king Eric X of Sweden](#), who had deposed his predecessor [Sverker II of Sweden](#), desired to build cordial and peaceful relations with Denmark, which had traditionally supported the [House of Sverker](#), against the Norwegian-supported dynasty of Eric. That was why Rikissa, sister of the then reigning [Valdemar II of Denmark](#), was married to king Eric.

When she arrived at the Swedish coast, the legend says, she was surprised that she was expected to ride and not travel by carriage, and the Swedish noblewoman had then encouraged her to adapt the customs of her new home-country instead of trying to establish her own "Jutian" customs.

Rikissa bore her living husband only daughters. King Eric died in 1216. Queen Rikissa was pregnant at the time and then gave birth to her only surviving son, the future [Eric XI of Sweden](#). The family of king Eric X however was driven to exile from Sweden as the House of Sverker heir, [John I of Sweden](#) was elected king there, to succeed Rikissa's husband. It was in Denmark where Rikissa herself died, without seeing her son's accession to the throne (in 1222), nor her daughters' marriages.

Table of Royals buried at the Church of Ringsted

Forfælder	ST. BENDTS Kirke i RINGSTED:
Konung	KNUD LAVARD, d. 1130,
Konung	VALDEMAR I, d. 1182.
Konung Dronning	SOPHIA, d. 1198.
Konung & Son Dronning	CHRISTOPHER, d. 1166.
Konung	KNUD VI, d. 1202.
Konung & Dronning	RIKIZA, Dronning SVERRIG, d. 1220.
Konung	VALDEMAR II SEIR, d. 1241.
Konung Dronning	DAGMAR, d. 1213.
Konung Dronning	BEENGJERD, d. 1220.
Konung	VALDEMAR III, d. 1231.
Konung & Dronning	ELEONORA, d. 1231.
KNUD	Dronning af LOLLAND, d. 1260.
Konung & Son	ERIK, Dronning af HALLAND, d. 1304.
Printe	VALDEMAR, Son CHRISTOPHER I.
Konung	ERIK PLOVPENNING, d. 1250.
Konung	BIRGER af SVERRIG, d. 1321.
Konung Dronning	MARGARETHE, d. 1341.
Konung	ERIK MENVED, d. 1319.
Konung & Dronning	AGNES, d. 1304.
Konung Dronning	INGEBORG, d. 1319.
ERIK	Son af CHRISTOPHER II, d. 1331.

Children

- Sophia, (d.1241), married Henry III of Rostock.
- Ingeborg Ericsson of Sweden (d.1254), married to [Birger Jarl](#), regent of Sweden, and mother of king [Valdemar of Sweden](#).
- [Eric XI of Sweden](#), (1216-1250).

Eric XI of Sweden

The seal of king Eric XI of Sweden.



Eric XI Ericsson ([Old Norse](#): *Eiríkr Eiríksson*) (1216 – [February 2, 1250](#)) *den läspe och halte*: "the lisp and lame," was king of Sweden 1222 – 1229 and 1234 – 1250. He was the son of king [Erik X of Sweden](#) and Richeza of Denmark.

According to the biased chronicle *[Erikskrönikan](#)* written in the early 1320s, he is said to have been partly lame. Eric was born after his father, King Eric X of Sweden, had already died, and in the meantime the fifteen-year-old [John I of Sweden](#) from the rival [House of Sverker](#) had been hailed king by the Swedish aristocracy (against the will of the [Pope](#), who wanted Eric as king).

When John I died in 1222, the five-year-old Eric was hailed King, with a distant male cousin, who was adult, first as leader of the regency council and then as co-King [Canute II of Sweden](#). In 1229, Canute exiled Eric to Denmark and ruled alone.

After Canute's death in 1234, Eric returned and ruled until his own death in 1250. He was buried in the monastery of [Varnhem](#) in [Västergötland](#). Eric was married to Queen [Catherine](#), daughter of (Jarl) Sune Folkason of Bjälbo and an heiress of the House of Sverker. Commonly, sources say that Eric was childless, but some sources claim that he had a couple of baby daughters who died.

In 1236 King Eric XI's (apparently youngest) sister Ingeborg had been married to [Birger Magnusson](#) (this was Birger's first marriage) - he was son of a female heiress of the Sverker dynasty. Their underage eldest son [Valdemar](#) was elected king 1250 to succeed Eric, possibly by-passing the sons (if such existed) of Ingeborg's elder sisters. Birger became the Regent.