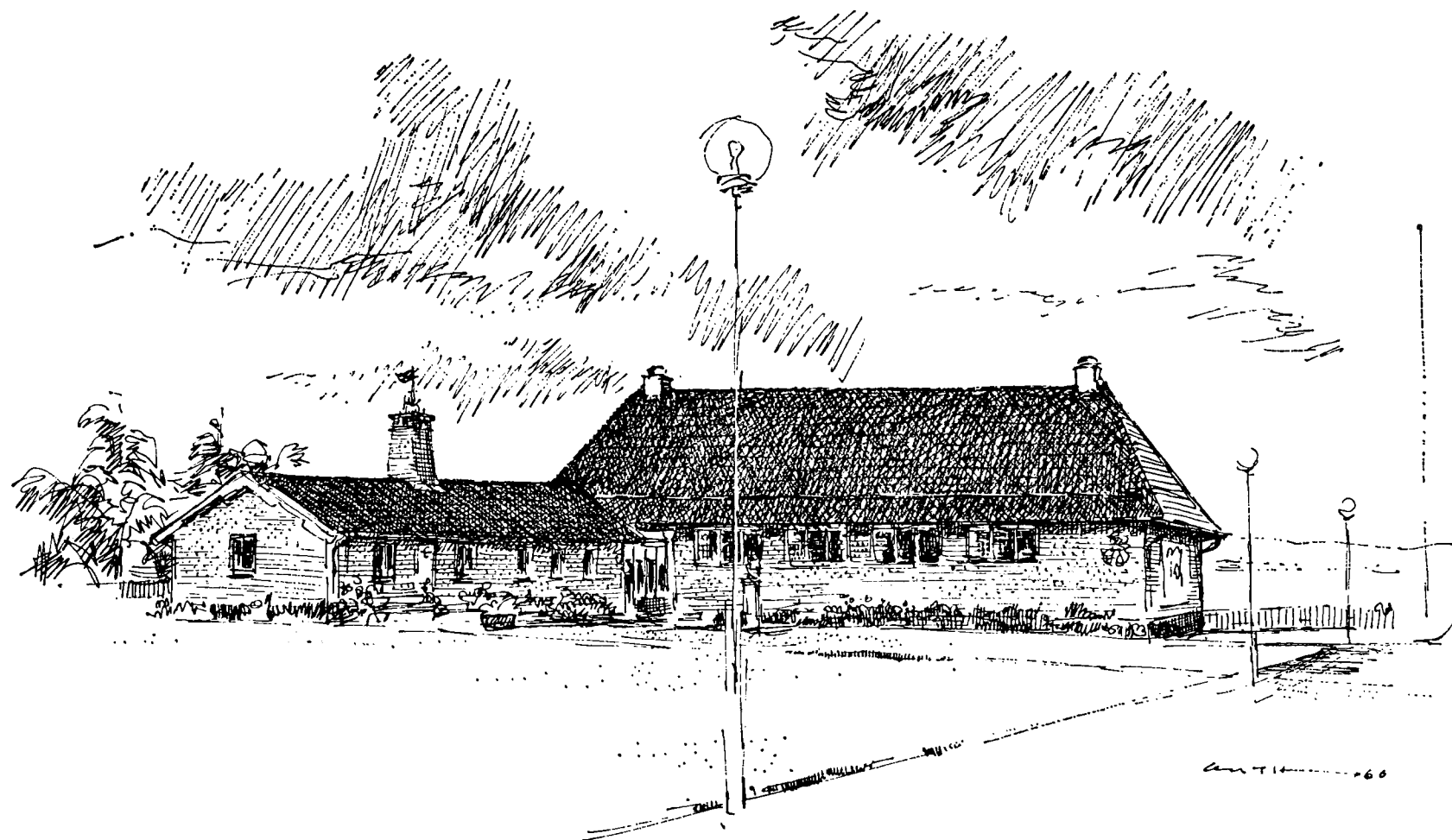


Sixth Viking Congress

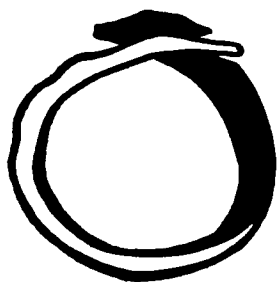


Bonäs Bygdegård

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Sixth Viking Congress

Uppsala 3–10 August
Bonäs, Dalarna 10–12 August
1969

EDITED BY
Peter Foote and Dag Strömbäck



1971

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Contents

Sixth Viking Congress, Uppsala and Bonäs 1969	7
Members of the Congress	9
List of plates and figures.. . . .	12
Abbreviations	13
Congress Diary	15
A Congress prelude: Uppsala in Old Norse literature. By DAG STRÖMBÄCK	21
Vital factors in the success of the Vikings. By BERTIL ALMGREN	33
Some characteristic features of ancient popular tradition in Upper Dalarna. By STIG BJÖRKLUND	39
Recent excavations on Viking Age sites in the Faroes. By SVERRI DAHL	45
The Viking Congress at Bonäs. By ANDERS DIÖS.	57
Atlantic and Baltic earldoms. By GERHARD HAFSTRÖM	61
The literate Vikings. By ASLAK LIESTØL	69
The Viking Age in Dalarna. By INGA SERNING	78
Some old Uppland island names. By HARRY STÅHL	87
A new interpretation of <i>Viking</i> . By PER THORSON†.	101
Stray thoughts on scaldic poetry. By GABRIEL TURVILLE-PETRE .	105

Sixth Viking Congress Uppsala and Bonäs 1969

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Professor Per Thorson could not attend because of illness but his
paper was read for him and is printed here.

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Nyman, Anders, Keeper, Nordiska Museet, Stockholm

Nyman, Åsa, Archivist at Landsmåls- och Folkminnesarkivet, Uppsala

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Ordéus, Valdis, Assistant Lecturer, University of Uppsala

Sandred, Karl Inge, Docent of English, University of Uppsala

Serning, Inga, Docent of Nordic Archaeology, University of Stockholm

Ström, Folke, Docent of History of Religion, University of Gothenburg

Strömbäck, Dag, Emeritus Professor of Folklore Research, University of Uppsala

Ståhl, Harry, Professor of Nordic Place-Name Research, University of Uppsala

Professor G. Hafström, Professor of Legal History, University of Lund, was not able to attend the Congress, but the contribution he had intended to make is printed here in the Proceedings.

List of plates and figures

Bonäs Bygdegård	<i>frontispiece</i>
The inscription of the Orsbleck loft	41
The inscription of the Lillhärda! chair	42
The Dalarna runes after Bureus	43
The Dalarna runes in the 1850s	44
The Faroes: place-names mentioned in <i>Færeyinga saga</i>	46
Ergidalur	47
The Faroes: <i>ærgi</i> sites and early settlements	48
Longhouse fireplace, Fuglafjörður	49
Viking Age farm, Kvívík	51
Parish church, Sandoy	53
Paved area in churchyard, Sandoy	55
Lisa and Anders Diös	<i>facing page</i> 60
Supper at Bonäs	<i>facing page</i> 61
Communication routes through Dalarna	85
Distribution of pre-Viking Age finds in Dalarna	<i>fold-out map</i> 1
Viking Age finds in Dalarna	<i>fold-out map</i> 2

Abbreviations

ME	Middle English
MLG	Middle Low German
Norw	Norwegian
OE	Old English
OHG	Old High German
OI	Old Icelandic
ON	Old Norse
OScand	Old Scandinavian
OSw	Old Swedish
OWN	Old West Norse
PGmc	Primitive Germanic
RAp	Document in Sweden's Public Record Office
SD	<i>Diplomatarium Suecanum</i> (1829–)

Congress Diary

The Congress was formally opened on the morning of Monday, 4 August, with an address of welcome by Professor Torgny T. Segerstedt, Rector Magnificus of the University of Uppsala. Papers were then delivered by Professor Strömbäck* and Professor Almgren*. During the forenoon kind words of welcome and encouragement came by telegram from His Majesty Gustav VI Adolf, Patron of the Congress. At lunch that day members were guests of the University at Värmlands nation. The Rector Magnificus presided, and the thanks of the Congress to him and to the University were moved by Professor Halvorsen.

After lunch members visited either the archaeological collections in Gustavianum under the guidance of Professor Almgren or a special exhibition of manuscripts in Carolina Rediviva, the University Library, under the guidance of Dr Gert Hornwall and Dr Åke Davidsson. On reassembly the Congress heard a paper by Mr Liestøl*. At 5 p.m. the members inspected the imposing bookshop of Messrs Almqvist och Wiksell, where they were received by Mr F. D. Thomsen. Thereafter Messrs Almqvist och Wiksell, principally represented by Mr Hæggström, the Managing Director, entertained the Congress to dinner at Västmanlands-Dala nation. It was a memorable banquet. Sæhrímnir, whom the Einherjar could never entirely despatch, was finally consumed; and by a beneficent anachronism the liquor flowing from the teats of Heiðrún proved to be purest *brännvin*. Mr Hæggström delighted the gathering with a stirring speech, during which he broke into song; and Mrs Alderman Ivy Wightman, sometime

* An asterisk means that the paper referred to is included in full or summarised form in the present volume.

Lord Mayor of York, responded for the Congress and broke into poetry. But expressing the thoughts of all the members, she spoke of her particular pride and delight in being the guest of one of the great academic publishing houses of the world, congratulating Messrs Almqvist och Wiksell on their outstanding services to scholarship in general and particularly to those branches of knowledge the Congress was in being to promote. That evening the existence of the Congress as a guild or *convivium* was firmly established and many new friendships were made.

On Tuesday, 5 August, the Congress heard papers by Professor Ståhl*, Mr Cruden and Mr Dahl*. In the afternoon an excursion was made to Gamla Uppsala—where Mr Lars Allberg, proprietor of the present-day feasting-hall there, kindly refreshed members with mead—and to Valsgärde. Expert guidance was provided by Professor Lindqvist, Professor Arwidsson and Professor Almgren. It was very hot and the shade of juniper bushes was eagerly sought. In the evening the Congress attended a dinner given at Östgöta nation by the City of Uppsala. The Chairman of the City Council, Miss Blenda Ljungberg, presided. Professor Greene thanked Miss Ljungberg and the City for their interest and hospitality.

Wednesday, 6 August, was devoted to a visit to Birka and Adelsö, sailing from Stockholm in M/S Gurli. The weather was perfect and the company in high spirits, grateful for the glories of Mälaren and for the skilful guidance of Professor Arwidsson, Professor Almgren, Dr Björn Ambrosiani and Mrs Birgit Arrhenius.

Thursday, 7 August, was spent on a tour of some rune-stones of Uppland under the leadership of Professor Valter Jansson. The Congress finally arrived at Sigtuna, where members were instructed by Professor Almgren on the ancient churches, more rune-stones were inspected, and great pleasure was taken in Fornhemmet, the City Museum, where a special exhibition of material from Sigtuna and Birka had been arranged by Mrs Else Nordahl Schönback, the museum's director. After some days of indisposition Professor Ström-

bäck delighted his colleagues by rejoining the Congress at this moment. The Sigtuna City Council then entertained members to dinner. Mr Gustaf Delin presided, and Dr Olsen thanked the City Council on behalf of the Congress. Members were touched by the presentation to them of a replica of an Olaf Skötkonung coin as a memento of the occasion.

On Friday, 8 August, the Congress travelled to Stockholm by way of Vallentuna, Täby and other sites where Professor Sven B. F. Jansson commented on the ornament and elucidated the inscriptions of a number of rune-stones; with the aid of eminent British scholars he was able to provide translations in tolerable English. In Stockholm the Congress was entertained to an al fresco luncheon by the Royal Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities, at which members were welcomed by Professor Jansson, as Secretary of the Academy and State Antiquary. Thanks on behalf of the Congress were moved by Mr Cruden. Sections of the Museum were then visited under the guidance of the curators; and Mr Wilson lectured on the St Ninian Isle Treasure. Later the Congress visited the great ship *Vasa* and its museum, and there Mr Binns thanked Dr Per Lundström for his guidance.

On the morning of Saturday, 9 August, a paper on runic inscriptions from Sigtuna and Vassunda was read by Professor Lindquist; the next paper by Professor Thorson* was read in his absence by Mr Binns; and the last paper of the Congress in Uppsala was given by Professor Turville-Petre*. The Congress then discussed its continued existence. It was decided that the next gathering should be in Dublin, in 1972 or 1973, and that, if possible, the meeting thereafter should be in Greenland. It was agreed that the preparation of the Proceedings of the present Congress should be entrusted to Professor Strömbäck and Professor Foote. Telegrams were sent on behalf of the Congress to Dr Kristján Eldjárn, President of Iceland, Professor Einar Ól. Sveinsson, Professor Christian Matras and Professor Johannes Bøe. Professor Foote and Professor Greene thanked the organisers

of the Congress for their most successful efforts; members warmly acknowledged the special debt of gratitude they owed to Dr Erik Olof Bergfors, Mrs Valdis Ordéus and Mrs Birgit Bergfors.

That evening members were the guests of Royal Gustaf Adolf's Academy in the Academy's rooms. Professor Gösta Berg, President of the Academy, presided. Mr Wilson thanked him and the Academy for their generous invitation.

That would have brought the Congress to an end, and all too soon for most members, had it not been for the enthusiasm and unique munificence of Dr Anders Diös in arranging for the continuation of the gathering at Bonäs Bygdegård in Mora, Upper Dalarna. Two coaches took some forty members of the Congress there on the morning of Sunday, 10 August. On arrival they witnessed a church-boat race on Orsasjön—the two best crews were awarded a Viking Congress prize by Dr Diös—and folk-dances performed by boys and girls from the neighbouring parish of Våmhus. Some members were accommodated in Bonäs, others were fortunate enough to be quartered in idyllic surroundings at Fryksås, a *fäbod* some ten miles to the north. On formal assembly at Bonäs an inimitable speech of welcome was delivered by Dr Diös, and papers were subsequently read by Dr Björklund* and Dr Serning*. Dr Diös presided with Professor Strömbäck at supper; Dr Page thanked our hosts.

On Monday, 11 August, Dr Serning led an excursion to archaeological sites at Vindförberg, Sunnanäng and Sollerön, where Mr Karl Lärka also acted as guide. The return route was by way of Mora where the Congress visited the Anders Zorn Museum and Zorngården. Dr Erik Forssman welcomed the Congress and talked of Anders Zorn and his work. Members were entertained to coffee by the commune of Mora köping, represented by the Chairman of the Council, Mr Olof Bergman. Mr Sweeney offered the Congress's thanks for this notable hospitality.

Supper that evening was a sentimental occasion. There were speeches and translations of speeches, music and sad songs. A speech by Mr Taylor, in which he respectfully and affectionately bestowed the title

of *Dalakonungr* on Dr Diös, was the last official vote of thanks to the Congress's Honorary Treasurer; but members of the Congress afterwards forwarded to him an illuminated address commemorating the stay in Dalarna which had brought them so much delightful recreation and intellectual stimulus.

On Tuesday, 12 August, the Congress returned to Uppsala by way of Falun, where they inspected the ancient copper mine and the Museum, under the guidance of Dr Sven Rydberg, the Museum's director. The Congress were then entertained to luncheon, beautifully arranged by Mrs Elsa Carlmarker, in the elegant *salon* of Stora Kopparbergs Bergslags AB. Mr Erik Sundblad, Managing Director of the company, presided. It transpired in the course of the luncheon that Stora Kopparbergs Bergslags AB had recently acquired interests in Nova Scotia and it was agreed that it was the academic duty of members of the Congress to find evidence of Norse Viking Age occupation in that province as soon as possible; a small committee under the chairmanship of Mr Liestøl is in process of formation. Professor Foote did his best to express the Congress's thanks for the charming hospitality extended to them and to recall members of the Congress to a philological way of life. His omissions were made good by Professor Ström-
bäck.

After lunch the Congress visited Dalarnas Museum, under the guidance of Miss Birgitta Dandanell.

Then everyone went sadly home, except the organisers—and no one could begrudge them their feeling of relief after such great success had crowned their strenuous labours.

A Congress prelude

Uppsala in Old Norse Literature

By DAG STRÖMBÄCK

There is no part of Sweden which is mentioned so often in Old Norse literature as Uppsala and its surroundings. This is, of course, due to the fact that from prehistoric times this region was the centre of the *Sviaveldi*, the realm of the Swedes. And since Old Norse poetry and the sagas of Norwegian and Danish kings very often touch upon Swedish kings and their country also, it is obvious that the literary spotlights are often turned on Uppsala.

Uppsala, Old Norse *Uppsalir*, means the “Sala located higher up”. And *Sala* is the name of an old village a little to the northeast of the present city of Uppsala, nowadays mostly known through the name *Sala backar*, “hillsides of Sala”. *Sala* is thus the primary name and Uppsala a compound name given in relation to it, referring to what is now called *Gamla Uppsala* (“Old Uppsala”), a place which is definitely higher up in relation to *Sala*. I leave it to the place-name scholars to explain what *Sala* originally means!

The name of the river *Fyris* flowing through the present city indicates the strong influence of the Icelandic sagas about three hundred years ago when Old Icelandic literature was first discovered and studied here in Uppsala by learned professors. It was probably Professor Olof Rudbeck senior who baptized the river and called it “Fyresåå” with reference to the Icelandic saga names *Fýri* and *Fýrisvellir*, the plains around the river *Fýri*. But on the other hand this Old Icelandic form *Fýri* (with a long *y*) was a purely literary transformation of an indigenous Old Swedish word current in the tenth century and now preserved in the name *Föret*, which in our days

denotes two shallow extensions of the river below the falls and south of the city, “upper and lower Föret”. I leave also this very old and genuinely Swedish name *Före* to the discussion of the place-name experts.

On either side of the Fyris river as far as Old Uppsala are the slopes and fields that in Old Norse literature were called *Fýrisvellir*, the classic battle-field of the old heroic poetry and sagas. We can assume that to the west these plains were delimited by the “Castle Hill” (*Slottsbacken*) and its continuation in the ridge where the present main University Building—where we now meet—and a part of the city stand. Away to the north I suppose that what is now called *Tunåsen*, close to Old Uppsala, formed another limit. Even though these plains around the river, *Fýrisvellir*, are nowadays densely covered with buildings, we can still get a rather clear view from the Castle Hill of this extensive battlefield, with the winding river in the middle.

Indeed, if we take the trouble to walk up the hill to the castle, we can from there get a general view of the old pagan *Svíaveldi*, with monuments from the Viking Age and preceding periods. It is really the heart of Sweden we are looking at. About 10 kilometres to the southeast we have the Mora Stone (our Stone of Scone). A reliable source from 1434 says that here “from time immemorial newly elected Swedish kings, straightaway after their election, were lifted up onto the stone and acclaimed by the people”. From there the king probably started his *Eriks-gata*, first to Old Uppsala and then to the different parts of his realm. There is no doubt that the solemn elevation at the Mora Stone—taking place at the border of two Uppland “folklands”, Tiundaland and Attundaland—was of pagan origin and ultimately from the time when a creek or tributary from the lower part of Fyris made the place accessible by water. This place is indubitably alluded to by Snorri Sturluson in his saga of Saint Olaf. He makes Thorgný the Lawman, speaking on behalf of the people, tell King Olaf Eriksson of Uppsala that they could do the same with him as their ancestors did when they disapproved of a king’s behaviour—sink him in a well at *Múla þing*. Even some of the most cautious philologists regard this unique *Múla þing* as a reference to the thing-place at Mora sten.

Looking towards the north from Castle Hill we can see part of the burial mounds at Old Uppsala from the sixth century. Further north again, still by the river Fyris but over the horizon, is Valsgårde, with its series of graves from over 500 years, from the sixth century to the eleventh. These cemeteries have also thrown light on the magnificent culture of the Vendel period, called after the notable ship-burials by Vendel church.

Perhaps I should add that about 5 kilometres from Castle Hill to the southwest there is another prehistoric monument of great fame. It is not visible from the hill, but there lies the great Bronze Age burial mound of Håga. When it was built it was separated from the Uppsala ridge where we are by a bight of water. The mound has the traditional name of *Kung Björns hög*, while a stone-setting nearby is called *Kung Björns kyrka* or *gillesal*. An Icelandic saga (*Hervarar saga*) knows of a Swedish king called *Björn at Haugi*, who probably flourished in the ninth century. In connection with this, two fascinating problems are posed by the Latin *Vita Anskarii* from the late ninth century. The Swedish king whom St Ansgar met on his first visit to Birka in 830 was called Björn. It also says that King Olaf, whom Ansgar approached on his second visit to Birka about 852, spoke of an assembly which had to be held "in another part of his realm"—not in Birka. Was that the thing at Uppsala? And was the commercial town of Birka under the supremacy of the Uppsala kings? This question can perhaps be discussed in connection with our trip to Birka on Wednesday.

We have thus assembled at a place densely packed with monuments from prehistoric ages. But Sweden has no recorded historical tales or sagas from the middle ages, no poems from ancient times. This region of Uppsala, so replete with antiquity, would seem much poorer if we could not store it still further with the results we gain from a study of literary traditions in the Icelandic sagas and poems, scrutinizing and criticizing, accepting or rejecting their contents.

In Old Norse literature Uppsala seems to exercise a particular fascination. It seems a place enticing and venerable because of its—so to speak—divine origin and its mysterious fertility cult; but at the

same time a place terrifying, awe-inspiring, gloomy, because of the fancy that so many strange things could happen at such a remote place. We must not forget in this connection that many of the queer and unpleasant things told about Uppsala in the old sagas partly reflect the perpetual animosity that existed not only between Norway and Sweden during the Viking Age and later, but also between Denmark and Sweden in the same periods. To my mind it seems that the attitude in the sagas favours the Norwegians, and very often the Danes too, more than the Swedes. I shall give some examples later on.

If we now look at the oldest literary sources, the scaldic poems from the ninth and tenth centuries, they tell us of the belief that the royal dynasty of Uppsala, the *Ynglingar*, sprang directly from the gods Njörð and Frey. The kings were sometimes called *Freys afspringr* or *Freys óttungr*, i.e. "descendants of the god Frey". We owe our knowledge of the oldest Uppsala kings, from the fifth and sixth centuries and later, to the family pride of one member of this lineage. Towards the end of the ninth century, Rögnvald, a cousin of Harald the Fair-haired of Norway, proud of his dynastic origins in Uppsala, gave a Norwegian scald—Þjóðólfr ór Hvini—the task of making a poem on his pedigree. So, in the *Ynglingatal*, we now have a catalogue of his ancestors through twenty-six generations, going back to a mystical king in Uppsala, Fjölfnir, who died by drowning in a butt of mead. According to the legend, Fjölfnir was a son of Uppsala-Frey.

There grew up in oral tradition in Norway and Iceland a body of tales and legends about these ancient Swedish kings and also of other kings and other events in Uppsala. The references to Uppsala are concerned with its legal administration, with its archaic religious practices, with the characters of great kings and heroes, and with extraordinary adventures at the courts of its rulers. In all these stories it is an exciting and fascinating task—although not always an easy one—to try to decide what is pure invention and what may contain a kernel of historical truth.

In these traditions Uppsala acquired a special repute as the centre of a strange fertility cult, which is spoken of with curiosity and em-

barrassment. Things almost unbelievable were enacted there in the middle of the realm of the Swedes. According to one story (in the expanded saga of Olaf Tryggvason), Harald the Fairhaired of Norway had a daughter, Ingigerd, who was given in marriage to Erik, king in Uppsala (son of Anund). The superstitious men of *Svíaríki* put her on an island and worshipped her as a goddess and sacrificed to her. Horrified by this treatment of a queen in Uppsala, the Norwegians, her countrymen, fetched her home.

In another story we are told of a Norwegian subject who by strange chance became involved in the mysteries of the fertility cult itself. In this case the man was a fugitive from Norway who arrived in Sweden just as the festival in honour of the god Frey was at its height. He followed the procession which carried the god through the domain of the Swedes. When opportunity offered, he got secretly into the wagon in which Frey and his priestess sat, then overcame the god and took his place, travelling on through the country with the priestess. He was venerated as the god, and he very much enjoyed the ritual meals prepared in his honour, but let it be understood that he preferred gold, silver and other valuable offerings to blood-sacrifices. Finally he married the priestess and escaped with her to Norway, not forgetting to take with him a good part of the treasure he had collected during his divine career amongst the Swedes.

Among the early events connected with Uppsala it is possible to discern, in the dim history of the early sixth century, a great battle fought there between Swedish and Danish kings. The site of the battle is *Fýrisvellir*, the wide plains at Uppsala of which I have already spoken. This battle naturally made a welcome theme for Icelandic story-telling, partly based on old Danish traditions. Here we again meet accounts of wonderful events at the royal court of Uppsala. This time it is the great hero of Danish legend, Hrólf kraki, and his men who are the protagonists. They meet treachery at the hands of Aðils, the Swedish king, and narrowly escape being burnt in the hall in which they are lodged. Then they make off across Fýrisvellir, with Aðils at the head of his men in hot pursuit after them. To delay the

pursuers Hrólf strews golden ornaments and other precious things over the plain. Aðils's men are thrown into confusion and only Aðils himself continues the chase. Then Hrólf takes a famous arm-ring, an heirloom of the Uppsala dynasty, and throws it to the ground. The temptation is too much for Aðils—he halts his horse, bends down and takes up the ring on the point of his spear. This is what Hrólf is waiting for, and he cries out in scorn and triumph: “Now I have made the mightiest of the Swedes root like a swine” (*svínbeygt hefi ek nú þann, er ríkastr er með Svíum*).

Kennings for gold—as for instance *fræ Fýrisvalla*, “seed of Fýrisvellir”, *barr Kraka*, “barleycorn of Kraki”—which occur in Norwegian-Icelandic poetry of the tenth and eleventh centuries show that this traditional tale of adventure in its setting on the plains of Fyris is of respectable age.

These plains are famous in other connections too. There, near the end of the tenth century, Erik the Victorious won a decisive victory over invading vikings. According to the legend, it was his own nephew, Styrbjörn the Mighty, who, with the help of King Harald Bluetooth of Denmark, gathered a great army and marched against Uppsala. Erik the Victorious is certainly a historical figure, and the battle of Fýrisvellir is attested in no less reliable sources than two contemporary runic inscriptions from Skåne, as well as in the verses of an Icelandic scald. The runic inscription from Hällestad says this: “Askel set this stone after Toke Gormsson, to him a gracious chief. He did not flee at Uppsala ...” The one from Sjörup matches it: “Saxe set this stone after Asbjörn his comrade, Toke's son. He did not flee at Uppsala but, as long as he had a weapon, fought.” According to the much later Icelandic account, King Erik stood on *Uppsalabrekka*, “Uppsala slope” or “Uppsala height”, after the victory and from there surveyed the battle-field. He then called on anyone able and willing to make a poem, at which the Icelander, Þorvaldr Hjaltason, stepped forward and recited verses in the scaldic fashion. We have in fact some genuine verse by this poet from the end of the tenth century, and from it we learn that King Erik won a great victory on “Fyris fields” and that

the Swedish foray of the “vikings”—Styrbjörn and his allies—proved so disastrous that of their great host only those lived who fled. I confess that I have always imagined that the unique name in the Icelandic text, *Uppsalaþrekka*, was used of the present *Slottsbacken*, where the castle now stands, and that it was from this vantage point—one of the highest for many miles around—that King Erik looked out over the battle-field. However this may be, and whatever value we may attach to this topographical name, it is interesting and instructive to see how in other respects the Icelandic narrative art of later centuries has certainly overlaid and embellished the historical basis. In the *Styrbjarnar þáttr* in the fourteenth-century *Flateyjarbók* we find a fascinating account of Styrbjörn’s expedition and of the battle itself. Now it is thanks to a wise counsellor—a fictitious Thorgný the Lawman—and to a vow and sacrifice to Odin, that Erik the Victorious inflicts a crushing defeat on his nephew.

King Erik’s son was Olaf, usually called *inn sænski*, “the Swede”, in Icelandic sources and *Skötkonung* in Sweden. He too makes a notable appearance in the Icelandic stories. In conservative Uppsala he figures as an authentic representative of the old autocracy, but beside him Snorri Sturluson has placed a popular character to show the other side of the coin. This is Thorgný Thorgnýsson the Lawman who stands out as a significant representative of Swedish legal order and who is presented as an incarnation of wisdom, reason and power. In Snorri’s incomparable description, written perhaps about 1225, of the meeting of the Uppsala thing at the beginning of the eleventh century, Thorgný appears as the true leader of the yeomen and people, while in comparison the king appears rather like a wilful, spoilt boy. Yet it must be mentioned that the Lawman’s success on behalf of the people in Snorri’s account finds a remarkable parallel in the *Vita Anskarii* from the late ninth century, where it says that the custom among the Swedes is that “all public affairs depend more on the unanimous will of the people than on the authority of the king”.

As I have already suggested, it was characters, events and circumstances in Uppsala like these which busied the imaginations of Ice-

landic story-tellers in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and thus added such fascinating colours to episodes from the Viking Age. Uppsala became a focus for exciting incidents and experiences, a magnet which also drew to itself narrative material of utterly remote origin.

And now we come to a remarkable little tale of a merchant in Uppsala in the reign of Erik the Victorious, that is to say at the end of the tenth century. The story is found in the *Flateyjarbók* and was in all probability composed about 1300. It is called the *Hróa þáttr heimska*, the tale of Hrói the foolish or simple. Since we are now gathered in the very place where its events are set, I cannot refrain from telling the story, though in abridged form.

Hrói is an ordinary Danish merchant, enterprising, stubborn, bold. He is strongly built and has a peculiarity which distinguishes him from other men: his one eye is blue, the other brown. This energetic and industrious man succeeds in gaining the favour of Svein Forkbeard, king of Denmark. And no small gain it is, for, according to the Norse way of thinking, a man who undertook something with his king's agreement and protection also shared in the king's luck (*gæfa*, *gipta*, *hamingja*) and prospered in his affairs. Hrói's trading ventures are in fact extremely profitable as long as he is in partnership with the king, but one day he withdraws from their compact and starts off for Sweden on his own account.

He sails through Mälaren to Fýrisvellir, where he secures his ship and goes ashore to do business with the people of Uppsala. He soon meets a man called Helgi, one of King Erik the Victorious's attendants. They talk business straight away and Hrói is astonished by the size of the deal, for Helgi wants to buy all his cargo at once. He takes Hrói to a storehouse full of goods and offers him everything inside it in return for the cargo. Hrói is impressed and delighted and they soon agree. The next day Helgi and his men come down and quickly begin to unload Hrói's ship, emptying it completely. Hrói takes things much more leisurely and it is not until some days later that he goes to Helgi's storehouse to move the goods down to his empty ship. But when he

gets there he finds the doors wide open and the storehouse empty. There is nobody to be seen, but after some search he finds Helgi asleep on the grass. From him he hears to his great surprise that the merchandise has been taken away, because Helgi claims that in accordance with their agreement Hrói should have removed it on a prescribed day. On that day he had piled the goods outside the storehouse, but when Hrói had not come to fetch them, he had them moved to safe keeping—"for," he adds, "it is the law of the land here (in Uppsala) that everyone must take care of his own property so that no thief can steal it. If he does not, the king can prosecute him and now," Helgi says, "the king shall judge in this case of yours."

Hrói goes off, not best pleased, and walks over the Fýrisvellir until he is suddenly stopped by two men who have been following him for some time. One of these is Thorgils, Helgi's brother—and he is also one of King Erik's attendants. He tries to snatch a valuable knife that hangs from Hrói's belt, claiming that both knife and belt really belong to him. He accuses him of stealing them on one occasion when they met in Valland (France). Hrói succeeds in retaining his property but remarks that there seems to be small prospect of profit for him on this trip.

As he goes on his way over the Fýrisvellir he meets a big, powerful, evil-looking man with only one eye. This man accuses Hrói with harsh words of having stolen his other eye by magic. Hrói has, after all, one blue and one brown eye, and the big man says to him: "Everybody can see that my eye and one of yours belonged once in the same head. The king shall decide this case tomorrow, as well as the case of my brother Thorgils whose knife and belt you stole."

Hrói returns to his ship, deeply troubled. You meet curious people in Uppsala!

Next day he goes into the town and then catches sight of a young and beautiful woman who is just going to fetch water. She comes up to him and asks if he is Hrói the Simple. He cannot deny it but adds that he has had better nicknames in the past. "And what is your name?" he asks the girl. "My name is Sigrbjörg," she says, "and I am

the daughter of Thorgný the Lawman." Now an idea hits Hrói—if anyone can help him, Thorgný is the man. He asks her if she can arrange for him to meet her father. She replies: "My father is not very fond of Danes, but on the other hand he is no friend of Helgi and his brothers, who have far too much influence with the king." So they arrange Hrói's opportunity—he is to station himself under the balcony of their loft-room and listen while she talks to her father about his affairs. All goes according to plan. Hrói hears Sigrbjörg's questions about his problems and the detailed answers given her by Thorgný, who is presented as a blind man and, naturally, of the greatest wisdom and experience.

In this way Hrói is well prepared to defend himself in his law-suits before the thing at Uppsala. The beautiful girl advises him to join Thorgný the Lawman's following when he rides to the assembly. This works out as it should and Hrói arrives at the thing in good company. Now the cases are presented before the king, and the brothers Helgi, Thorgils and Thórir think they have Hrói in a cleft stick.

But—to make a long story short—Hrói remembers everything he has heard from the daughter's interview with her father and makes use of his cunning answers. He thus certainly "matches trick for trick", as it says in the saga. I cannot go into details but I would only like to mention one example. When the one-eyed Thórir claims his other eye back from Hrói, Hrói in reply flatly denies that he has stolen an eye from Thórir. "I propose," Hrói says, "that one eye is taken from us both. Both eyes shall then be put on scales. If they originally belonged in the same head, they ought to weigh the same." Thórir declines Hrói's offer—naturally enough since his only eye is at stake—so Hrói is victorious in his law-suit.

Now Thorgný the Lawman makes a speech and says that the brothers had long enough and undeservedly enjoyed the confidence of the king. Now they must at last receive their punishment. And so it happens: Helgi is banished, and Thorgils and Thórir are hanged at once on the thing-place! Hrói now becomes a much honoured and respected man and is called Hrói the Wise. He marries Sigrbjörg and

thus becomes Thorgný's son-in-law. And the tale adds: "Many men of rank in Sweden are descended from him"!

As I have tried to show in a special study, this tale is almost completely of foreign origin. It appears both in the *Thousand and One Nights* and in Indian literature and is also represented in the various collections of tales of the *Seven Sages*. In all these tales the narrative motif is the same: a merchant comes to a foreign city (often called "the city of rogues") and is there cheated by unscrupulous people but finally helped by a woman and an old wise man. Our tale's closest counterparts are, however, to be found in Western Europe, in a Middle English poem called the *Tale of Beryn*, and in a French prose romance called *L'histoire du chevalier Bérimus* from the fourteenth century. The French romance is in turn based on a poem of a merchant Berinus which was composed in the thirteenth century and strongly influenced from the oriental versions.

Märchen-motives of European-Oriental origin might thus be borrowed in any part of the Scandinavian world, but it was the narrative art developed in Iceland in the thirteenth century that was able to stamp such material in a Norse mould. This is the astonishing and at the same time misleading thing about the tale of Hrói the Simple. The old *Märchen* was set in a Norse milieu, the characters were given Norse names, the whole was stamped with the hallmark of Icelandic narrative art.

As I said previously, Uppsala was recognized in Iceland as a place of wonderful things and strange adventures. There a stranger might easily be hard done by, if he did not take care of himself and "match trick for trick", as it says in the *Hróa þáttr*. But at the same time Icelandic saga-tradition knew of Uppsala as a place with a firmly founded system of law and justice, developed and administered by the old law-skilled men of Tiundaland, that is to say by Thorgný the Lawman and his ancestors. This offered a point of contact with the vagrant tale—a tale in which just such a wise man of law was needed to keep the rogues of the city in check. In this way Thorgný the Lawman became an important figure in the story. His ride to the thing

and his opposition to the king have dramatic force, and a tension is built up which reminds us of the masterly description which Snorri Sturluson, writing perhaps some eighty years earlier, had given of the clash between Thorgný and Olaf Skötkonung at the same great assembly in Uppsala.

And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, you are gathered on the plains around the river Fyris and you have in front of you a whole week of experiences of the people of Uppsala. By the end of the Congress you may possibly know if there is any truth in our Old Norse tale and its description of Uppsala!

Vital Factors in the Success of the Vikings

By BERTIL ALMGREN*

Viking raids in Western Europe met with an easy success which is really rather astonishing. In the discussion of this, one fact does not seem to have been taken into account. If the Viking ships—with an overall length of 70–80 ft—had been built like modern schooners, they would have had a draught when loaded of about 10 ft, but in fact they drew only between 2' and 2'10". They are more like sailing canoes than sailing ships. This gave them the following advantages:

- a) They sailed much faster than a heavy-laden, deep-draught ship of the early medieval "kogg" type.
- b) They could sail further into the often shallow rivers of Western Europe.
- c) They could use oars (because they always had low sides) as a complement to sails, thereby becoming almost completely independent of wind and current, whilst the continental oarless sailing ships had to be hauled up the rivers. Unlike the latter, the Viking ships were thus also independent of the more or less private strongholds that existed along the shores of the rivers, and could not easily be prevented from moving unassailed far up the rivers to the inland towns.
- d) They could use islets in the shallow waters of estuaries as landing places and as strongholds to stay over the winter, as the Vikings did in the Seine, the Loire and the Rhône, as well as on the Isle of Thanet and Sheppey, without the risk of attacks by the natives, whose ships drew too much water to be able to land there.

* These notes represent a synopsis of my paper to the Congress. For more detailed discussion see my papers, 'Vikingatåg och Vikingaskepp', *Tor* (1962), 186–200, and 'Vikingatågens höjdpunkt och slut', *Tor* (1963), 215–50.

- e) And—most important of all—the Viking ships were able to land everywhere, and especially on the shallow coasts of the North Sea and the Irish Sea, thus outflanking the only really fortified parts of the coasts: the old Roman harbours, far up the rivers. The Viking ships were probably the first ocean-going landing-craft in naval history.

Such Viking strongholds as the Orkneys, lacking good natural harbours in the present-day sense, are a good example of a region with ubiquitous shallow sandy bays offering excellent landing opportunities for Viking ships, but none for their opponents.

This contrast is well illustrated by the description in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle of how Alfred the Great “ordered the construction of a new fleet of ‘long ships’ that were nearly double the size of the Danish boats, some having 60 oars and some even more. They were built neither on the Frisian *nor the Danish* [my italics] model, but were thought to be swifter and steadier than the foreign craft ... [but] when nine of these ships of Alfred’s engaged six pirate boats the English made a sad muddle of the fight by running aground (‘very awkwardly’ as the chronicler candidly says).”¹ *The Danish boats escaped.*

That extremely shallow waters were especially used by the Vikings is demonstrated not only by their first recorded landing-place, Lindisfarne, but also by their winter quarters at Thanet, Sheppey, Mersea and Northey, as well as their corresponding use of islands in France, e.g. in the Seine at Jeufosse, Noirmoutier at the mouth of the Loire estuary and La Camargue in the Rhône estuary.

The description of the prelude of the Battle of Maldon in 991, when the Anglo-Saxon commander let the Viking army have free access to the mainland from the island of Northey, where they had first landed, seems to show that the Vikings were practically invulnerable on that island because, unlike the Viking ships, the Anglo-Saxon ships could not land there.

¹ T. D. Kendrick, *A History of the Vikings* (1930), 245.

Even the early Viking fortresses, such as Benfleet and Shoebury, north of the Thames estuary, as well as Milton (Regis) inside Sheppey, or Appledore on the Channel in Kent, show the same preference for exceptionally shallow waters, accessible for the ships of the Vikings but not for those of the Anglo-Saxons (cf. the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 896).

These shallow-draught Viking ships had another advantage, which has been little noticed. The "Great Army" of Vikings, that built the above-mentioned fortresses, had crossed in 892 from Boulogne "with horses and all", in some hundred ships. Anybody who has tried to move a horse from one surface to another, more than five feet higher or lower, will know how almost impossible that is. Thus, landing with horses from ships of the schooner or "kogg" type is strictly limited to harbours with quays (which must have been few and far between in the Viking Age). Viking ships, however, sailed straight in on a shallow beach, offer the best possible means of landing horses, because their decks will be only one or two feet above the sand of the beach.

This is the *sine qua non* of 1066. The harbour of Pevensey, now on dry land, cannot possibly have accommodated the hundreds of ships required to transport the army of the Conqueror, let alone offered quays long enough to moor them and disembark all their horses. But they did not need such a harbour.

The Bayeux Tapestry shows that the Norman ships were typical, low-built Viking ships—indeed, it even shows how the horses step over the ship's side straight into the shallow water of the beach. This was the only possible way to land such a large army in a reasonably short time, and this landing could have taken place anywhere on the sandy beach *outside* Pevensey.

1066 was probably the last successful large-scale landing of a cavalry army on a completely hostile coast. The success depended on the Viking ships, and with their disappearance in favour of larger and generally higher-built ships (which must have been superior for sea-fighting) the Viking harassment of Western Europe ends.

The Norman invasion was not the first large-scale cavalry landing.

Already the "Great Army" of the Vikings in 892 had brought their mounts with them, which enabled them to make swift raids through the country. Their newly-built fortresses, perhaps originally derived from an East European idea, probably served them as more convenient bases than the ships in the long run. The corresponding system of fortifications built by Alfred and Edward, partly as fortified boroughs, managed in the end to halt the success that the "private" Viking raids had enjoyed in the almost completely unfortified England of the ninth century. The peaceful time between the 930s and the 980s must be due to this.

Why, then, were the Viking raids able to start again in England about 980? It is well known that at that time their leaders were of royal descent—Olaf Tryggvason, Sven Forkbeard—and their forces must be looked upon as well organized, more or less regular armies.

Danish tenth-century graves show that such an army must have contained units of heavily armed cavalry, whose gear displayed marked influence from the latest military novelty, the Magyar cavalry, whose raids—reaching as far even as Bremen in the early tenth century—made them well known on the Continent. The German troops who conquered the Magyars at Merseburg in 933 and occupied the Danish town of Hedeby in the following year probably acted as intermediaries for the transfer not only of Magyar stirrups and bridle bits, but also of sabretaches found in Birka graves, of buttons for their Oriental dress and, still more important, of their arrowheads, found in Birka and *Trelleborg*. Possibly the camps of the *Trelleborg* type, all situated on extremely shallow waters, were meant for the training and subsequent shipping not only of troops in general but of cavalry in particular.

This new, well-trained professional cavalry, whose existence is proved by a remarkable number of tenth-century graves in Denmark, must have played no small part in the success of Sven Forkbeard and Canute the Great, for they provided the only force capable of overrunning the numerous fortified boroughs.

Even the Norman cavalry of 1066 may show something of this

Magyar influence. Not only are the conical helmets and the lances with pennants depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry the same as those of the riders on the golden crucible of the tenth-century Hungarian hoard of Nagy-St-Miklos (whether Bulgarian or Magyar), but this latter is also *the only pre-Conquest representation* in Europe of the chain-mail dress *with breeches* also familiar from the Tapestry.

As time went on, the lack of Norse ships suitable for the easy landing of horses on the one hand, and the presence of the professional Norman cavalry on the other, ensured that Viking raids came to an end. Easily assembled into larger armies from a tight net of baronial *mottes*, the mounted men-at-arms formed what the Anglo-Saxons had so badly lacked: a mobile "home-guard" always equipped and ready for battle against the "paratroopers" of their age, the Vikings, who were no longer able to profit from swift moves and unexpected attacks, on the coast by ship and inland on their sea-borne horses.

Some Characteristic Features of Ancient Popular Tradition in Upper Dalarna

By STIG BJÖRKLUND

Dalarna can still today be said to be Sweden's most interesting province from the ethnological and linguistic point of view. This is especially true of the areas surrounding Orsa Lake and Siljan and along the upper part of Österdalälven. Here we find an extremely archaic and at the same time highly developed peasant culture such as cannot be found anywhere else in Sweden.

In spite of modern technical progress in the more central areas, with its attendant economic and social changes, the remoter districts have faithfully preserved features of medieval Dalarna. In earlier times psychological factors doubtless played an important role in these areas, when it was a matter of resisting novelty and change under external pressure. Nowadays there is a conscious desire to keep up old traditions and this is encouraged by contributions from individuals and from associations devoted to the preservation of what is genuinely old in the province.

The following are a few choice examples of especially ancient features of life and language typical of Dalarna and still to be found there.

In places where crop and animal husbandry have not yet been reached by modern rationalization processes, people still live on farms with timbered buildings, with *one* for each activity: living quarters, loft and stable, cowhouse, barn, shed and storehouse, etc. The buildings either stand in one long row or else in a square, round an enclosed yard. They are built very skilfully in a way originating centuries ago—they remind us of the farms of that period when the farmer's Viking kinsmen travelled far and wide eastward and westward.

In summertime, cows, sheep and goats were taken from the village to remote forest pastures. Farms often owned *two* such summer-pastures, differing in type and use. One was a so-called "home-pasture", which was often more or less the same as the home-farm. A certain amount of crop-cultivation took place here. The other was a remoter pasture with fewer buildings and of a simpler, more ancient type. No crops were grown here. There was frequently a "fire-house" (or "frying-house"), called in the dialect *jälldaus* (OI *eld(a)hús*) or *störöjs*, *stärrhus* and *stess* (OSw *stekar(a)hús*), which served as both kitchen and living-quarters. It had a door in the gable-end, a hearth in the middle of the floor and fixed bunks along the walls.¹ The great Linnæus has told us that in ancient times this type of building was the standard dwelling of the home-villages as well. On his journey through Dalarna in the summer of 1734 he saw these chimneyless log cabins among the farm-buildings of Älvdalen and Särna. But he adds that "they had also this type of house on all the summer-pastures".

The summer-pastures have also been the last stronghold of other ancient traditions, both material and otherwise. It was the out-of-date implements and containers for fodder-gathering, dairying and cooking that were taken from the farm to the summer-pasture, along primitive roads and by primitive means of transport, such as pack-horses.

With the old implements and methods went the old ideas and the old *language*, which even today, especially in the north of Älvdalen, has an extremely conservative stamp. By way of example, I may mention that the dialect there has preserved *nasalized* vowels that disappeared from most of the rest of Scandinavia more than 500 years ago. In addition, the dialects of the northeastern part of Dalarna down as far as Rättvik have preserved the short-syllabled pronunciation of the old language (that is, a short consonant follows a short stressed vowel). They have also preserved the full conjugation of the verbs, the declension of nouns (in the definite and indefinite forms of the

¹ Sigurd Erixon, *Några bidrag till det nordiska husets historia I-III, Fataburen* (1917), 145 ff. (171).

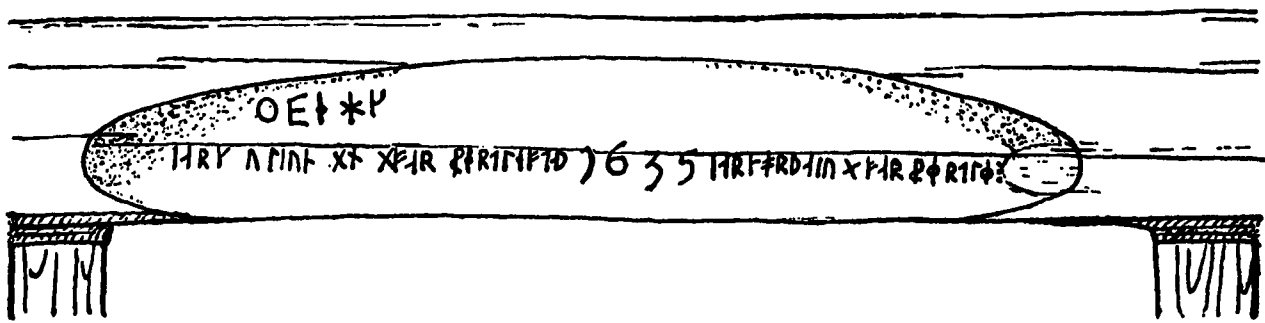


Fig. 1. The inscription of the Orsbleck loft: *ierk ulsun an afer gort lofted 1635 ierk årdesu (?) afer gort lo ...*, which means: "Erik Olson he has made the loft 1635 Erik Hårdson (?) has made ..."

singular and plural), and the declension of adjectives, pronouns and certain numerals.

As late as a generation ago there were still old people in Dalarna who spoke only dialect. Nowadays everyone can also speak standard Swedish and the younger generation has in fact mainly gone over to speaking *only* standard Swedish.

An ancient feature of Dalarna tradition, one which may be compared with the Viking Age rune stones of Uppland, is that the *runic alphabet* lived on and was used in a modified form in Upper Dalarna until the latter part of the nineteenth century. As the alphabet was most often used by the men and girls tending herds on the summer-pastures, where it was preserved longest, old people today still call it *gässelkarl-stil* (in dialect *gässlkallstyl*) or *gässel-*, *gätar-* and *herdkarl-stil* etc., that is "herdsman's writing". Old Icelandic had a word *stafkarlalettr* for runes as opposed to letters of the Latin alphabet ("staff-men's" or "vagrants' writing").

The runes were carved in wood with a knife, and this was certainly the primitive method. But they are also found carved in horn or hammered in iron and similar material.

The language of the preserved texts appears to be mainly the Älvdal dialect, mixed with broken Swedish. The inscription above the door of a loft from the village of Orsbleck in Orsa, now in the Anders Zorn Museum, Gammelgården in Mora, and dated 1635, may however be in the Mora dialect (fig. 1).

The ingenious inscription on the back of the Lillhärda chair,

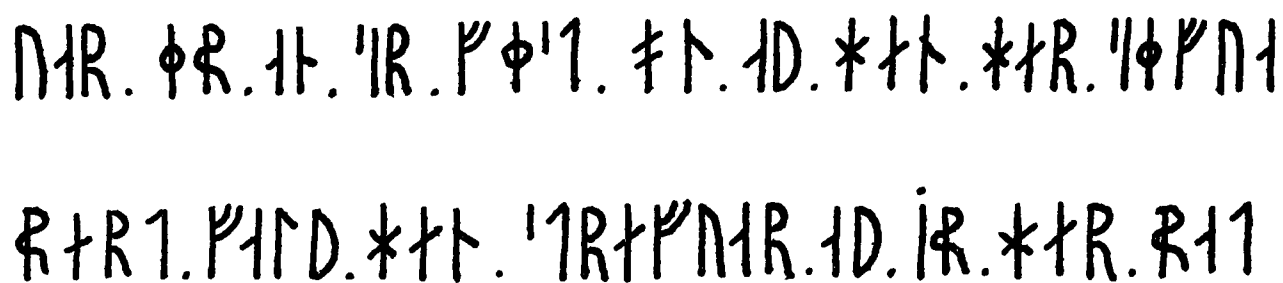


Fig. 2. The inscription of the Lillhärda chair.

a fine judge's seat dating from about 1600, now kept in the National History Museum, bears characteristics of the Älvdal dialect (fig. 2). The text, which is the oldest we have in a modern Swedish dialect, runs as follows: *Uer og en sir fost ån äd han har siofue gart feld han strafuer ed ig har gart*, which means: "Everyone should look at what he has done himself, before he criticizes what I have done". The inscription was discussed by Professor Sophus Bugge in 1900.¹

Since the modern Älvdal dialect still has nasal vowels, it is interesting to note that in this inscription, the seventeenth-century carver kept the *n* of the preposition *ån*, corresponding to the *n* of English *on*, German *an*, cf. Gothic *ana*. This preposition is still pronounced nasally *å* in Älvdalen today.

There are also runes or similar letters inscribed as calendar signs on the Älvdal "rune-staff" called *prim* (dial. *praim*), which was used until the 1860s as a kind of perpetual calendar. This form of writing is mentioned by Reinhold Näsman in 1733 in his dissertation *Historiola Lingvæ Dalekarlicæ*. They also made a deep impression on Linnæus in 1734, who notes that "the peasants here (in Älvdalen), in addition to using rune-staffs, still write their names and owner's marks with runes, which can be seen on walls, stones (perhaps sinkers), wooden dishes etc. Here they practise what is no longer known anywhere else in Sweden." For other runic inscriptions in Dalarna (cf. figs. 3 and 4) and a chronological survey of more ancient Dalarna runes, I refer to

¹ *Svenska Fornminnesföreningens Tidskrift* 10 (1900), 30 ff.

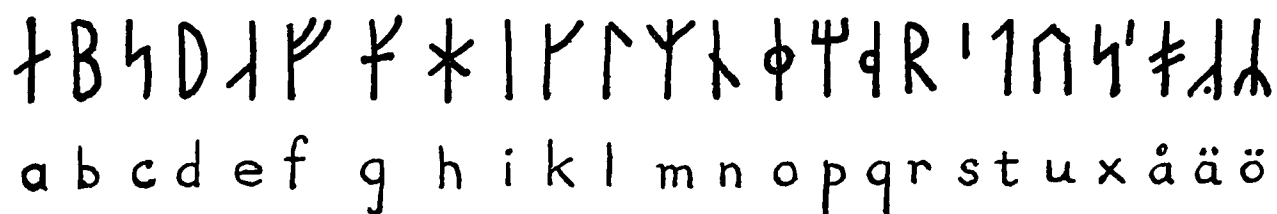


Fig. 3. The Dalarna runes after Bureus 1599, published by Adolf Noreen in *Fornvännen* (1906), 90-91.

papers by Adolf Noreen, Johannes Boëthius, Lars Levander,¹ Sigurd Erixon² and Elisabeth Svärdström.³

The archaic uniqueness of the dialects of Upper Dalarna was noted at an early stage, and dialect was now and then used in short, popular works written by native speakers. Apart from the runic texts already mentioned there are a number of passages of varying length preserved in the Älvdal, Mora and Orsa dialects. They consist of plays and wedding and congratulatory verses from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There are also short grammatical treatises and glossaries from the same period. More and more such material appeared during the nineteenth century. Our oldest printed dissertation on a Swedish dialect is Näsman's *Historiola Lingvæ Dalekarlicæ* (1733) which I mentioned above. This work deals with the Älvdal dialect, compared with the dialects of Mora and Orsa.

These works are, of course, of unequal value, owing to difficulties of phonetic notation and obvious printing or scribal errors. But if they are read critically and closely compared with modern records of the corresponding dialects, they give us valuable information on the language of earlier times in Upper Dalarna.

I will not go into more detail here about the different works *in* or *on* the Dalarna dialects. Those who are interested may consult Adolf Noreen's introduction to the Dalarna dialects in *Svenska Landsmål* 4 (1881), and above all the preface of the great dialect dictionary of

¹ Dalska runinskrifter från nyare tid I-III, *Fornvännen* (1906), 63 ff.; cf. L. Levander, Nya runinskrifter från Älfdalen, *ibid.* (1910), 165 ff.

² Runinskrifter från Dalarna, *Fataburen* (1915), 147 ff.

³ Runskålen från Hykie, *Filologiskt Arkiv* 7 (1959).

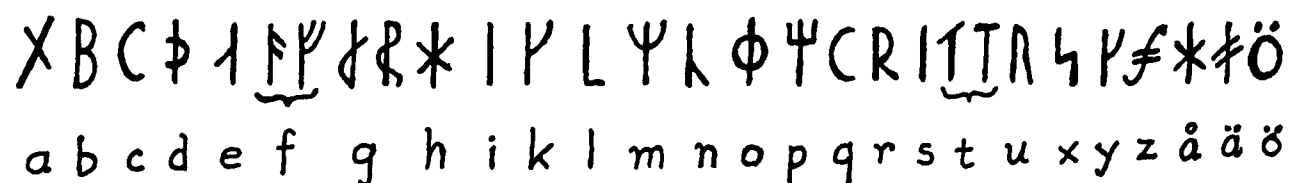


Fig. 4. The Dalarna runes in the 1850s after Liljegren (1832) and others; cf. A. Noreen, *Fornvännen* (1906), 90–91.

Upper Dalarna which is being prepared at the Uppsala Dialekt- och Folkminnesarkiv. You will find in the preface a detailed account of all the manuscript and printed sources.

So far—starting in 1961—the first volume of the dictionary (about 630 pages of double-column text) has been published. It covers the letters A to F and gives many different forms of words, idioms and phrases taken from earlier and later records from the 21 parishes of the Dalarna dialect area proper.

The dictionary was started by Dr Lars Levander at the end of the 1920s, shortly after he had completed his comprehensive grammar of the Dalarna dialects (1925–8). The first articles in dictionary form were begun about 1940. When Levander died suddenly in 1950 after ten years work on the dictionary, I was given the task of putting the articles into final form for publication.

The success of this venture will mean the fulfilment of an old wish of many Dalarna scholars, a wish formulated as early as 1757 by the traveller A. Hülphers: “It would be desirable if someone could preserve in a grammar and dictionary the memory of such an ancient relic as this Dalarna language.”

Recent Excavations on Viking Age Sites in the Faroes

By SVERRI DAHL

This paper reports on two particular groups of archeological investigations undertaken in the Faroes in recent years that have a wider significance than for the islands alone. They cover shieling sites and one or two old churches.

If we relied on *Færeyinga saga*, the Saga of the Faroese, written in Iceland about 1200, we should get only a very limited notion of the earliest settlements and of people's circumstances at that time. The map (fig. 1) shows all the place-names given in the saga—we know that there were many more farmsteads in the later middle ages but here only a mere 7 are named! We must remember too that Þórshöfn, now the capital of the Faroes, was not originally a settlement site. From about A.D. 900 it was the thing-place of the whole country, but it was not permanently inhabited until the middle ages.

The seven farm-names and the island-names mentioned in the saga are, using the Icelandic forms, *at Hofi* and *Sandvík* on *Suðurey*, *Dímon hin meiri*, *Skúfey*, *Sandey*, *Straum(s)ey*, *Gata* on *Austrey*, and *Svíney*, one of the *Norðreyjar*. It is odd in a way that *Kirkjubøur* is not mentioned, for it seems likely that it was the site of a substantial farm from early times—it was later the bishop's residence and the cultural centre of the islands. The absence of names in the saga is sadly matched by the absence of information about daily life. It is a lack we feel keenly because written medieval sources touching the Faroes are so very scarce. Certain things suggest, however, that the early farmsteads were more scattered than they became in later times, when people moved to settlements near the sea. It is likely too that the early settlers were primarily farmers. Evidence for this has been given by Professor

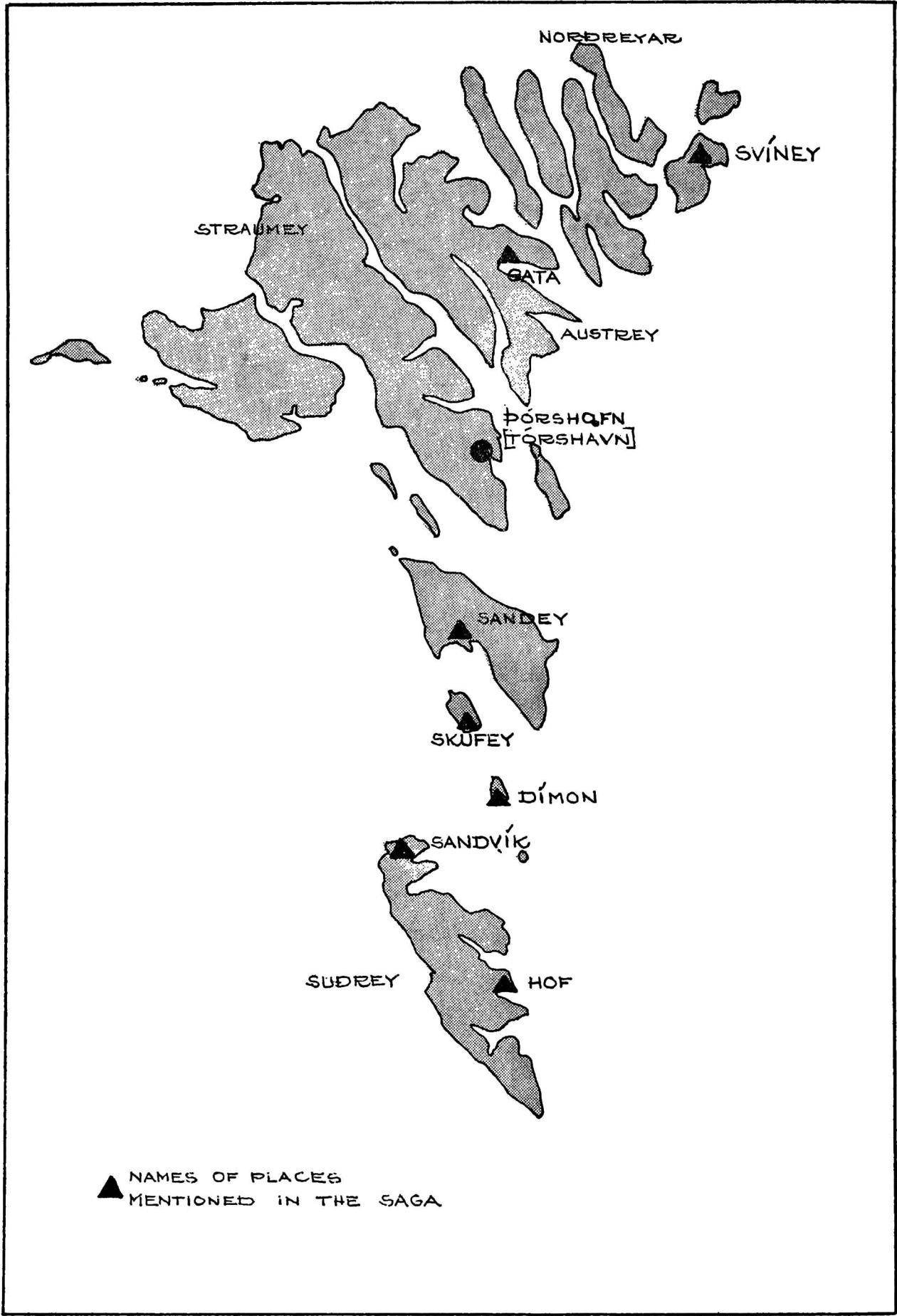


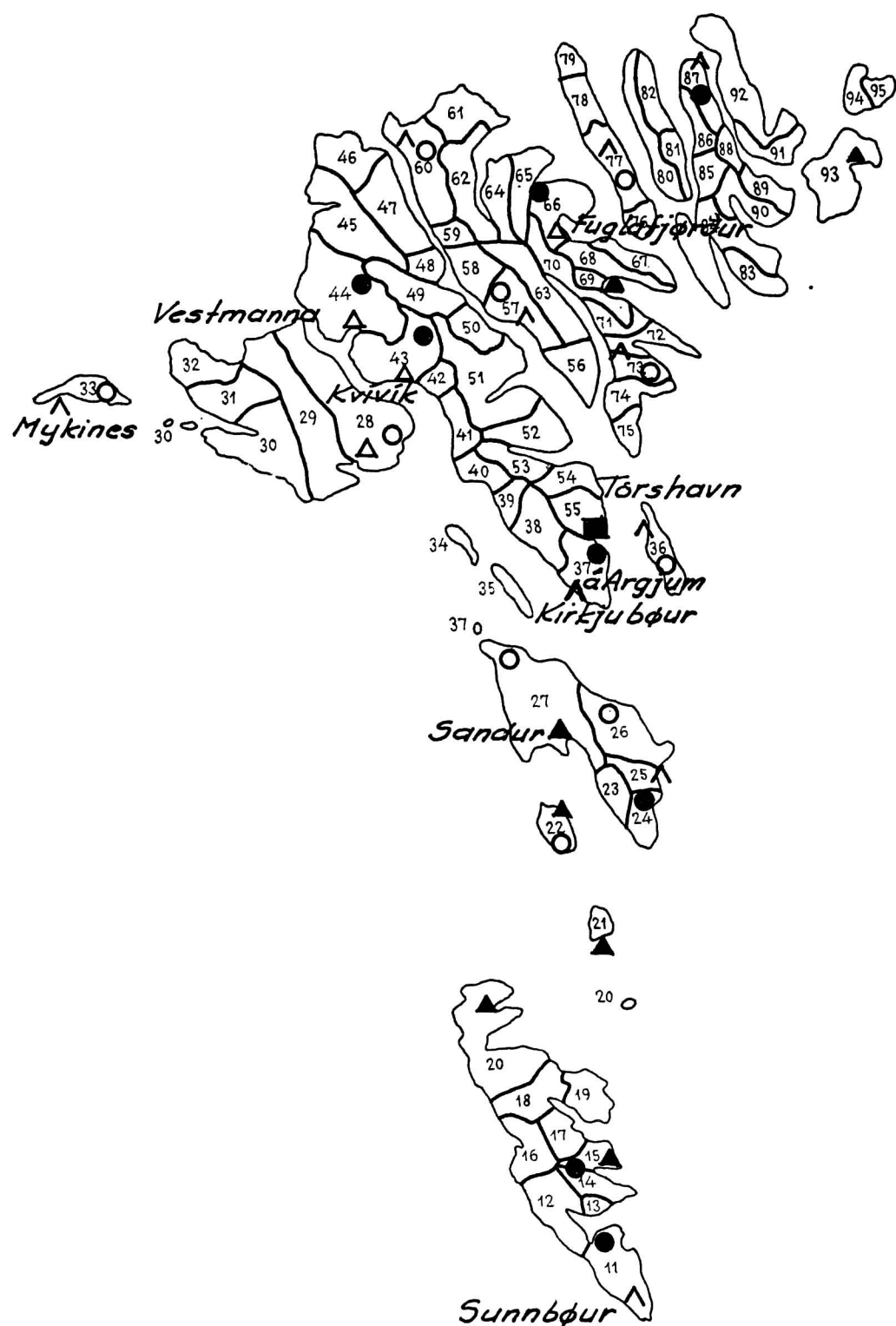
Fig. 1. The Faroes: place-names mentioned in *Færeyinga saga*.



Fig. 2. Ergidalur.

Christian Matras in his interesting 'Gammelfærøsk *ærgi* og dermed beslægtede ord' in *Namn och bygd* (1956), a study which has shed much light on the early settlements. There had previously been no real knowledge of any genuine, organised use of shielings, like the *sæter* or *fäbodur* of Norway and Sweden, but Professor Matras was able to show that a number of Faroese place-names contain a Celtic word which can be interpreted as 'shieling'. Around A.D. 900 it was used by Norsemen in the Atlantic settlements (but not in Iceland), and the Old Faroese form for it was *ærgi*, which gives modern *argi* in the northern islands and *ergi* in the dialect of Suðuroy, as in *Argir*, *Argisá*, *Argisfossur*, *Ergisá*, *Ergidalur*, for example. In Old Irish the word is used of a herd of cows or a cow-pen; in Scottish Gaelic it means a pasture (with huts where herdsmen live in summer) or merely a summer-cottage for dairymaids. This Scottish Gaelic meaning seems to be the one we have in the Faroese place-names.

Once the problem was posed, it was too exciting to ignore. An



- Ærgi
- Ærgi, ávíst toft – Ærgi, identified site
- ▲ Garðar nevndir í Føroyingasøgu – Farms mentioned in the Saga
- △ Funnir víkingaaldargarðar – Excavated Viking Age Settlements
- ▽ Ætlaðir víkingaaldargarðar – Indicated Settlements

Fig. 3. The Faroes: ærgi sites and early settlements.



Fig. 4. Longhouse fireplace, Fuglafjörður.

immediate survey gave the provisional result that house-sites and other traces of human habitation are visible at all the places bearing this type of name, and that all the Faroese *ærgi* are situated rather far from what are thought to be the oldest main farms or from the present main villages to which they belong or belonged. Some of them are in fact located high up in the mountains, though always close to fresh water.

One of these sites has been excavated: *Ergidalur*, 200 m above sea-level, inland on Suðuroy. This belonged to the Viking Age settlement at *Hofi*, where according to the saga the chieftain Hafgrímr lived, and where his farm-site and burial mound are still pointed out. To the

left of the brook there, an avalanche of stones from the waterfall, *Ergisfossur*, has covered what was presumably a *kví* (modern *kvíggj*), a milking-place for dairy cattle. To the right of the brook there was a house-site which on excavation revealed the remains of a building, 5.5 m long, 3.5 m wide (fig. 2). In a fireplace built up with flat stones above the level of the floor and in the floor itself were found sherds of large bowl-shaped pottery vessels, which indicate that the house was in use in the Viking Age. By the fireplace there was a hexagonal basalt column used as a seat: and it must have cost somebody a lot of effort to bring it here, for it is a long way and hard going to the nearest rock formation of this kind.

Another *ærgi* on Suðuroy is at the site called *í Ergibyrgi*, which has not yet been excavated. Here the dwelling-house and cattle-pen are quite distinct, and we can even make out the overgrown stone dykes that stretch down from the mountain to the edge of the steep sea-cliffs.

The site called *við Argisá í Havnarþø* on Eysturoy is one from which we have every reason to hope for good results. There are traces of certain smaller buildings there but it is also the site of a rather big longhouse with curved walls of Viking Age type. It has not been excavated but some very promising finds were made when a draining ditch was dug.

Some established *ærgi* sites are marked on the map (fig. 3) and it will be seen that in some cases they correspond to farmsteads mentioned in *Færeyinga saga* (also marked on the map), at *Hofi*, *Skúfey* and *Sandey*, for example. Some correspond to farms that have now been located and examined, especially Fuglafjörður, whose *ærgi* was at the place just mentioned, *Argisá í Havnarþø*, and Kvívík, whose *ærgi* was at another *Argisá* over the mountains on the extreme edge of the outlying fields.

At Fuglafjörður we have excavated a Viking longhouse, with a splendid fireplace made of flat stones (fig. 4). Among the many finds may be mentioned a basalt pebble with ornament of magic import on it. It has been looked upon as a sinker, *vaðsteinur*, but is more likely to

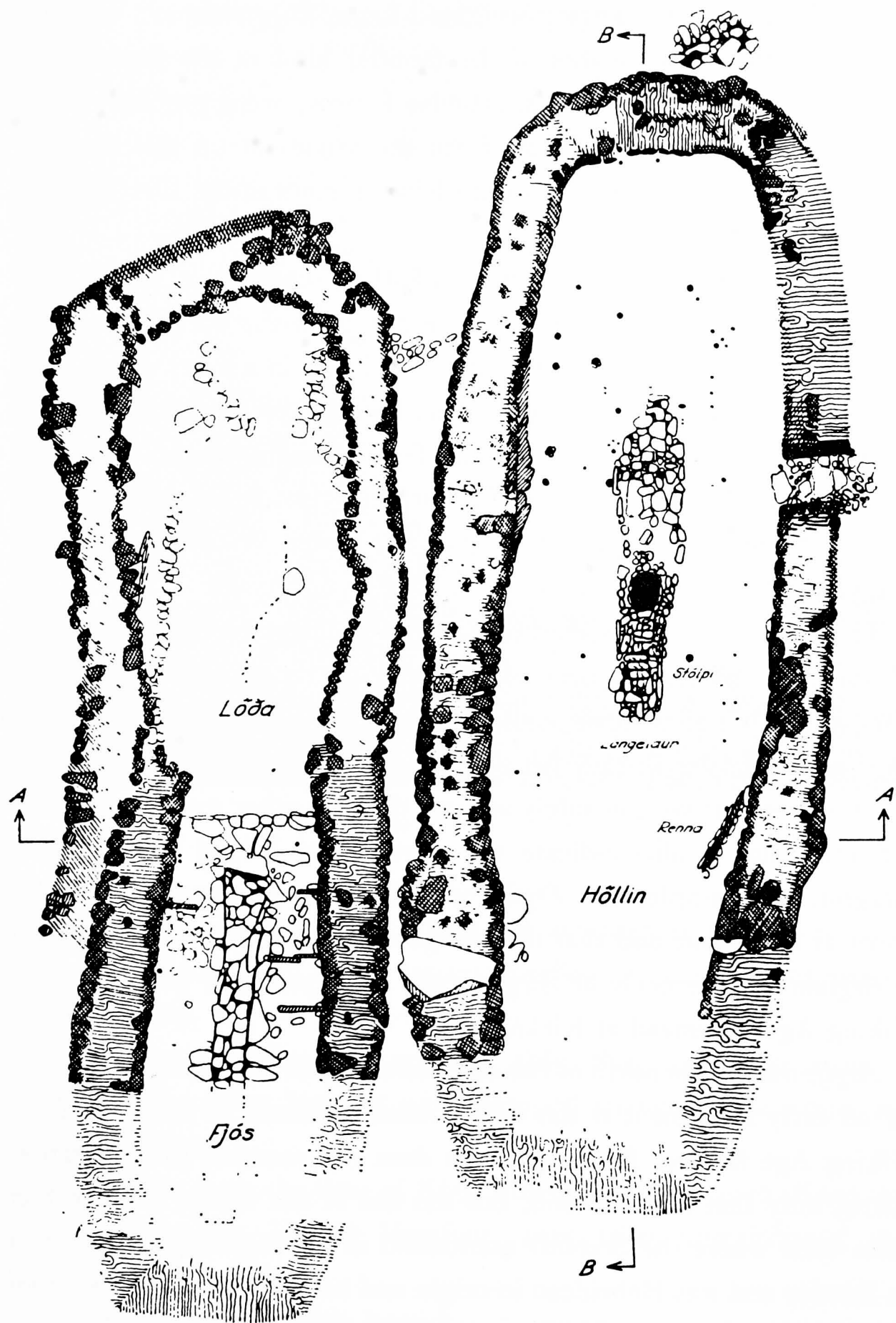


Fig. 5. Viking Age farm, Kvívík.

be a weight-stone for a warp-weighted loom, *klíggjasteinur*. We have found steatite loom-weights of the familiar kind in the Faroes, but pebbles like this, with one lengthwise furrow, were probably more common. This seems to follow from the ornament on this one and from the find of several such stones lying in rows in the Kvívík farmhouse.

The farm at Kvívík consists of a hall 21–22 m long, with a fireplace 7 m long in the centre and an entrance in the curved long-wall to the east (fig. 5). West of the dwelling-house is a byre, with a barn added later. The southern walls of the house have been washed away by the sea. Some items among the finds warrant special attention: imported bowl-shaped vessels of soapstone, glass beads coloured and silvered, amber beads, toy boats and toy horses—vivid reminders of everyday life.

The connection established between these farms and the occupation of *ærgi* sites places the date of the latter pretty certainly within the Viking Age. It also corresponds to Professor Matras's dating of the *ærgi* names in the British Isles and the Faroes to the tenth century. This means that we can safely assume that the other *ærgi* we know of (cf. map, fig. 3) also indicate the existence of Viking Age farms. I suggest, for example, that *Ergibyrgi* on Suðuroy presupposes a settlement at Sunnbøur and that the village south of Tórshavn now called *á Argjum* was formerly *at Ærgjum* and most probably presupposes a Viking Age farmstead at Kirkjubøur.

Argifossur on the north of Sandoy also seems to indicate the existence of an early settlement at the village *heima á Sandi*, an ideal site for a Viking Age farmer. *Færeyinga saga* does not mention the habitation name, only that of the island, but the site of the village must in fact have been where the Snæúlfr mentioned in the saga lived: "He lived in Sandey and was Hebridean in origin and had fled to the Faroes from the Hebrides because of killings and ugly temper." No early farm has been located there but some occasional finds of Viking Age character, tools and domestic utensils, have been made in the village. And the churchyard there has yielded the only silver hoard that has ever come

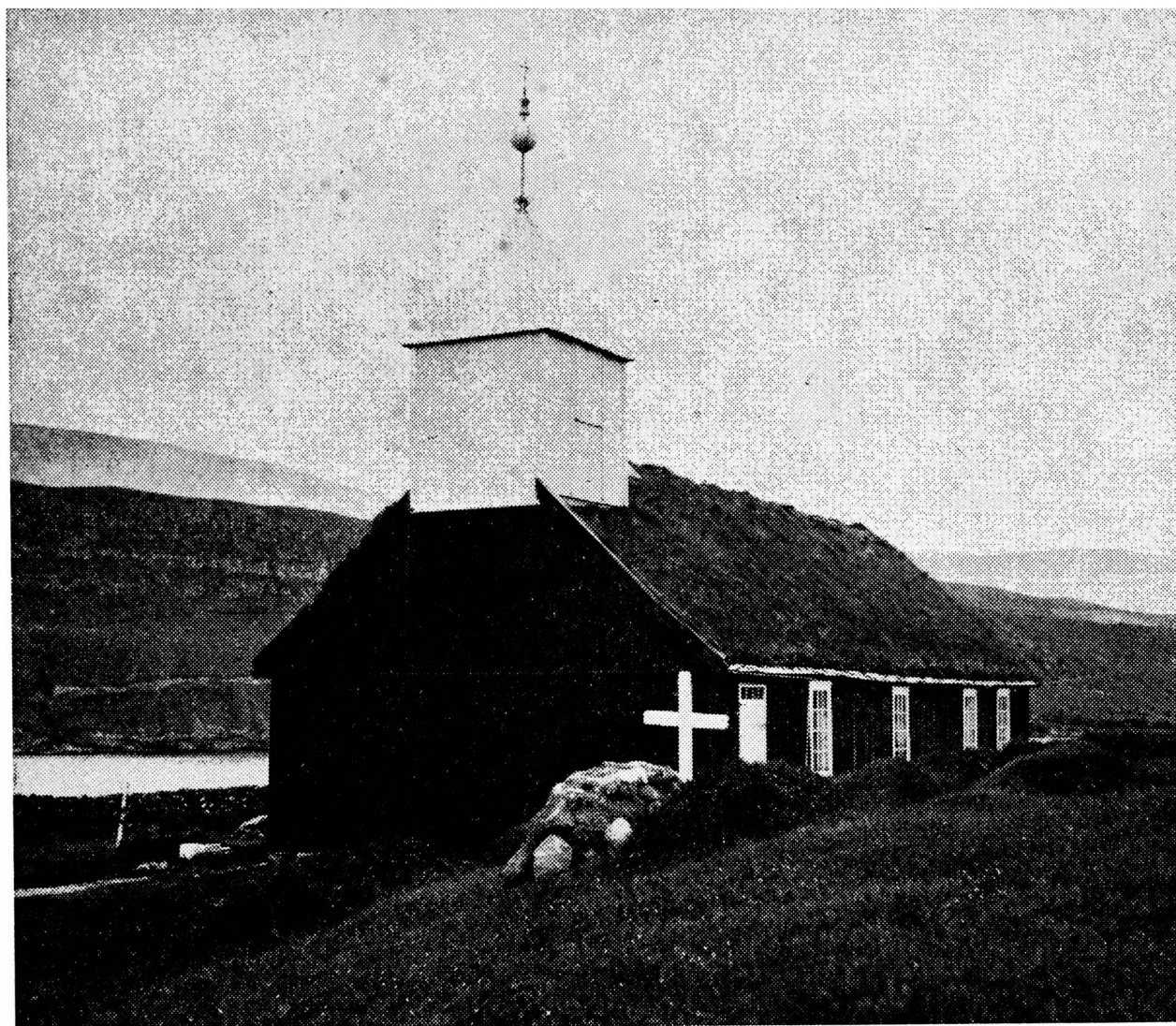


Fig. 6. Parish church, Sandoy.

to light in the islands, a find which has acquired fresh interest now that excavations have begun under the floor of the present parish church (fig. 6).

When men were digging a grave in 1863, they found 98 coins and a fragment of a silver bracelet with stamped triangles. The coins are distributed thus:

24 English, from the time of King Ethelred II, 978–1016, Knut the Great, 1017–1035, Harald Harefoot, 1035–1040, and Edward the Confessor, 1042–1066.

1 Irish, with an illegible legend.

21 German, issued by Emperor Conrad, 1024–1039, and from various towns.

1 Hungarian, from the reign of Stephen I, 1000–1038.

4 Danish, 1 from the reign of Hardaknut, 1035–1042, and 3 minted in Viborg.

18 Norwegian, from the time of Magnus the Good, 1035–1047, Harald *harðráði*, 1047–1066, and Magnus Haraldsson, 1066–1069.

29 unidentified.

Many of the Norwegian coins were previously unknown.

None of the English and Danish coins is later than 1066, none of the German ones later than 1039–1056. The majority of the coins come from the first half of the eleventh century, and the treasure must have been buried some time in the decade 1090–1100.

Where the find was made we can now see a low grass-grown elevation. It has a circular outline towards the northeast and south, but on the west side more recent graves have affected the shape. An excavation begun in the winter of 1968–9 revealed a paved area 50–100 cm below ground level here, the significance of which has not yet been explained (fig. 7). There is a floor laid with flat stone slabs and divided by straight parallel rows of other flat stones placed on edge and now standing out a few centimetres above the level of the floor itself. I shall pass over various traditions that have been associated with this place and only mention the one which says that a church once stood where the grave was dug and the hoard found.¹

More similar flat stone slabs were found further to the west, and a building could once have stood there. We hope that further excavation will elucidate the mystery of this paved area.

The wooden church that stands there now was built in 1839. It has a rectangular ground-plan with division into porch, nave and choir, 16 m long and 7.5 m wide. Some remarkable medieval features recur, such as the partition between nave and choir and the benches along the choir-wall. Current restoration of the church offers an opportunity for an extensive archeological investigation of the ground on which it stands, undertaken by Føroya Fornminnissavn and Knud J. Krogh of the National Museum, Copenhagen. Only a brief and

¹ M. A. Winther, *sýslumaður* in Sandoy, wrote in a letter in 1863: “på det sted hvor graven blev opkastet, skal der i ældre tider have stået en kirkebygning.”

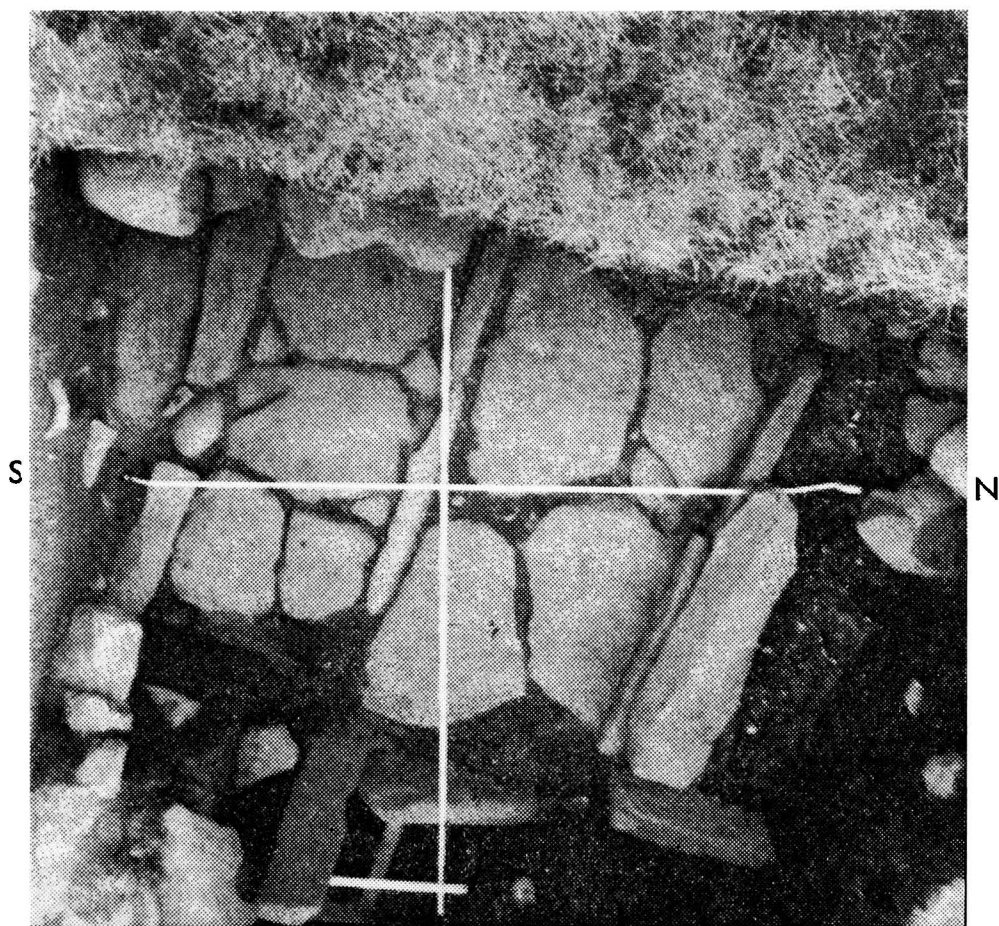


Fig. 7. Paved area in churchyard, Sandoy.

entirely provisional report can be given at this stage, for there is still much to do. We have however traced a number of earlier levels, and one discovery of particular interest is a post-hole, 40 cm in diameter, which, on stratigraphic grounds, ought to belong to the oldest church on the site, a timber church, with earth-dug posts, dating from the early middle ages.

The church at Sandur has always been the main church of the island, so it is not surprising that we found some ecclesiastical burials from the seventeenth and eighteenth century, especially under the choir. Some of the textiles were extremely well preserved, remnants of a bead-work dress and bonnet ribbons held together by metal pins. Pins of the same kind were also found in great number in post-Reformation levels both here and in the parish church at Kirkjubøur. Other occasional finds gave an impression of prosperity—of no small interest from the social historian's point of view. Examples are a piece of gold foil with holes for beads, a metal book-clasp, a bronze chain

and plate with a human figure on it, a bunch of metal wire, fragments of a censer and a piece of sheet-lead, probably acquired from a church roof, used as a charm or amulet. The coins—some 40 in all—are of great significance. They have not yet all been identified but it is already evident that there are many interesting ones among them. I may make special mention of some medieval Norwegian specimens from the days of Erik Magnusson, 1280–1299, a stamped coin of Duke Hakon Magnusson, 1273–1299, and a single coin issued by Hakon V, 1299–1319. Possibly some of the others are still older.

In conclusion I must return to the post-hole mentioned above, for this gave us our biggest surprise and may have the utmost significance for the architectural history of the site. It seems that it must have been one of a series of posts dug into the ground to form the main structural elements of an early church. What that church looked like we hope further investigation will reveal. We can however see that the hole we have found corresponds closely to post-holes on sites of Norwegian stave-churches from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Perhaps the original church at Sandur goes back to the same period—or even to the days of Sigmundur Brestisson, chieftain on the neighbouring island of Skúvoy, who converted the Faroese to Christianity about the year 1000.

The Viking Congress at Bonäs

By ANDERS DIÖS

I now want to welcome all members of the Sixth Viking Congress to Bonäs.

Bonäs is a village in the large parish of Mora. Mora's name has a historical ring, for here King Gustav Vasa began to collect followers to liberate the country.

The neighbourhood is nowadays also famous as a high-class tourist province.

There are a number of reasons for this. Nature on the one hand and old culture on the other have flourished to give the visitor fine scenes both in landscape and in the colourful folk-dresses and many other ancient features of the life of the people. A great artist, Anders Zorn, lived at Mora and built his home and museum there. He was an artist of world renown. He was born in 1860 here in Mora and is now gone, but his memories and museum speak clearly of his greatness.

I was myself born here in this neighbourhood in 1891. My birthplace was the village of Indor in the parish of Våmhus, which is situated between the big communities of Mora and Orsa. The people have of old lived on farming combined with forestry, but these did not always provide an adequate livelihood. This has caused both men and women to look for work outside Dalecarlia and to become itinerant workers both in Sweden and other countries. As long ago as the beginning of the nineteenth century the women began to learn how to make bands and ornaments out of human hair, and the men learnt handicrafts—basket-making and many different kinds of metal-work.

As an example I should like to tell you that my grandmother, who was born in 1833, went to England and Scotland when she was twenty to sell ornaments made out of human hair. She took orders and carried

them out locally, and this developed into a widespread domestic industry.

My grandmother, who died here at home in 1920, 87 years of age, used to tell us of her travels in England and Scotland. It was very interesting. She used to tell how she travelled with a haversack or rucksack of leather, in which she had all the belongings which she could not do without on her trip.

Their costume was as a rule the old Mora dress (cf. plate 1), but they also learnt to change it for the usual dress of the places visited. In the 1850s the hardships of travel were great, especially on long journeys. But that did not frighten these men and women from Dalecarlia. They took advantage of the opportunities that came along. Grandmother told how they went by boat on the Orsa Lake and Siljan down to Insjön and Gråda at Gagnef, and from there had to find their way to Kristinehamn carrying their rucksacks a distance of 250 kilometres. There were many women who went away from here in that way, and they earned good money. Grandmother also said that in England Queen Victoria was one of the customers. Later on my grandmother took her daughter Mait with her. Mait was born in 1858. She settled in Scotland, where she was comfortably off and founded a family. That means that I have cousins and cousin's children in Scotland.

My aunt's husband was a well-to-do manufacturer of garden and agricultural implements. His family name was White. One of my cousins got the name McMillan at her marriage and my cousin's daughter married an Owen.

My own mother, who was born in 1860, found herself in St Petersburg before her marriage, from 1880 to 1884, and she earned her living in the same way as I have just described. She could wrangle with Russian saw-filers who were constant visitors in our country at the turn of the century. Now there are not many here in Dalecarlia who live on the old-fashioned handicraft and hair-work. That is a bygone age. Conditions are different now with all the developments of modern times.

A great change in the way of life resulted from the emigrations to America. From the 1880s to the 1910s almost half the population left the province.

It cannot be denied that we had connections with the old vikings, especially those in Uppland and Södermanland. Like the vikings we have never been afraid of going to foreign countries, but our trips have been of a peaceful nature, which cannot be said about the trips of our ancestors. The old vikings surely had much on their conscience! But it is worthwhile studying their colonizing of different countries from America in the west to Russia in the east, their artistic work in wood and metal, their timber architecture, their language and traditions. Perhaps we should even also approve of modern history's tendency to glorify the old vikings!

Anyhow! Please accept my heartiest welcoming greeting!



The hosts of the Congress at Bonäs Lisa and Anders Diös in Mora dress



Dr Diös presided with Professor Strömbäck supported by Lisa Diös and
Birgit Bergfors

Atlantic and Baltic Earldoms

By GERHARD HAFSTRÖM

Among Atlantic islands tributary to Norway in the medieval period were Orkney, Shetland and the Hebrides, to which must be added the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea. According to literary sources they were administered by earls on behalf of the Norwegian king—they were earldoms. Two-thirds of the tribute paid by the inhabitants went to the king, one-third to the earl.

Similar circumstances existed in the Baltic dependencies of the Swedish crown, particularly in Gotland.

The second chapter of *Guta saga* contains this interesting passage:

Many kings made war on Gotland while it was a heathen land. But the people of Gotland were always victorious and maintained their rights. Later the islanders sent many envoys to Sweden. But none of them was able to bring about a peaceful settlement before Avair Straw-leg from Alva parish—he first made peace with the king of the Swedes. When the Gotlanders asked him to go, he replied: "You know that death and doom are close at hand for me. If you want me to venture into such peril, then give me three wergilds, one for myself, one for the son born to me, and one for my wife." For he was wise and skilled in secret lore, as stories about him tell. He made a confirmed legal agreement with the king of the Swedes. Sixty marks of silver each year, that is the tribute of the Gotlanders, so that the king of Sweden has forty marks of silver from the sixty, and the earl twenty marks. He had fixed these terms in counsel with the country before he left home. Thus the Gotlanders submitted voluntarily to the king of the Swedes, so that they might freely visit Sweden, at all points, without tolls or any fees. Swedes may also visit Gotland, unaffected by any corn embargo or other ban. The king must give protection and help to the Gotlanders if they need it and ask for it. The king, and the earl too, are to send envoys to the assembly of the Gotlanders and have their tribute collected there. Those envoys shall formally declare that the Gotlanders may voyage in peace over the sea to all places appertaining to the Uppsala king, and likewise for those who in the same manner need to come here.

For administrative purposes the Isle of Man was divided into six parts, so-called *sheadings* (OWN *séttungr*, sixth). A corresponding division appears to have existed in Orkney. Asgaut Steinnes, sometime State Archivist of Norway, has shown in his valuable monograph called *Husabyar* (1955) that Orkney was divided into six *husaby* districts, with a *husaby* estate in each. The situation seems to have been similar in the Swedish provinces of Hälsingland and Ångermanland with Medelpad, both of which were divided into thirdings (cf. the Yorkshire *ridings*, from older *thridings*, *thirdings*). In this great dependent territory, where the tribute was collected by the king's steward (*ármaðr*), there were also six *husabys*. All these formed part of the *Uppsala öd*, the property officially pertaining to the monarchy, and at each one of the estates there was a large, royal mound, a feature which has given the name *Hög* to no less than four of them. (See further Å. Holmbäck and E. Wessén, *Svenska landskapslagar* III, *Hälsingelagen* (1940), 293-4, 296, 301.)

Gotland shows a similar division. According to *Gutalag*, the island was split up into three thirdings and six sixths, which seem to have represented both cult and legal divisions. At the time of the codification of the law the higher *things* were still the assemblies of the thirdings and sixths.

Like Gotland, Åland was also divided into three, and since the medieval parishes on Åland proper numbered six, it may be that they reflect a further division into sixths, also as in Gotland (see further V. Voionmaa, 'Studier i Ålands medeltidshistoria', *Finska Fornminnesföreningens tidskrift* XXVII, 1916). It may be that closer comparison of the divisions for tax and levy purposes in Åland and the Norwegian earldoms in the west will bring to light other similarities between them.

The Norwegian colonies were also split up into smaller, mutually comparable units. In Orkney they were called *urislands*, in the Hebrides *tirungs* and in Man *treens*. Each *urisland* was further divided into four *skattlands*, while each *tirung* and *treen* were similarly subdivided into quarters. In his monograph mentioned above Steinnes shows that

each Manx *sheading* comprised thirty-six *treens*, while each *husaby* district in Orkney was similarly made up of thirty-six *urislands*.

Each of the six major divisions was thus subdivided into 36 units (*urisland*, *tirung*, *treen*), and these minor units were themselves split up into quarters (*skattlands* in Orkney), corresponding to the Norwegian unit called *lið* when the old levy system was in force. It follows that each sixth part (in Orkney a *husaby* district) contained 36×4 , i.e. 144, *skattlands*. Such a twelve dozen might perhaps have been called by a name like *storphundare*, being a true duodecimal "long hundred". It should be noted in this connection that *Gutalag* also uses the term *hundare* for the sixth-part divisions of the earldom of Gotland.

Since the sixths in the Norse islands thus comprised thirty-six units, it may be assumed hypothetically that the ships manned in the levy were 36-oar vessels. This would mean they had the same number of oarsmen as both the Sutton Hoo ship in East Anglia and ships from certain Swedish districts where division into thirds obtained (see my *Ledung och marklandsindelning* (1949), 21-2).

It seems to me that an important conclusion may be drawn from these last considerations. The name *skattland* for the subdivision of the *urisland* provides a link with the taxation system. The *urisland* must in that case have got its name (from *eyrisland*) because it once had to contribute one ounce of silver in tax. The taxation income from each *husaby* district—comprising thirty-six *urislands*—must consequently have been 36 ounces, giving a total of 6×36 , i.e. 216 ounces or 27 marks for the whole earldom. Since the imposition of the tribute goes back to the Viking Age, we may assume that the tax—like atonement-fines payable to the king—came in the form of so-called *baugar*, rings of gold or silver, whole or hacked. A *baugr* acceptable as payment to the Norwegian king had a legal value of 12 ounces of silver. The 216 ounces of silver payable in tax from the earldom thus amounted to $216/12$, i.e. 18 *baugar*. Since the king got two-thirds and the earl one-third, the royal tribute must have been 12 *baugar* a year and the earl's 6—entirely consonant with the duodecimal system that prevailed among the early Scandinavians.

The sum payable as tribute by the Norwegian earldoms, 27 marks of silver, corresponds to the free man's wergild as stipulated in the *Older Västgötalag*. This code is the oldest of the extant provincial laws of Sweden and shows some particular connections with Norwegian law. (See further my paper, 'Böter och baugar', in *Rätts-historiska studier*, Bd. 2, Skrifter utg. av Institutet för rättshistorisk forskning, Ser. II, Bd. 2, 1957.)

In another field even closer correspondences are to be noted between the conditions that obtained in the colonies and in Norway itself. This concerns the organisation of the levy and taxation connected with it. On the west coast of Norway, in the districts covered by the Gulathing Law, the units on which the levy was based had the name *manngerð*, while in southeast Norway they were called *lið* (cf. above); the Swedish equivalent was the *hamna*. Such units comprised a number of farms from which one man, equipped and provisioned, had to muster for levy service. In those years when the commander of the levy—the king—did not call for both "men and provisions" (*mæn oc mat*), but only for the latter, then the local people were obliged to send supplies to the king's storehouse instead of to the local levy-ship. The provender, corn or meal, meat and butter, was then consumed at the king's table: this imposed obligation, becoming as it did an annual tax, was consequently called "table-levy" (*borðleiðangr*). It appears from the extant tax and land records that such levy supplies were still being paid as a form of land tax in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This happened not only in the mainland Scandinavian countries but also in the Norwegian earldoms in the west. Steinnes has succeeded in demonstrating that certain levy taxes imposed on the *lið* in Norway were paid at the same rate by the so-called *skattlands* in Orkney. The levy units in the Norwegian earldoms were thus in Man one-quarter of a *treen*, the so-called *quarterland*, and in Orkney one-quarter of an *urisland*, the so-called *skattland*. It follows from this that each of the subdivisions enumerated above, *treen*, *tirung* and *urisland*, must have been made up of four levy units. What corresponded to them in Sweden was the *tolft* (literally "dozen"), which was made up of a number (3–6) of the subdivisions called *hamna*.

The old Swedish *tolft* still occurs in the Uppland Law. According to clauses in the sections relating to the Church and the monarchy, every so-called *hundare*-church should be endowed with one *markland* and every *tolft*-church with land of half that value. Another name for the *tolft*-church was *cappalskirkia*, “chapel-church”—the *tolft*-church was built in the first Christian period as a modest wooden chapel, of stave-construction, and later replaced by the parish church, usually built of stone.

A parallel to the *tolft*-churches of Swedish Uppland seems to have existed in the Atlantic dependencies of Norway. As I mentioned above, in Man the *treen* and in Orkney the *urisland* corresponded to the *tolft*. In each *treen*, as in each *urisland*, there was a small chapel, called *keill*. When bigger churches were built in these islands the small chapels fell into decay. Instead of maintaining them the inhabitants of a *treen* or *urisland* now had the duty of maintaining a certain portion of the churchyard wall.

According to the eminent Celtic scholar, Professor Carl Marstrander of Oslo, the chapels of the Isle of Man can generally be thought to have originated before the Norwegian conquest, while those in Orkney belong to the period following the conversion of the Norse inhabitants about the year 1000. We find there is a regular relationship between the chapels and the old administrative divisions, and because of this it is most natural to conclude that Christianity was accepted—as in Iceland, many parts of Norway and in Swedish Uppland—by public enactment at an assembly, whereby a whole community changed to the new religion.

In a paper published in 1949 on ‘Naval defence in Norse Scotland’, Hugh Marwick came up with the following question concerning the small chapels in the Norse settlements in the west: “Is it possible that here also light can be thrown on the subject from facts in the Western Isles?” Since then there has not been, as far as I know, any further investigation of the oldest chapels in Orkney and Man and their connections with pre-Christian cult organisation. But, as far as the parallel circumstances in the Uppland “folk-lands” are concerned, I believe it is already possible to make some preliminary observations.

The word *tolft* occurs in four Uppland parish-names: *Tolptakirkia* in Tierps hundare, *Husby-Sjutolft* in Trögds hundare, *Fröstolft* (now Frösthult) in Simtuna hundare, and *Lundatolft* (now Lunda) in Seminghundra hundare. As we see, the first of these is identical with the ordinary name for a chapel in such a district, i.e. *tolptakirkia*. Husby-Sjutolft means the *tolft* by the lake on property—a *husaby*—belonging to the pre-Christian Uppsala monarchy. The first element in Fröstolft is the name of the pagan god Frö (Freyr), while Lunda-tolft has *lund-*, “grove”, as its first element and may remind us of the sacrificial groves of heathen Scandinavia. The opening words of the Church section in the Uppland Law brings to mind both god and grove—in my opinion the phrases here have been carried over from the original *thing*-declaration made when the assembly approved the acceptance of Christianity. In translation they go like this:

All Christians must believe in Christ, that he is God and that there are no other gods besides Him alone. No one may worship *false gods* and no one may put faith in *groves* or rocks. All must honour the church, thither all shall go, both the living and the dead, those coming into the world and those who leave it. Christ commanded that churches should be built.

Since heathen cult-names—names of “false gods” and “groves”—occur in *tolft*-names, it is probable that the *tolft* units in Uppland figured not only in the ancient levy organisation (like the *hundare*) but also in the cult organisation of the districts as well. It would then appear that the first chapels or small stave-churches in Uppland were built on the site of the pagan temples that had previously served the various localities.

We thus observe numerous correspondences in a variety of spheres between the old Norwegian colonies in the British Isles on the one hand and the provinces of mainland Scandinavia on the other. The Norwegian islands were organised as earldoms, from which king and earl received tribute in the same proportion as in Norway and Gotland. The six-part division was the same as in Gotland. The levy organisation and the units on which it was based were like those found in

Norway and Sweden. Finally, the system of chapels in the islands accorded with the *tolft* divisions of Swedish Uppland. In some cases these similarities might be explained as results of the Norse conquest but the origin of others appears to belong to an older stage. There are important topics here awaiting scholarly investigation, just as there are in other areas of study to do with the earliest Anglo-Saxon and Norse history (e.g. the relationship between the *hundare* and *hundred* divisions). Perhaps these problems will only be solved through organised co-operation between English, Scottish and Scandinavian scholars.

Additional references

An account of Hugh Marwick's studies on the levy organisation in the Atlantic islands is given in the memorial article by Per Sveaas Andersen, 'Orknøy-forskningens nestor', (*Norsk Historisk Tidsskrift*, 1965: 4, 324 ff.

For literature on the levy and taxation system in Sweden see my *Ledung och marklandsindelning* (1949), and references there given, chiefly to works by Erland Hjærne, and 'Die altschwedische Hundertschaft', *Vorträge und Forschungen* VIII (1964). Since 1949 I have dealt with the Swedish levy organisation in a number of smaller articles; see *Nordisk rättshistorisk bibliografi 1940-65*, in *Skrifter utg. av Institutet för rättshistorisk forskning*, Ser. II, Bd. 1, 2, 4 (1954, 1957, 1970); and for the period after 1965 the annual bibliographies issued as appendices in (*Svensk*) *Historisk Tidsskrift*. Reference should also be made to relevant articles (some by the present writer) in *Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid* (in course of publication).

The Literate Vikings

By ASLAK LIESTØL

No other region can boast a concentration of runic inscriptions comparable to what we may find here, in the very heart of the rune-stone country. Uppland alone has as many inscriptions as all Norway, even though the Bergen finds have doubled the number of Norwegian inscriptions, so that they now amount to a total of 1200. It seems only natural that Viking specialists meeting here should concern themselves with a runic topic.

I hope our hosts will forgive me for not dealing primarily with the Uppland inscriptions from the late Viking Age. Instead I intend to discuss those from the first part of that age, some two hundred years earlier—roughly from before A.D. 900.

There are not many inscriptions from this period, and Uppland's share of them is in no way impressive. In fact, inscriptions from this period are notable for their absence in Uppland—apart from a few in Mälardalen, there are none.

There were two types of runes in use at that time—the so-called normal runes, also known as Danish runes, because the earliest of them come from what was then Denmark; and the short-twigg or Swedo-Norwegian runes which, as the name implies, occur in Sweden and Norway. In reality these two contemporaneous alphabets are merely variants of the one which replaced the old common Germanic runic series at the transition to the Viking Age. The geographical distribution of these two fuparks has given rise to a lively discussion, and several different explanations of their origin have been offered. I do not intend to cite any of the arguments here, but I shall present some of the material that has come to light in recent years, and follow this presentation with my own views on the matter.

The most important of these new inscriptions come from the excavations at present going on at Hedeby. So far, three inscriptions have been found there, two from the ninth century, the third probably rather later. None of them has as yet been published. I shall discuss them at some length later on. But important inscriptions have also been found in many other places. One of them is the wooden stick from the eighth- to ninth-century stratum at Staraja Ladoga, by the river Volkhov. This was found in 1950. Though its short-twig runic inscription has not yet been definitely interpreted, it is clear that this is a metrical text in a Scandinavian language:

?uf??ufuariprhaliualirriisfrānmanafraṭfibulshnibluka

Another, also in short-twig runes, is on the hanging bowl found in a grave from about the year 900 at Kaupang in Vestfold. It is somewhat elliptical, consisting only of the words **imuntlauku** *í mundlaugu* "in the washbasin". Not that this is entirely without interest, for it shows what the vessel was used for. A third inscription is on a comb excavated at Elisenhof near the Eider in South Jutland five or six years ago. There is only one word—**kabr**—which may be said to be a superfluous label, for it simply means *kambr* "comb". What is important is that the word is Scandinavian, and that it is written in short twig-runes.

The inscriptions from Hedeby are also in short-twig runes. One of them, : **plua** : **nuta** (No. II), which is unfortunately quite unintelligible, is incised on a wooden object resembling some kind of handle. The most recent (No. III), which was found in May this year (1969), is almost as hopeless as No. II.

a) **fuparkhniastbmlr**

b) : **safur** : **sāfu** : **h(s)[?]apini[?]** : **fiui** :

c) : **kuka** : **kuikui** : **saqr^h**

d) : **faki^m** : **kl**

Nevertheless I feel convinced that it is more than just a jumble of runes, and that it too represents a Scandinavian text. Even though it does not as yet provide us with any direct information, it is of especial interest to paleographers because of the manner in which the runes are cut and because of the type of runes used. Moreover, it is incised on a piece of wood whose only function was to carry a runic text. Many of the Bergen inscriptions are on just such sticks of wood—these are surely what our far-off ancestors called *rúnakefli*. The stick from Staraja Ladoga is of the same type, and so is Hedeby No. I, the most interesting of the Hedeby texts. This inscription has been damaged but, apart from the lacunae, the text has been read with certainty:

A **rapi** · **utlfr** · **utufr** · **sati** · **auriki** · **itarku** · **in** · **aurik** · **salti**
· **utlfi** · **utur**

B : **aupikr** · **biq̃n** · **fur** · **uk** · **ᵑat** · **fu** · **suiarp** : **?lt** · **ul**[?]**?**[?]**?**[?]**li**^a
: **kafipu** : **at** : **ualr** · **akiu** : **likr** :

C (- - -) : **nu** : **suiarp** : **ilt**

In line A we immediately note that certain words bear a strong resemblance to each other: **utlfr**—**utufr**—**utlfi**, and **auriki**—**aurik**. They can hardly be anything except men's names, and we have seen them before. They are rare, but both of them occur in Uppland runic inscriptions from the late Viking Age. The stone at Skalmstad was raised to the memory of **utulf**, while that at Skilstad was erected by **aurikr**. The former of these names we may normalise to *Oddulfr* or *Útulfr*; the latter is probably *Eyríkr*, or, if **aupikr** in Line B is yet a third way of spelling this name, it may be *Auðríkr*.

Many may at this point object that I am reading too much into the text, for my attempt at likening these words to one another presupposes many spelling errors. However, no one used to working on runic material is likely to raise such objections, for spelling mistakes are common in runic texts. They are not always cunningly invented by scholars to help them interpret an otherwise incomprehensible

text. We have an example of an obvious spelling error on one of the Hedeby stones—*Þórulfr* is there written **þurlf**—in other words, the unstressed vowel in the second syllable and the nominative ending are both missing. Our stick, too, has at least one certain mistake, although in this case the writer noticed and corrected it. **auriki** at the end of line A was first written **auriui**; an attempt at correcting the two final runes to **ki** was unsuccessful, so the writer cut away a sliver of wood and wrote these two runes again.

The first line starts with an injunction: *ráði Oddulfr* “Let Oddulfr read (this)”. Then come two parallel clauses, joined together by the conjunction *en* “and”. The two men’s names change places, each being the subject of one clause and the indirect object of the other. The predicates of the two clauses are very similar—**sati** and **salti** may both stand for *seldi*, infinitive *selja* “to sell”, but **sati** may of course also be a form of *setti* from infinitive *setja* “to put”. If both are from *selja*, the text may deal with a barter transaction between these two gentlemen, but it is difficult to find out what the objects of their transaction were. **itarku** may perhaps be a kind of shield, a special type of *targa*. But what Eyríkr gave in exchange for this hypothetical shield is still more uncertain, though the possibility of an otter hide seems indicated, for furs and hides were traded at Hedeby.

All this I am merely putting forward as a suggestion. No complete interpretation of the text is possible at this stage, and any such attempt is bound to be too suggestive and would make too little of the necessary reservations. We must accept the fact that we do not know enough to be sure of any details. The fupark used is very imperfect in its ability to reproduce the sounds of the language, consisting as it does of only sixteen runes. One symbol had to be used to express several sounds. The u-rune, the second in the futhark, for example, is normally used for o, u, ø and y. Obviously this makes the reading of a text written with this futhark very tricky, for how are we to decide which of the possible sounds the writer actually intended? Moreover, as shown, we must reckon with spelling errors, and we also have to accept the fact that we do not know as much as we should like to

about the Scandinavian dialects of the Viking Age, nor about the general, cultural background. And of the immediate background of this particular inscription we know nothing, only what we ourselves choose to read into it. With all these moments of uncertainty in mind, and without any possibility of checking our theories, we must obviously have very weighty reasons indeed for preferring one possible reading to another.

Lines B and C are still more difficult to interpret than line A. Apart from the general difficulties discussed above, these lines also contain lacunae, and they make it practically impossible to determine the context of the words to be identified. I have not been able to reconstruct the text completely, and I fancy that there is only a very slight chance of doing so with any degree of probability.

Some of the words, however, can be discussed: the words **sviarþ ilt** apparently occur twice. They must stand for *sverð ilt*, “poor (or bad) sword”. **likr** can be the present tense of *liggja* “to lie” or of *leggja* “to lay”. **akiu** is most naturally read as *ekkju*, an oblique form of *ekkja*, “a widow” or (in poetry) “a young woman”.—The beginning of the text suggests trade and weapons as the subject matter. Other words may point in the same direction, for example: **valr** “the slain”, or a different reading of **akiu** as “edge, sharp edge”, though such a reading of **akiu** presupposes uncertainty on the part of the writer about the use of the two a-runes, for this word should not contain a nasal vowel. If, however, **akiu** is to be read as “woman”, we may well begin to wonder whether the inscription is not entirely different in content and purpose—is it perhaps obscene? Secondary meanings of the words *sverð* and *liggja* which would cover such a possibility are well known. What the inscription says about Oddulfr and Eyríkr may be very far from my own, respectable suggestion. And such a reading would explain why Oddulfr is discussed in the third person, even though he is exhorted to read the inscription. To my mind we should not disregard the possibility that we here have an instance of *níð*. If it is, it is a great pity that so well-preserved an inscription leaves us so helpless in our attempts to read it.

One thing, however, appears clearly from this rune stick: the practice of writing rune letters existed in Hedeby in the ninth century. Our specimen is a rune stick of the same kind as those which are so plentiful in the finds from medieval Bergen. Seven of the Bergen sticks are normal letters, their addressee and their writer are mentioned in a fixed introductory formula adopted from epistolary usage on parchment. Our inscription has an introduction of a different kind: *ráði Oddulfr*, an expression not unexpected in such a connection. One would have expected to find the name of the writer in another formula: *NN reist rúnar*. But one would hardly append one's signature to an obscene inscription which was addressed to someone by name! Anonymous letters surely occur at all times, a diseased by-product of the letter-writing tradition.

Although we have long since been told that rune letters belonged to the trading life of the Viking Age, many have been unwilling to accept this as fact. Writing about Ansgar's return from Birka to the Emperor Louis the Pious in 831, Rimbert says:

Peracti itaque apud eos [the citizens of Birka] altero dimidio anno, præfati servi Dei cum certo suæ legationis experimento, et cum litteris regia manu more ipsorum deformatis, ad serenissimum reversi sunt Augustum (*Vita Anskarii*. Migne, *Patrologia latina* 118, 972).

Surely this can only refer to a letter written in runes, probably to a rune stick.

If rune letters like those we know from medieval Bergen existed some three or four hundred years earlier, during the early Viking Age, there must have been a group of people who could make use of such letters, people who considered it worth their while to learn runes and to apply their knowledge. And such a group must have formed a stable social element, well able to keep a literary tradition alive.

The short-twig runes, of the type used in the early Hedeby inscriptions, have often been described as a cursive variant of the normal runes. This description tallies well with their geographical distribution. The rapid spread of the short-twig runes as early as the very start of

the Viking Age means, to my mind, that they represent the writing of the merchants. Very many of these inscriptions have been found at or close by the ancient trade centres—Kaupang, Hedeby, Birka, Gotland and Staraja Ladoga, which the Norsemen called Aldeigjuborg. At a later date we find the same fupark used in the regions visited and settled by Nordic merchants and colonists—in western Norway and in the northwestern parts of the British Isles, on the Norse Atlantic islands, and even as far off as in Greenland. This type of runes remained in use in western Scandinavia, and gradually developed into the alphabet we know from the medieval town and trade society of Bergen, where it was apparently in daily use among members of all the social strata of the city. The development in eastern Scandinavia was different: the short-twig runes apparently fell into disuse there towards the end of the Viking Age, at the time when Baltic trade underwent changes and reorganisation. Birka disappeared—and later Hedeby as well. The custom of erecting rune stones spread from Denmark into Sweden, where their tradition was to culminate—and with the rune stones came the Danish, normal runes. In the early stages of the Viking Age these runes seem to have been used only in Danish territory, where they had presumably met all the needs of communication in that society.

Runes were not solely or even chiefly a monumental form of writing—that I must be allowed to maintain. Their use in memorial inscriptions and the like is secondary—first and foremost they were employed in practical, everyday life. Indeed this should be self-evident. I find it difficult to conceive of someone learning to write simply in order to carve tomb-stones, but even if there were such people, their work would be in vain—unless others were prepared to learn to read, simply in order to decipher those same tomb-stone inscriptions!

We have good reason to believe that the miniature runic inscriptions on wooden sticks, incised with a knife, represent the primary function of runes. The sticks found provide good evidence for this view, especially the earliest, those from Staraja Ladoga and Hedeby. Further, many details of the runes themselves show that wood and a knife

were the material and tool they were meant for. But we also have contemporary information about this in literary sources. They do not mention stones, they are concerned only with runes cut in wood. Finally, the earliest runic stones of the Viking Age have a form clearly inspired by the faceted wooden stick, the *rúnakefli*, which must have been their model. Sometimes, the lines of the inscription are cut on facets of the stone in the same way as the lines are cut on the facets of wooden sticks. Most commonly the natural shape of the stone did not allow this, and so the writer carved artificial facets. He hewed parallel framing lines corresponding to the edges of the stick, and thus the inscription on stone looks like a spread-out *rúnakefli*. Most of the early runic stones are cut in this way. Later, the rune-carvers freed themselves from their model, and exploited the decorative possibilities of the stone they were working on. But this stage was not reached before the era of the professional masons and artists.

During that period, too, we may assume that runes were still used for practical purposes. Quite a considerable number of people were skilled in runes, and those scholars may well be right who maintain that the short-twig runes were the cursive form for everyday use during this period as well, while the normal runes were used for monumental inscriptions. In the districts around Mälaren we know that a still more cursive form of runes was in use, the so-called staveless runes. They are also known as Hälsing-runes, and are practically a kind of shorthand. They were used at the end of the Viking Age, and were clearly based on a late form of the short-twig runes. They depend entirely on a precisely defined writing space, like the facets of a rune stick.

I think we are bound to conclude that the majority of Viking Age Scandinavians—at least those of any standing, and those intent on making their way in life—were able to read and write. Their system of writing was in constant use, and the inscriptions extant today are merely the pitiful remains of the wealth of documents written by them.

And what were these documents? I think we know most of the types. If we compare the 550 medieval inscriptions from Bergen with

those we now have from the Viking Age, we find that they represent roughly the same kinds of text. Apart from haphazard scribbles and inscriptions denoting ownership, we find harsh adjurations and pious prayers for delivery from sickness and peril, we find poems written in the ancient, alliterative style, and prosaic communications from one person to another. Book-keeping accounts, such as those from Bergen, have not yet been found from earlier times. But, on the other hand, we have the legal text on the door-ring at Forsa, an extremely important document in this connection—regardless of whether we believe that it concerns canon law at the end of the eleventh century, or whether we consider it to be very much older, as I do myself. Be that as it may—it presupposes that people could read its legal injunctions, for otherwise there would have been no point in writing them down.

I am not trying to conjure up a picture of the literate Viking as a bookworm—a kind of library Viking, complete with desk and files. The advantage of runes was that one was independent of desk, ink and pen, nor was there any need for special protection of the writing materials or the finished documents from frost and rain. The Viking skilled in runes had at his disposal a means of communication with people far away and a means of documentation. Runes enabled him to jot down whatever notes he needed should his memory fail him—in fact, he could write whatever circumstances might require him to. All he needed was a knife to cut a twig from the nearest tree. And surely this is how he must have used his accomplishments: he wrote messages, he made notes of agreements and arrangements, and he wrote down any verse which appealed to him so much that he did not want to risk forgetting it.

Norse philologists will remember what Björn Magnússon Ólsen claimed about the runes as a means of literary communication. I think we should be chary of dismissing his theories completely—let us rather tone them down a little, and adapt them in the light of the finds of the ninety years or so that have passed since he worked on the problem. And if this means that we must revise our views on the

circumstances which made possible the continuous tradition of Norse poetry, then we shall have to revise them.

If these assumptions are correct, it follows that a large number of inscriptions must have been written during the five or six centuries (about A.D. 800–1400) when runes of the younger type were used. True, only a few texts have come down to us—but quite an unusually fortunate combination of circumstances is required if such inscriptions are to be preserved. For one thing, we must presume that most of them were intentionally destroyed in their own day, being reduced to waste, broken, burned, chopped or cut up (examples of all these methods of destroying them have been found in Bergen). If a rune stick escaped such a fate, it would still have to be lodged in a hermetically sealed place within a fairly short time of its making if it was to have any chance of surviving for a thousand years and more. It is our job to find the rune letters which have been preserved in this way, we must dig them up, we must draw attention to them and see to it that they are taken care of. When the odds against preservation are so great, it is remarkable that any have come to light at all—no wonder that enthusiasm and keen expectancy greet any new find. We believe more runic inscriptions on wooden sticks are yet to be found in the unexcavated parts of Viking Age and early medieval towns, and we have no doubt but that the leaders of excavations now and in the future will do all they can to bring them to light.

The Viking Age in Dalarna

By INGA SERNING

The geographical situation of Dalarna makes the province very interesting from an archeological point of view. During the Iron Age the province had the rich settled areas of Svealand to the south, the important settlements of the Norwegian valleys to the west and the province of Gästrikland to the east with its wide Viking Age connections in various directions. Thus Dalarna was—and is—a natural transition area between Svealand and Norrland and between the west and the east. This circumstance has set its stamp on the prehistoric finds and sometimes makes it possible for us to study the relative strength of different influences and imports in the province and the effects they had on local developments.

The province shows great variation in agricultural conditions and in climate. In the northern and northwestern parts there are fairly extensive mountainous areas. The central parts are dominated by large tracts of forest, but in the south we find a more open, mixed type of landscape. The conditions of today doubtless correspond in the main to those of the Iron Age. It can be seen that the cultivated land and the settlements connected with it are especially concentrated in the valleys of the Dalälven, in the southeastern parts of the province and around the lakes Runn, Siljan and Orsa. In the Siljan area arable land also occurs in the high-lying parts within the Silurian area.

In the northwest the climate is of north Swedish type, in the southeast it approaches central Swedish conditions. In the northernmost areas only grass, green fodder and potatoes can be cultivated. Certain parts of Idre parish have such a severe climate that not even potatoes can be grown.

The earliest datable Iron Age finds from Dalarna are from the

fourth and fifth centuries. As an introduction to the introduction of the Viking Age in the province a map of the pre-Viking finds may serve (see fold-out map 1).¹ I must stress what is obvious and point out that, considered as source-material, the known finds are attended with certain weaknesses. The main three are connected with (1) the frequency and geographical distribution of expert investigations; (2) the varying intensity of farming and other work on the land in different areas and the accompanying destruction of graves and cemeteries; and (3) the destructive effects of erosion, which can be noted in the case of graves situated on promontories in the lakes and which has without doubt taken its toll along the Dalälven.

The finds from the pre-Viking period mainly come from the so-called forest graves, i.e. graves often situated far from present-day settlements on promontories in small lakes. Most archeological investigations in recent years have been devoted to this type of grave and good, datable finds exist in several cases. It is true that the graves are often found to be plundered, but their situation on uncultivable land has led to their survival. Compared with preserved graves in or near inhabited areas their number is quite large, but it is probable that the proportion between the two groups has changed to the advantage of the forest graves and does not reflect the true ratio.

Pre-Viking finds also come from the southeastern part of the province but are few in the central parts. The cemetery at Kråkberg, mainly from the Viking Age, goes back to the Vendel period, as does probably also one of the graves on Sollerön, but apart from these we only know of one grave-find, one bog-find of uncertain date, and one stray find from the Vendel period from the central areas.

It is perhaps due to mere chance that generally speaking only pre-Viking graves have been preserved in the south. But here several of the preserved graves are on uncultivated soil in contrast to what

¹ The maps are based on those given in my book, *Dalarnas järnålder ...* with summary and conclusions in English (Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitetsakademien, Stockholm 1966), to which the reader is referred for a full treatment of the subjects briefly surveyed in the present paper.

seems to have been the case with graves mentioned in older literature but now vanished. If some of them were from the Viking Age, as some of the finds suggest, this might mean that the settlement was moved to its present situation during that period. This possible removal of the settlement may have been occasioned by a change in the mode of life, perhaps with increased emphasis on agriculture, perhaps with a shift from isolated farmsteads to a village.

In central Dalarna, on the other hand, there are in the main only Viking Age finds. Possibly it was not until then that a settlement grew up here and left clear traces in the prehistoric material. But the pre-Viking graves are throughout smaller than those from the Viking Age. This may mean that they were eliminated by cultivation, whereas the Viking Age graves constituted such great obstacles that it was simpler to use them as dumps for stones cleared from the fields—as we know was done—than to remove them. This might explain why now only Viking Age graves are preserved there.

The datable forest graves have finds from about A.D. 300 to 800. Only one of the cemeteries belongs to the Viking Age. It is hard to explain why forest graves became rare during the Viking Period. Perhaps the increased importance of farming, together with the increased competition for trading goods, led to a concentration of settlement in agricultural and central areas. It seems probable that greater demand for iron and the need for efficient delivery of iron constituted one of the causes for the centralised concentration of trading and production places during the Viking era.

Some of the forest graves may be connected with shielings that were in existence in the Iron Age. In almost every case the forest-grave areas have been used in historical times for shieling settlement at the same time as for hunting and fishing. On the other hand, the farming settlements which are nearest to the forest graves appear rather to be outposts of the cultivated areas of that time and the population there probably had satisfactory access to game and fish and adequate pasture in the farmstead or village. It is therefore conceivable that the forest-grave people had no permanent farming settlements behind them.

A hunting population which moved with some regularity from one place to another in order to make use of seasonal opportunities must, of course, be regarded as having a certain degree of "settlement" within the region, although not at any one place. This explanation makes it possible to see a connection between the different occurrences of forest graves and perhaps explains why the size of the grave fields varies so greatly; at some places they made longer or more frequent stops than at others.

Both cremation and inhumation graves are found from the Viking Age (cf. fold-out map 2). With one exception the cremation graves are all situated in central Dalarna, on the lakes Runn, Insjön, Siljan and Orsa. They have cremation layers and are marked by cairns, mounds or filled stone-settings. The most important are the cemeteries of Sollerön in Lake Siljan and at Kråkberg in the parish of Mora. Inhumation graves do not appear until the later part of the Viking Age and are usually under level ground. This change in burial customs is most probably connected with Christian influence during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The discovery of inhumation graves under level ground depends, of course, on the intensity of work on the land in various areas—thus, inhumation graves have been found by railway buildings in Järna parish in the western part of the province. Recently a horseshoe-shaped ditch, datable to the ninth and tenth centuries, has been found in Floda parish, when trenches for drain-pipes were dug. In the vicinity are cremation graves from the same period.

Other closed finds and the treasure finds have in the main the same distribution as the graves. Of the six treasure finds, three are scattered, one consists of a gold armring, the remaining two are only partly preserved. They consist of silver coins and silver ornaments and are mostly datable to a late phase of the Viking Age.

Among the stray finds from the Viking Age are some from the south-east of the province. Expert investigation of the sites where they were found has been made in only very few cases, and there is a possibility that some of them come from graves.

The grave types from the different Iron Age periods mainly corre-

spond to those in the more central areas of Sweden. The graves from the Roman Iron Age and the Migration Period usually have the burnt bones collected in a pit or concentrated within a limited area. The majority of the graves from later periods have cremation layers.

But the finds from the graves tell us about connections in other directions as well. Thus, the finds from the peripheral forest graves and graves in the southeast often show influences and include imports from the neighbouring areas, Norway in the northwest, Norrland in the northeast. Contact with the central parts of Sweden—sometimes also with Gotland—is evident in all the areas.

Watercourses and eskers were the main communication routes in ancient times (fig. 1). In Dalarna the Dalälvs is the most important connecting link in the province and it is mainly along this river that settlement has grown up. Hesselman has given an account of several of the routes through Dalarna, above all the string of eskers and lake-routes called *Långheden-Hälsingeskogen*. From Mälaren near Västerås this route led along the Badelunda esker through Dalarna and up to southern Norrland, afterwards continuing to Trøndelag in Norway. The Badelunda esker (*Långheden*) reaches Dalarna southwest of Bäringen and then turns off to Hedemora. Here the esker divides into two branches, the western one continuing with several interruptions towards Leksand and Siljan and the eastern one passing over the Dalälvs in Stora Skedvi parish, then east of Lake Runn through Vika, Sundborn and Svärdsjö, from which point the route is called *Hälsingeskogen*. It passes the southeast end of Lake Amungen and then proceeds to Voxnadalen in Hälsingland. This route is mentioned in written sources of the seventeenth century. Another route mentioned in the same century is the one called *Daleskogen*. It leads from En-viken through a lateral valley to the northwest and then past Lake Ljugaren to Rättvik. A further route which reached Dalarna from the south is *Fyrisleden*, described by Ambrosiani in connection with the distribution of ornaments datable to the late Vendel period. This route went from the outlet of Mälaren to the mouth of the Dalälvs via Vendel and Uppsala and then along the Dalälvs.

Other routes go along the Malingsbo esker and several routes over the Norwegian boundary are mentioned by Hesselman; many of them are marked by Iron Age finds.

Since the Viking Age finds are mostly concentrated in central Dalarna, it is no longer possible, as previously, to trace the different communication routes through finds along their more peripheral sections. That several of them continued to be used is shown by the fact that they are mentioned in medieval and later sources.

It is difficult to determine from the Viking Age material with its often general Nordic character what the main directions of external contact were. It is characteristic of this material in Dalarna that it is rich in iron objects. This indicates a certain wealth in the province at that time, underlined by the fact that among the weapons there is a considerable number of two-edged swords. Recent investigations have also shown that most of the blades have inscriptions. As a whole the Viking Age material most frequently shows affinity with eastern central Sweden; this applies to both weapons and ornaments.

During the late Viking Age a new element occurs in the find material. This represents an eastern influence visible, for example, in the late tortoise brooches. These eastern contacts can be followed some way into the middle ages. In the course of making channels for hot-air ventilation under Leksand church some graves were found containing Slavonic temporal rings and two circular pendants, all of silver. The temporal rings have many counterparts south of the Baltic and in the Ladoga area. One of the circular pendants is ornamented with an animal with parallels in Gotland and Finland. The find probably belongs to the twelfth century.

There is of course a certain danger in judging what was eastern and what was domestic in the Swedish material of the late Viking and early medieval periods, because the burial of grave goods began to fall off at this time in Sweden, while it still occurred in the east. With this reservation, it may be said that most of the eastern objects found in Dalarna seem to be connected with the northwestern parts of Russia or to have come by way of them. It is conceivable that Sigtuna, the

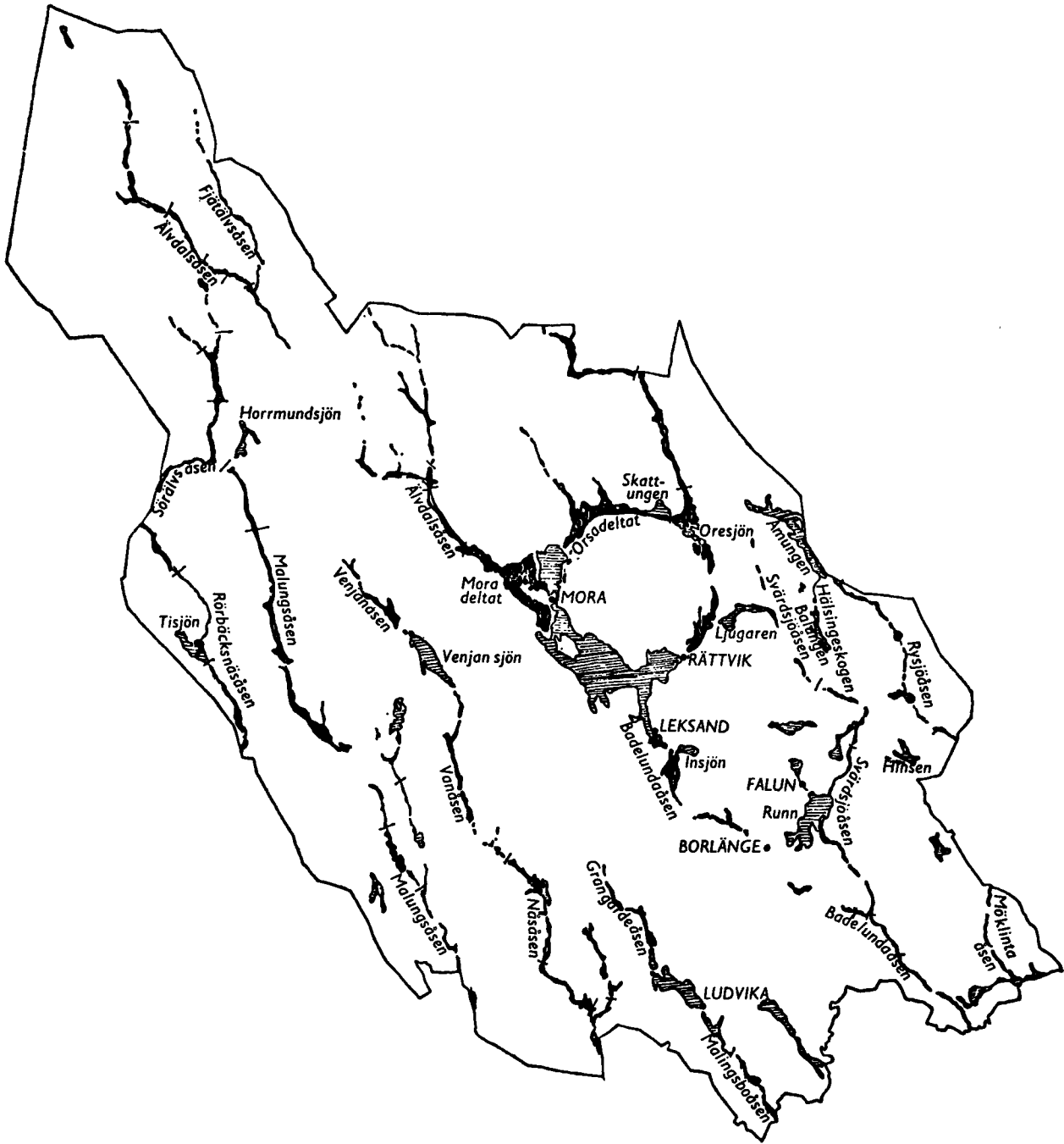


Fig. 1. Communication routes through Dalarna.

successor of Birka, or the Gotland trade played a part here. But it is undeniably more natural to connect them with the eastern imports which can be established in Gästrikland during the late Viking era and which are probably a result of direct connections between the inhabitants of that province and the countries on the other side of the Baltic.

If one asks what the find material can tell us about the basic economy of Iron Age people in Dalarna the answer is that, judging both from the finds and from the geographical situation, fishing and hunting played a great part in the lives of the people responsible for the forest graves. But the number and distribution of specialized arrowheads show that in the southeast and central parts of the province hunting was equally important even where the best farming conditions existed.

The richness of the graves in iron objects shows that yet another factor played a great part in the prosperity of Dalarna in the Iron Age, namely the production and working of iron. This is underlined by the very great number of slag heaps from iron manufacturing sites that are recorded from almost all over the province. During the last ten years investigations of old ironworking sites have increased all over Europe, and also here in Sweden. Even so, not more than at most ten such sites have been scientifically investigated here during the last twenty years and seven of them have been examined only during the last six years, five of them in Dalarna. The furnaces—in some cases well preserved—were all of the same type, clay-lined, 50 cm in diameter and about the same in depth, stabilised either by stone packing or a small mound of clay, all but one with a slag-tapping channel and worked by draught produced by bellows. Magnetic ore was found on all the sites, either magnetite or roasted limonite. According to Carbon-14 dating of three of the sites, they belong to the late Iron Age and early medieval period.

Some Old Uppland Island Names

By HARRY STÅHL

In his famous ethnographic work, *Germania*, from A.D. 98, Tacitus describes the Germanic nations and tribes. After giving an account of the eastern Germanic peoples, ending with the Rugii and Lemovii who lived on the Baltic coast, he then moves northward, out into the “ocean itself”. The only Scandinavian nation mentioned by him is the *Suiones*, the Swedes, *Svear* in modern Swedish, Old West Norse *svíar*, the founders of *Svea rike*, modern *Sverige*, Sweden. Of them he says: “Suionum civitates ipso in Oceano praeter viros armaque classibus valent”—“the settlements of the Swedes in the ocean itself are strong in fleets as well as in men and arms”.

It has been thought¹ that the phrase used by Tacitus, *ipso in Oceano* — “in the ocean itself”—implied that the Swedes lived on an island, “evidently *Scandia* or *Scandza*, that is *Sca(n)dinavia*”, the Scandinavian peninsula, regarded by classical writers as an island. But to my mind it seems more likely that the expression signifies the seaward edge of Uppland, the *skärgård*—“skerry-fence”—coastal region, where we know the nation of the *Svear* originally lived. At the beginning of our era, this region was a typical *skärgård*. Where we now see fertile plains, broken by rounded hills and ridges, there were once sparkling bays and channels. In the great bays with their islands and islets were to be found large peninsulas between inlets that cut deep into the land. It was a landscape of more or less the same kind as we now see in the Stockholm “skerry-fence” coast or the Åland archipelago. Tacitus’s informant could reasonably maintain that the tribal home of the Swedes was “in the ocean itself”.

¹ See P. Persson, *Tacitus mindre skrifter*, 251.

The change in sea-level due to the rising of the land is a phenomenon that has long been recognized, but views as to the speed at which it has taken place have been far from unanimous and even now complete agreement about its chronology has not been reached. The encroachment of the land upon the sea can be followed in the contour lines given on the new topographical maps, scale 1: 50 000. I shall not go into the different views concerning the rate of change and the periods represented, for example, by the 5- and 10-metre lines. In the region that interests us the 10-metre line may well show us the extent of the coastline as it was some 200 years before the birth of Christ.

It is not only in the contour lines that we can detect this ancient "skerry-fence" coastline. It will be obvious that place-names also reveal its existence, both younger names that are still comparatively transparent in meaning and older names that are much harder to interpret. As examples of such younger names I may mention *Amnö* and *Härjarö* in Veckholm, once island-names but now used of places high and dry ashore.

Jöran Sahlgren remarks that place-names in the south Swedish provinces "have a younger appearance than those in the ancient homelands of, for example, the Götar, Svear and Norwegians".¹ He explains this fact by reference to the depopulation that followed the migration of different Germanic tribes in the Migration Age. The warfare between Danes and Herulians "seems to be the cause of the lack of archaic farm- and village-names in South Sweden and Denmark".

The reason why we have so many more archaic names in Uppland, for example, is doubtless that such names are originally nature-names belonging to a "skerry-fence" landscape. Old island-names have very often become the names of settlements situated on the islands. In South Sweden, on the other hand, names most often have a more direct connection with the settlements—they are not originally independent nature-names to the same extent.

¹ Sockennamnen på Österlen. *Tumathorps Sanct Knuts Gille. Tänkebok* (1950), 13 f.

Many of the ancient island-names of Scandinavia, like the names of the biggest rivers and lakes, are among the oldest place-names we possess. They are archaic, so old that a Norwegian scholar has referred to many of the island- and river-names of his country as “fornordiske dannelser”, pre-Nordic creations.¹ We have no reason to believe that our Swedish island-names are any younger. An inevitable consequence is, however, that the interpretation of such names is often extremely uncertain. It is easy to get entangled in Indo-European roots and we are soon indulging in flights of conjectural fancy. But we take a step in the right direction if we can demonstrate, with certainty or plausibility, what kinds of places the names originally denoted. We need be in no doubt as to what type of linguistic formations the old island-names are. Many such names are still in use and denote places that are still islands, names like *Orust*, *Tjörn*, *Ven* and *Vinga* from western Sweden, *Läckö* (from older **Läkkia*) in Västergötland, and *Ljusterö* (Old Swedish *Liustra*), *Möja*, *Rådmansö* and *Runmarö* in Uppland. The last two names are alterations of an Old Swedish *Rudhman*, that is **Rudhma* with the suffixed article, a word related to *röd*, “red”, and the name is due to the colour of the rock there.² *Liustra*, on the other hand, is certainly connected with the adjective *ljus*, “light, bright”. We have *Björkö*, Ansgar’s *Birka*, in Mälaren, and names like *Selaön*, Old Swedish **Sila*, *Aspö*, Old Swedish **Aspa*, and so forth. The names are always feminines, both strong and weak.

We are not being particularly rash if we interpret some inland place-names as original island-names. Typical examples are the parish-names *Ryttern* and *Kärrbo* in Västmanland (Old Swedish **Rytra*, *Kyäwr*), the härad-name *Trögd* in Uppland, parish-names such as *Låssa*, *Sånga*, *Skå*, and the big peninsula *Sko*, *Skobolandet*, where *Skokloster* is situated. Many more could be cited. The contour lines confirm that we are dealing with areas that were once partly or wholly surrounded by water— islands or headlands.

¹ Jakob Sverdrup in *Maal og minne* (1910), 152 ff.

² E. Hellquist, *Svensk etymologisk ordbok* (1939), 863.

In this paper I have thought of paying special attention to three names that have been much discussed: *Arland*, *Solland*, **Valland*. All three occur only in the oldest sources, though the first of them has been reborn in the name of Stockholm's airport, Arlanda. I should prefer my remarks to be looked on as a contribution to an unfinished debate on a subject which has both linguistic and historical interest. The question is: What does the element *-land* signify? Does it mean a smaller piece of land, a farm, or does it imply a larger settlement, a district? The problem is closely connected with the interpretation of the semi-appellative, *Husaby*. Is, for example, *Husaby Arland* to be understood as "the *husaby* which is or was called *Arland*"? Or is it to be interpreted in some other way? Another problem connected with the meaning of *-land* is how far the settlement units we are dealing with are older than the so-called "folk-lands" and how far it may be possible to think of them as lying behind *Uppland*, the name of the province itself.

Place-name scholars are now, it seems, unanimous in thinking that the first elements in the three Uppland härad-names, *Ärlinghundra*, *Sollentuna* and *Vallentuna*, denote the inhabitants of the districts and are formed from the names *Arland*, *Solland* and **Valland*. The first two of these are recorded; the third, **Valland*, is a constructed form.

The name *Arland* first occurs in our oldest "land-register", an inventory of the property belonging to Vårfruberga convent, Fogdö, in Södermanland. The list appears to be largely based on documents from the twelfth century, but it is now only preserved in a copy from about 1540, itself derived from an exemplar from the mid-thirteenth century, probably from 1257.¹ It contains this entry, *Ʒn parrochia Arland j Arnabergum*; immediately thereafter comes *Ʒn parrochia Husaby. Brista*; and next after that we find *Ʒn Soland. Grenby*. Both *Arnabergum* (modern *Arenberga*) and *Brista* are in the present parish

¹ See F. Ossiannilsson, Fogdö (Vårfruberga) klostets jordebok, *Vetenskapssocietets i Lund Årsbok* (1945), 81 ff., and C. I. Ståhle, Om vår äldsta jordebok, *Namn och bygd* (1948), 81 ff.

of Husby-Ärlinghundra.¹ The only possible conclusion seems to be that *parrochia Arland* and *parrochia Husaby* are different terms for the same parish, the present-day Husby-Ärlinghundra parish. A document from 1291 (SD 2, p. 105, original) has (*in*) *husaby arlandi*, another from 1311 talks of *Ecclesie husaby arland* (SD 3, p. 38, original), and there are many similar examples from the fourteenth century. The hamlet with the church is regularly called *Husby* or the like.

In an original document in Latin from 1316 (SD 3, p. 273) Ärlinghundra härad is called *prouincia Aarland*. The oldest instance of the härad-name is from 1298, *i arlenningiahundäre* (SD 2, p. 268, copy); in 1314 there is reference to *Prouincia arlendahundäri* (SD 3, p. 148, copy 1344) and in 1343 to *arlendahundäre* (SD 5, p. 237, copy 1344). The commonest medieval forms contain a derivative in *-ing-*, in the plural, denoting the inhabitants, **arländingiar*. This may be safely considered a secondary formation, one that perhaps came into being under influence from the name of the neighbouring härad, *Seminghundra* (*Semingiahunderi* 1291, SD 2, p. 118, original).²

Grenby (modern *Granby*), which I mentioned just now, is located *ŷn Soland*, but this is not described as *parrochia*, "parish". If it were a parish, it ought to have answered to the present Spånga parish, to which Granby belongs. The present manor *Sollentunaholm* (*Sultona* 1539, *Solentuna* 1545 jb) is evidently the settlement which originally bore the name *Sollentuna*. The parish-name first occurs in 1287 as (*de*) *solendatunum* (SD 2, p. 37, original) and the oldest record of the härad-name is from 1298, *solendahundäre* (SD 2, p. 268, copy 1344). In 1344 we find *prouincia solendathunum* (SD 5, p. 331, original). A direct parallel to the change from *Sollända hundare* to *Solländatuna hundare* is also found in the case of the härad-name *Vallentuna*, written in 1281 as *de walandahunderi* (SD 1, p. 589, copy 1283) and in 1292 as *in walendahunderi* (SD 2, p. 138, copy 1344), but in 1375 as *prouincie walentuna* (1375 5/2 Sthm RAp) and in 1385 as *walentuna hundare* (1385 28/3 Uppsala RAp).

¹ A *Brista* also occurs in the neighbouring parish of Norrsunda.

² C. I. Ståhle, *Studier över de svenska ortnamnen på -inge* (1946), 68.

The parish-name *Vallentuna* (*Datum valändatunum*, 1253, SD 1, p. 367, original) is probably a loan from the original name of the place now called Kyrkoherdebostället (2 1/8 mtl). I know of no farm or village with the name Vallentuna.

The village-name *Vallensjö* in Fresta parish has the same first element. In 1318 it was written (*de*) *valändasio* (SD 3, p. 366, original). It took its name from a lake that has now disappeared.

I shall give only a very brief summary of the interpretations that have so far been offered of these names.

K. H. Karlsson (1905) thought that the districts (hundreds) *Solenda*, *Valenda*, *Arland*, were "named after the farm- or parish-name—that is to say that the farm or village which gave the parish its name was originally the chief place in the district".¹

Adolf Noreen (1913) thought that *Ärlinghundra härad* meant "the härad ... of the people of Arland", but that, as härad-names, *Sollentuna* and *Vallentuna* were originally *Solanda* and *Valanda*.² He clearly arrived at these "original" härad-names by detaching them from spellings such as *Solandahunderi* (1316) and *Walandahunderi* (1281), forms which occur as variants of *Solenda*- and *Valendahunderi* in the early middle ages.

Otto von Friesen was the first man who clearly saw the first elements in the names as "terms for the inhabitants of the whole hundare. *Solendir* in *Sollentuna*, *Valendir* in *Vallentuna* ..."³

In 1935 we have this from Oskar Lundberg's pen on the härad-names, Vallentuna and Sollentuna: "The härad were thus called *Valanda* or *Valenda* hundare and *Solanda* or *Solenda* hundare, but it is not certain how these names are to be explained."⁴

Jöran Sahlgren (1952) thought that *Sol(l)and* was the oldest name for Sollentuna härad, and with some hesitation proposed that the first element should be interpreted as *sol*, "sun", and the second, *land*,

¹ *Uppland* I, 408 f.

² A. Noreen, *Spridda studier* 3, 99, 103.

³ O. von Friesen i *Uppsala Nya Tidnings Julnr* (1915), 3.

⁴ *Hembygdsböckerna: Uppland* I, 167.

as “district, härad”.¹ “The original name for *Vallentuna* härad ... seems to have been **Valland*.” He considers the first elements denote the local inhabitants. He interprets *Ärlinghundra* in the same way but does not dismiss the possibility that *Arland* may originally have been not the härad-name but a village-name: “Since Husby-Ärlinghundra parish is called *Arland* in 1257 and (in) *Husaby Arlandi* in 1291, there is reason to think that the village with the church, *Husby*, had an earlier name, *Arland*. If so, we must assume that the second element meant ‘cultivated ground’. The first element might be a verbal substantive from the verb *ärja*, ‘work the ground with an ard’. The oldest meaning of the name would then be ‘the ploughed field’ or ‘crop-field settlement’.” Sahlgren rejects the explanation of the name offered by Hellquist in 1922.² He derived it from Old Swedish *ār*, genitive singular of *ā*, “river”, a suggestion which has also been dismissed by Lennart Moberg³ on formal grounds. He points out that in accordance with the rules for forming inhabitant names from compound place-names⁴ the derivative should have the first element in root-form and would be **Alända*- if it was formed from a compound with genitive *ār* from *ā*, “river”. Instead Moberg derives “Old Swedish *Arland*, ‘Ärlinghundra’, from an older **Arpland*, ‘ploughed land, crop-field’ ... an exact parallel to Anglo-Saxon *irpland*, ‘arable land’, and German *Artland*, ‘crop-field’ ... originally a purely appellative compound, which came to function as a place-name”.

Moberg makes no direct statement on the interpretation of *Arland*—whether it is to be considered a name for a smaller area, from which it has been transferred to the settlement with the church, or whether it is an original name for the hundare itself and thus a district-name. But the translation “ploughed land, crop-field” suggests that he most probably regards **Arpland* as originally a name for a smaller piece of land.

¹ *Sveriges bebyggelse. Landsbygden. Stockholms län* 3, 82 f.

² *Svensk etymologisk ordbok*, första uppl.

³ *Ortnamnssällskapet i Uppsala årsskrift* (1953), 11 ff.

⁴ See E. Wessén in *Namn och bygd* (1932), 71 ff., and L. Moberg, *op. cit.*, 13.

I shall not talk in any detail about the Old Swedish appellative and place-name, *husaby*, *Husaby*. Its usual meaning was doubtless “royal estate run by a steward (perhaps with living quarters for the king and his retinue?)”.¹ It has been suggested that *Husby*, with its appellative nature, replaced an older name, “but at first both names appear side by side”.² If this were so, then *Husaby Arland* ought to mean in effect “the *Husaby* which was earlier called *Arland*”, and *Arland* would then be a farm- or village-name. It is however quite clear from the names themselves that in the majority of cases the second element in such medieval doublet names defines the district—usually a hundare—in which the relevant *husaby* existed as a royal estate in the care of a steward. We can see this in examples such as *Husaby Lyhundare* in *Lyhundra*, *Husaby Nördhingiahundare* in *Närdinghundra*, *Husaby Aspu* on *Aspö*, *Husaby a Rek* in *Rekarne* in Södermanland.³ My interpretation of *Husaby Arland* is consequently “Husaby in or on Arland”.

When Jöran Sahlgren published his paper, “New light on the name Uppland” (*Namnet Uppland i ny belysning*),⁴ he had completely overcome his doubts as to whether Arland was originally the name of the church-hamlet or the name of the hundare. Here he interprets *Arland*, along with *Solland*, **Valland*, the härad-name *Oland* and the parish-name *Västland* (*Vesland*), as district-names, independent small “lands”, which were later to combine with other “lands” to form the province of Uppland. It had been earlier proposed that Uppland originally stood for a federation of the three “folk-lands” north of Mälaren, Attundaland, Tiundaland and Fjädrundaland, and that the name of the province came into existence at the same time as the Upp-

¹ See e.g. O. Lundberg in *Turistföreningens årsskrift* (1915), 94, and in *Uppland* (1935), 158; S. Tunberg in *Historisk tidskrift* (1947), 337 f.; E. Elgqvist, *Ullvi och Götevi* (1947), 77.

² Thus e.g. K. H. Karlsson in *Uppland* I, 414, E. Hellquist, *Svensk etymologisk ordbok* (1939), 373.

³ See L. Hellberg in *Namn och bygd* (1942), 88 ff., and H. Ståhl, *ibid.* (1960), 109.

⁴ In *Upsala Nya Tidnings Julnr* (1954), 2 f., reprinted in *Ortnamnssällskapets i Uppsala årsskrift* (1961), 19 ff.

land Law.¹ If Sahlgren's new explanation is correct, however, then the name of the province must be much older than the law-code.

Sahlgren does not now think that *Solland* can be compounded with *sol*, "sun". Instead he compares it with Old Icelandic and Norwegian dialectal *soll*, "mixture of bread and milk; mush". What would give rise to this as the name's first element was the swampy ground of Solland. It could, says Sahlgren, be glossed as "wet-bottom land". But if this were so, we should most probably expect to find the form *sull*, without *a*-mutation—the form the word in fact has in the eastern dialects of Sweden.

Sahlgren thinks the first element in **Valland* is the very common place-name element, *vall*, "grass-grown flat land". The name might be glossed as "dry-bottom land". He interprets *Arland* as "crop-field land". All three names thus originate in agricultural use.

Other explanations can of course be offered. Pronunciation is hardly an adequate criterion for rejecting *sol*, "sun", as a possible first element in *Solland*²—the original long vowel could have been shortened before long *-ll-*, for example.³ The first element in **Valland* might be *vall*, as Sahlgren thinks, but it might also be some other word, though I should not like to give a verdict in favour of any particular one. There is the word *val(e)*, for example, known in several Nordic dialects, with the meaning "collection of brushwood, débris from clearing land", closely related to the synonymous *vål(e)*. Or there is Old West Norse *valr*, "round, cylindrical". It may even be that Hellquist's derivation of *Arland* from the genitive of *ā*, "river" (the river in question would be Märsta river, from Halmsjön to Mälaren) is still worth serious consideration, despite the objections raised against it. As Moberg, with reference to Wessén, maintains, there is no doubt that root-composition represents the old method of forming inhabitant names of the kind we are dealing with, but while

¹ See e.g. E. Hjärne in *Namn och bygd* (1952), 136 f.

² But cf. J. Sahlgren, *op. cit.* in note 19 above, p. 22.

³ For parallels to such shortening see examples quoted by T. Bucht in *Namn och bygd* (1945), 100 f.

this kind of formation is well known from West Norse, there has been no thorough investigation of the subject in East Norse, and it looks in fact as if this kind of name-formation did not exist to anything like the same extent in the east as in the west.

For my argument today it matters less what precise sense is given to the first elements in the compounds, as long as the interpretation offered does not make nonsense of my interpretation of the second element. In the case of *Arland*, for example, there is no need for me to dismiss either Hellquist's reference to *ā*, "river", or Sahlgren's reference to *ärja*, "plough". Moberg's suggestion that the name may contain a word corresponding to Old West Norse *örð*, "what grows, harvest, corn", is for that matter also a possibility. But his view of *Arland* as "an exact parallel to Anglo-Saxon *irþland*, 'arable land', and German *Artland*, 'crop-field'" cannot be reconciled with my interpretation of the word *land*.

As is well known, place-names in *-land(a)* make up an extremely heterogeneous group. On the one hand we have *land* in the meaning of "province, tribal region", and on the other there is the extensive group of names in which *land* appears to mean "cultivated land" and which are directly comparable to names in *-åker* and *-åkra* (generally implying "sown ground")—one can point to parallels such as *Torslanda* : *Torsåker*, *Råglanda* : *Rågåker*, and so on. In my opinion there can be no question of this sense of *-land* in the three names we are discussing.

As I mentioned a moment ago, Sahlgren's most recent suggestion is that *Arland*, *Solland* and **Valland* originally denoted larger settlement units, districts, and not smaller areas, farms or villages. This view is certainly correct. Of course, it is possible that in these cases the element *-land* did mean "tribal region, small province", just as in *Hälsingland*, for example, or the härad-name, *Aspeland*. But we can also consider another possibility.

Svenska Akademiens Ordbok (L 162) includes this definition of *land*: "(större) ö, skärgårdsö, holme, halvö", i. e. (larger) island, skerry-fence island, holm, peninsula. This sense of the word can easily be detected in many names, including a series from Sweden's Baltic coast, from

Bleking at least as far north as Hälsingland, in which the element always denotes an island or peninsula. Another name for *Listerhalvön* in Listers härad, Bleking, is *Listerlandet*, which refers to the original peninsula (?), *Lister*.¹ Farther up the coast we find *Vikbolandet*, the big peninsula between Bråviken and Slätbaken, "the peninsula of the inlet-dwellers", called *Mällom vika*, "between the inlets", in the middle ages.² *Öbolandet* is an island off Trosa. According to the current assessment of geographers, the island Värmdö by Stockholm is the third biggest of the Swedish Baltic islands.³ It has been formed from a number of smaller islands and deep-penetrating inlets now divide it into various parts, each with a name in *-land*: *Värmdölandet*, *Fågelbrolandet*, *Ingarölandet*, *Ormingelandet* and *Farstalandet*. From at least the seventeenth century the old Färingö(n) in Mälaren has been called *Svartsjölandet*.

I have found no instances of any of these names before the seventeenth century. And in every case the name occurs with the suffixed article. This suggests that the names are young, but we cannot exclude the possibility that the definite article is a later addition, just as we find it is in a number of lake-names, like *Mälaren* for older *Mälir*, *Vänern* for *Vänir*, and so on. A name like *Vikbolandet*, for example, might very well have existed as a more popular name alongside the more official *Mällom vika*.

The härad-name *Villand* (*a wetlandi*, twelfth century) in Skåne has been interpreted as an old regional name, originally **Vätlaland*, "region or province around the lake **Vätle*" or "the lake province".⁴ **Vätle* would then be an old name for the big lake, Ivösjön, lying in

¹ Cf. C. G. Styffe, *Skandinavien under unionstiden* (3:e uppl., 1911), 90, and see E. Hellquist, *De svenska ortnamnen på -by* (1918), 124, note 2. The name *Lister* easily finds a place among other Nordic island-names in *-str-*, e.g. Swedish *Ljusterö*, *Toster* (*Tosterön*), Danish *Falster*, Old Norwegian *Flóstr*, *Mustr*, *Óstr*, *Røkstr*, etc.

² See G. Franzén, *Vikbolandets by- och gårdnamn* I (1937), 1 f.

³ *Svensk uppslagsbok* (2:a uppl.), 31, col. 1121 f.

⁴ J. Sahlgren in *Namn och bygd* (1920), 58. *Vad våra ortnamn berättar* (1963), 32. K. G. Ljunggren in *Svensk uppslagsbok* (2:a uppl.), and S. Benson in *Namn och bygd* (1959), 181, speak of the lake **Vätla* (sic!). See also Th. Andersson, *Svenska häradsnamn* (1965), 74, note 6 and works referred to there.

the middle of the härad. But *Villand* can also be interpreted in a different fashion. It will be seen that as a regional name it does not follow the usual pattern for such names in *-land*. The first element in these is normally an inhabitant name, *Hälsingland*, for example, or *Aspeland* (from **Asboaland*, "land of the ridge-people"). Like Lister, the ancient *Vätland* was evidently once surrounded by water, and an old island-name **Vätla* may be concealed in the medieval name; **Vätla* would be identical with the hypothetical river-name **Vätla* which is assumed in explaining the name of *Vättle* härad in Västergötland.¹ This interpretation would then derive *Vätland* from an older **Väthuland*, "the island **Vätla*". To my way of thinking we could then group this name with the other ancient island-names in *-land*: names such as *Langeland* and *Lolland* in Denmark,² and the *Shetland* group (Old West Norse *Hialtland*), where, as also in Orkney, the chief island is called *Mainland* (Old West Norse *Meginland*). Further examples are the German *Helgoland* off the mouth of the Elbe and the Åland parish names, *Hammarland*, *Lemland* and *Lumparland*, which were once separate islands in the Åland archipelago.

If we trace the 10-metre contour line—which, as I said earlier, can perhaps be related to the period some two centuries before our era—we soon discover that the *hundare* under discussion must once have been islands or peninsulas. In my opinion we are therefore justified in interpreting the second element, *-land*, in *Arland*, *Solland* and **Valland*, as "island" or "peninsula". With names of this kind, ancient island-names, it is not at all unreasonable to think that they came into existence a very long time ago. The three names, *Arland*, *Solland* and **Valland*, may themselves be relatively old, but other names may well have preceded them. The first elements in them need not necessarily be appellatives. They might be original island-names to which the appellative *land* was later added,³ perhaps in the Migra-

¹ *Ortnamnen i Älvsborgs län*, Inledningen. h. 1, 24.

² On the island-name *Sjælland*, mistakenly interpreted as a name in *-land*, see J. Brøndum-Nielsen in *Namn och bygd* (1932), 94 ff.

³ Cf. my newly proposed interpretation of *Villand* (*Vätland*) as a compound similar in kind to that found in younger names such as *Värmdölandet*.

tion Age. We cannot say for sure what such uncompounded names would have looked like. But in ending my talk I will be bold enough to offer a conjecture about the origin of *Solland*. Might there not lie behind both this name and the related place-name *Solna* (*Solnö* 1305, SD 2, p. 454, original) an original island-name **Soln*?¹ In the first case it would be compounded with *land* (**Soln-land*) and in the second with *ö*. In the period of the 10-metre contour line Solna was surrounded by sea. When, as the land rose, the big peninsula was joined to the island, **Soln-ö*, then perhaps it came to be called **Solnland*, while *Solnö* remained as the name of the peninsula's southern tip.²

¹ On *Solna* see E. Hellquist, *Svensk etymologisk ordbok* (1939), 1026.

² For a different view see J. Sahlgren in *Ortnamnssällskapets i Uppsala årsskrift* (1961), 22.

A New Interpretation of *Viking*

By PER THORSON †

It seems to me that the term “viking” is rather a natural subject for our Viking Congress to discuss. For in my view the problem of the word’s origin has not been definitely settled but still awaits a plausible solution.

Probably the most widely accepted derivation of ON *víkingr* is from *vík* “a bay, inlet”. The attribution of *víkingr* to the place-name *Vík*, denoting the Oslofjord, may be considered a variant of this etymology. An attempt has also been made to connect *víkingr* with Latin *vicus* “a camp”. None of these proposals can be said to hit the mark. The Vikings did not commonly lurk in coastal bays; and as for *vicus*, it is unlikely that the Scandinavian pirates should be named after their camps or somebody else’s camps in Britain. The latest noteworthy theory is Fritz Askeberg’s who interprets *víkingr* as “a person who deviates, departs from home, keeps away, or the like”.¹ But the notions of deviation, of departure from home, or staying away, are too one-sided to adequately describe the doings of the Vikings—however much we admire their capacity as sailors.

As a preliminary to my explanation of *víkingr*, let me remind you that the word is not exclusively Scandinavian but is found in West Germanic as well: compare OE *wícing*, Old Frisian *wítsing* or *wising*. One should also bear in mind that it occurs first of all in England—indeed very early, before the traditional date of the commencement of the Scandinavian Viking expeditions. In the seventh-century poem *Widsith*, the plural *wícingas* is employed twice—once as a synonym for the Heaðobeardan, possibly a Low German tribe.² In both cases

¹ *Norden och kontinenten i gammal tid* (1944), 181.

² See Kemp Malone’s revised edition of *Widsith* (1962), 162 f.

wicingas may be most naturally taken to mean “warriors”. Again, in the OE poem *Exodus*, composed in the eighth century, the Israelites marching through the Red Sea are called *sæwicingas*, a suitable translation of which must be “sea-warriors”. *Wicing* signifying “warrior” is thus what we encounter in these antique sources. However, as Dr Askeberg has demonstrated,¹ chiefly on the strength of the OE glosses, *wicing* in the general sense “pirate” was known in England already at the close of the seventh century, or about 700. During the Viking Age the word was used as a standard term for the Scandinavian pirates who raided Western Europe.

I refer *vikingr* to the PGmc stem **wig* “fight”, “slaughter”, which is found in the substantive, ON *víg*, OE *wig* etc., and also in the allied verb, ON *vega* “to kill, slay”,² OE *wigan* “to fight”. Hardly anybody will deny the semantic appropriateness of this starting-point, for fighting was the characteristic occupation of the Vikings: only gradually did they turn to trade and to organized emigration. There have, in fact, been several attempts to explain *wicing/vikingr* from the stem **wiz*, but they have failed through resorting to an improbable Indo-European base with *gn* (**wign-*). My own approach to the formative problem is a different one. I understand the *k* in *wicing/vikingr* as due to a frequentative verb derived from **wig* by a *k*-suffix. An ON **vígka*, OE **wígcan* may be postulated with the sense “to fight habitually, to live by fighting”—as a professional Viking did. From this expanded verb, an *-ing-* noun could be fashioned, which I hope to substantiate in a moment.

The frequency and variety of *k*-derived verbs in North and West Germanic may be illustrated by a few examples. In ON verbs of this type are formed from primary verbs, from substantives and (most usually) from adjectives. Thus *þjáka* “to exhaust” (from *þjá* “to constrain”); *vítka* “to censure” (from *víta* “to fine or mulct”); *kveinka*, “to whine” (freq. of *kveina* with the same meaning); *iðka*, “to effect,

¹ *op. cit.*, 153.

² From a previous **viga*; see A. Noreen, *Altisländische und altnorwegische Grammatik* (Vierte...Aufl., 1923), 335.

perform" (from *ið* "an act, work"); *þrælka* "to enslave" (from *þræll*); *blíðka* "to coax" (from *blíðr* "cheerful, gracious"); *seinka* "to delay" (from *seinn* "slow"); *dýrka* "to glorify" (from *dýrr* "dear, precious"). Corresponding OE and ME formations are occasionally made from substantives, but more often from verbs: *smearcian*, *smercian* "to smirk" (from *smer* "derision");¹ ME *talkien*, *talken* "to talk" (from *talen*, OE *talian* "to speak"—if not from OE *talū* "a statement"); ME *herkien*, *herken* "to hark", probably OE **hīercian* (from the stem of *hieran*, the same derivative being OHG *hōrechen*, MLG *horken* etc.). The above-mentioned frequentatives with *k* justify the contention that *wicing/vikingr* represents the verbal stem **wigk*. In this phonetic sequence the spirant *g* must have disappeared very early. There are parallels in some OScand and OE compound personal names with *Vig/Wig-* where the *g* is dropped before an initial consonant belonging to the second element of the name. Thus ON *Vífastr*, OI *Vífuss*, OE *Wilaf* (occurring in *Beowulf*) and *Wīstan* (in the *Battle of Maldon*, late tenth century) for *Vigfastr*, *Vigfuss*, and so on.

As regards the suffix *-ing*, PGmc *-inga-*, a recent investigator, H. H. Munske,² has shown that on characteristic criteria it makes terms for persons and things. These criteria are implied in the adjective, noun or verb to which the suffix is added. We find that in ON the personal designations with *-ingr* are mainly formed from adjectives, e.g. *spekingr* "wise man" (from *spakr*). They may, however, also be derived from nouns, as the poetic *hildingr* "warrior, chieftain, prince" (from *hildr* "strife"), or else from verbs, witness the surname *bøystingr* "a precipitate one" (cf. Norw. *bøysta* "to rush on").—The OE *-ing-* substantives are generally denominative, but in some cases deverbative: e.g. *ierming* "a wretch" (from the adj. *earm*), *flieming* "a fugitive" (from *flieman* "put to flight"—or perhaps rather from the substantive *fléam* "flight").

So much to demonstrate that the *ing*-suffix agrees quite unobjectionably with the stem I have suggested for *wicing/vikingr*. In the

¹ According to F. Holthausen, *Altenglisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (1946).

² *Das Suffix -inga/-unga in den germanischen Sprachen* (1964), 127.

above etymological sketch I have been utilizing Norse and English evidence side by side, without discussing the possibility that the word was borrowed from one language into the other. It may, in fact, be a common Scandinavian and English word. On the other hand, there is nothing to prevent us from assuming, as Dr Askeberg does,¹ that it was originally Scandinavian but was transplanted to English in a remote past. The latter view, of course, presupposes maritime connections between Scandinavia and England in early Anglo-Saxon times.—Old Frisian *witsing*, *wising* etc. is generally—and I suppose rightly—held to be borrowed from Scandinavian.

I must make one or two concluding remarks.—First, I refrain from treating the man's name *Wícing/Víkingr*. It is true that this may be partly identical with the appellative, having in that case started as a surname, but it may also be of different origin—a possible Norw. derivation for instance would give it the sense of "inhabitant of a place or district called Vík". For a further suggestion about the personal name, I refer to Hellquist's Swedish etymological dictionary.—Second, the ON feminine verbal abstract *víking* "a freebooting voyage" becomes readily intelligible in the light of my interpretation of the masculine cognate. Its original implication must have been "professional fighting". In form it is to be set beside *fylking* "phalanx", derived from the verb *fylkja* "to draw up in battle array".

¹ *op. cit.*, 164-5.

Stray Thoughts on Scaldic Poetry

By GABRIEL TURVILLE-PETRE

Since this is the last lecture of the Congress, and members have already heard rather many lectures, I promise that mine will be short.

I would like to talk for a few minutes about my own experiences of scaldic poetry, first as a student and later as a teacher.

As a student, even as a schoolboy, I was interested especially in Old Icelandic literature. I read the *Poetic Edda* avidly, and saga after saga. But when I came to the verses embedded in those sagas, I passed them over or tried to get some vague idea of their meaning from editors' notes. I was warned off poetry of this kind. Some would say that it was too difficult to be worth while and others, more insidiously, that it was bad poetry, no better than a crossword puzzle.

Brought up, as most British people of my age were, on the English Romantics, the heretic Byron, then Keats, Shelley, Southey and especially Wordsworth, it is easy to see why we should condemn the formalistic, rigid poetry of the scalds. The scalds did not use the language of rustics and peasants and to quote one of our best known poets and critics of the present century: any poetry which demanded "a conscious effort of interpretation" was necessarily bad poetry.¹

The scalds transgressed all the rules which we had been taught. They used an artificial diction, artificial form and artificial word-order. They were trained, as we can easily see from the story of Egill Skalla-Grímsson and his pupil Einarr Skálaglamm, as craftsmen. Although we hear little about it, the training of a successful scald must have been long and arduous.

I have named some of the English Romantic poets, on whose verse

¹ See W. H. Gardner, *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Penguin Books, 1963), xv.

the taste of many Englishmen is formed. It is interesting to notice that among those whom I have named were some who showed a certain appreciation, if little knowledge, of the scaldic art.

In 1797, Southey wrote:

Wild the Runic faith,
and wild the realms where Scandinavian chiefs
and Scalds arose, and hence the Scalds' strong verse
partook the savage wildness. And methinks
amid such scenes as these, the Poet's soul
might best attain full growth.¹

These lines were quoted by Peacock in *Melincourt*,² and placed in the mouth of Mr Forester, who is nothing more than a caricature of Shelley. The rejoinder came from Mr Fax, i.e. Peacock himself:

As to the "Scald's strong verse", I must say I have never seen any specimens of it, that I did not think mere trash. It is little more than a rhapsody of rejoicing in carnage, a ringing of changes on the biting sword and the flowing of blood and the feast of the raven and the vulture, and fulsome flattery of the chieftain, of whom the said Scald was the abject slave, vassal, parasite, and laureat, interspersed with continual hints that he ought to be well paid for his lying panegyrics.

Of course we can find better balanced accounts of scaldic poetry than those I have quoted, but even W. P. Ker, our most brilliant critic of medieval literature, expressed a certain reserve:

England, where poetry has never been taken in this way, is the last country to pass judgment on these spirited poetical diversions.³

Ker spoke more forthrightly on another occasion:

¹ In *Icelandic Poetry or the Edda of Sæmund*, translated by A. S. Cottle (Bristol 1797), xxxv-vi. It is not plain that Southey is using the word "scald" in the sense in which we now use it. It is, however, plain from the quotation which follows that Peacock understood it in our sense.

² *The Novels of Thomas Love Peacock I* (1963), 303. Peacock's quotation is not quite exact.

³ *The Dark Ages* (1955), 304-5.

there was ... a curiosity and search for new figures, that in the complexity and absurdity of its results is not approached in any school of "false wit" in the whole range of literature.¹

Although few English critics have written in praise of the scalds, they have not altogether lacked admirers among English-speaking people.

One who showed his admiration was William Morris. Nowadays English critics generally sneer at Morris's translations of sagas into his Wardour Street English. I can admit that Morris's translations of Icelandic prose are a little odd; he uses obsolete and invented words in profusion. But, if he does the same when he is translating scaldic poetry, we cannot say that he is doing other than the scalds did themselves. Morris had the help of Eiríkr Magnússon and, perhaps thanks to this, he seems to convey the diction and rhythm of the scalds better than others who have rendered it into English. Let me quote a few specimens of Morris's and Magnússon's rendering of scaldic lines. Here is an extract from Hornklofi's description of the battle of Hafsfjörðr:

Heardst thou in Hafursfirth
how there fell the battle
twixt the king of high kindred
and Kiotvi the Wealthy?
From east-away came the ships
all eager for battle,
with grim gaping heads
and prow-plates fair-graven ...

Heyrðir þú í Hafrsfirði,
hvé hizig barðisk
konungr enn kynstóri
við Kjotva enn auðlagða.
Knerrir kómu austan
kapps of lystir,
með gínqndum hqfðum
ok grqfnum tinglum ...

Down neath the decks then
dived the lads wounded,
their buttocks uphoven,
their heads by the keel laid.

Slógusk und sessþiljur,
es sárir vóru,
létu upp stjqlu stúpa,
stungu í kjql hqfðum.

¹ Quoted from E. V. Gordon and A. R. Taylor, *Introduction to Old Norse* (1957), XL.

Bold men stone-battered,
 blenched from the battle,
 hung Odin's hall tiles
 behind them to glitter.
 Home then from Hafursfirth
 held they by Jadar;
 trembled the gold-staves,
 and set heart on mead-horn.

Á baki létu blíkja,
 barðir vóru grjóti,
 Sváfnis salnæfrar
 seggir hyggjandi.
 Æstusk austkylfur
 ok of Jaðar hljópu
 heim ór Hafrsfirði
 ok hugðu á mjöðdrykkju.¹

To give another example, I may quote one of Morris's and Magnússon's rendering of a verse from Sigvatr's *Austrfarvísur*:

"O wretch," cried out the
 woman,
 "No further in for I fear me
 to win the wrath of Odin;
 here be we heathen people."
 The hideous hag, O folk-friend,
 me as a wolf drave outward.
 She said that now Elf-offering
 was toward in her homestead.

"Gakkattu inn," kvað ekkja,
 "armi drengr, en lengra.
 Hræðumk ek við Óðins,
 erum heiðnir vér, reiði."
 Rýgr kvazk inni eiga
 óþekk, sús mér hnekkði,
 alfablót, sem ulfi
 ótvín, í bæ sínum.²

I must add that Morris and Magnússon also translated *Kormáks Saga* and that their translation is soon to be published.³ I have been allowed to read the volume and can see that the translators have understood and thoroughly appreciated the verses, although, since no explanatory notes were appended in the form in which I saw the volume, I doubt whether many English readers will understand the translations of the verses. This is almost to say that you have to know

¹ Translation in *The Saga Library, Heimskringla I*, by William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon (1893), 112-3. Text: *Heimskringla I*, ed. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson (1941), 115-7.

² Translation in *Heimskringla II* (1894), 146. Text: *Heimskringla II*, edition cited (1945), 137.

³ *The Story of Kormak* (William Morris Society, 1969). I am indebted to the President of the Society, Sir Basil Blackwell, for allowing me to read the volume before publication.

the original before you can understand the translation. I will quote a few specimens of Morris's and Magnússon's translations of Kormákr's verses later.

This brings me back to where I started. I have learnt at least as much from my pupils, both in England and Australia, as they have learnt from me. When I started, as an experiment, to give classes on scaldic poetry in Australia, I was in grave difficulty, and convinced that the classes would be a failure. There is no reader suitable for English-speaking students other than that of Kock and Meissner.¹ Excellent as this work is, we can hardly place it into the hands of a student and tell him to get on with it. Students must know the context of a verse, on what occasion it was made, or said to be made. Jón Helgason² gave a splendid selection of scaldic poetry, but the commentary is too little for students to read without the help of an expert. Mario Gabrieli³ used a method of which I much approve and some of my students have read his work with profit, but few of them are able to read Italian. Some of the poems in Gabrieli's volume, such as *Sólarljóð*, cannot be called scaldic under any definition.

While in Australia, in great haste and most inaccurately, I ran off a small reader on a cyclostyle machine. I went through this with students and was asked for more and more. I have used the same inaccurate reader in England.

I had to ask students what it was that appealed to them in poetry of this kind and why they wanted to hear more about it. Answers were often vague, but the names of two British poets, whom students admired, came up repeatedly in comparison. These poets were Dylan Thomas and, much more frequently, Gerard Manley Hopkins.⁴ To me these were no more than names, and the first of them is still little more. Both of them, in contrast to Wordsworth and his group, may

¹ E. A. Kock and R. Meissner, *Skaldisches Lesebuch* I-II (1931).

² *Skjaldevers* (1961).

³ *La Poesia Scaldica Norrena* (1962).

⁴ It is interesting to note that Hopkins is not a modern poet, but lived 1844-1889. Little of his work was published until 1918.

be called anaturalistic poets, as were the best of the scalds. But two points struck me. Thomas was a Welshman, who knew little if any Welsh; Hopkins was an English Jesuit, but worked for some years in Wales and studied the Welsh language, reading the early poetry closely, and even able to write poetry, perhaps not quite accurately, in an intricate Welsh measure (*Cywydd*).¹ As Hopkins's journals show, he was especially interested in the rich metrical forms used by the Welsh poets. Besides being a poet, Hopkins was a scholar, well trained in classical metrics.

My first idea was this: the syllable-counting measures of the scalds, the irregular word-order, even the strange imagery, were derived from Celtic and particularly from Irish. The Welsh syllabic measures, as far as I understand, are influenced strongly by Irish ones. Therefore, I jumped prematurely to the conclusion that there was a basic historical connection between the poetry of Hopkins and that of the scalds.

It was not until later that I began to doubt this conclusion. Reading passages of Hopkins's letters and journals, I noticed that he read, not only classical languages and Welsh, but also Old and Middle English and at least some Icelandic, including scaldic poetry. Writing, to adopt Hopkins's term, of the "sprung" rhythm, he said that it was used in great beauty in Anglo-Saxon, but in a "degraded, doggerel shape" in *Piers Ploughman*. "I am reading that famous poem," Hopkins wrote, "and am coming to the conclusion that it is not worth reading."²

I do not think that the term "sprung rhythm" was a happy one. I would rather say "jerky rhythm" as opposed to "running rhythm".

Hopkins's "sprung rhythm" may be found in Sievers's types, especially D, also in E and perhaps C:

D sló brjóstkringlur

bið Bøðvildi

E svanfjaðrar dró

C við gim fastan.

¹ See W. H. Gardner, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* II (1961), 399.

² See Gardner, *op. cit.*, II 139.

In another passage, Hopkins spoke of the beautifully rich combination of alliteration, assonance, internal rime and half-rime (*skothending*) in Icelandic verse. He quotes a specimen, str. 57 of Snorri's *Háttatal*, illustrating *Fleinsháttr*, a form believed to be devised by the Norwegian, Fleinn Hjörsson, late in the ninth or early in the tenth century.¹ The *Fleinsháttr* is a form of *dróttkvætt*, but its distinctive feature is that the internal rimes and half-rimes fall, not on the third stress, but on the two first stresses:

Hilmir hjálma skúrir
herðir sverði roðnu,
hrjóta hvítir askar,
hrynja brynju spangir;
hnykkja Hlakkar eldar
harða svarðar landi,
remma rimmu glóðir,
ranna grand of jarli.

I know no other example of this form, but, if not in this verse, Hopkins's "sprung" rhythm is frequently found in scaldic poetry.

It is found, at least as I read them, in Kormákr's splendid "shivering" lines describing a storm at sea:

Brim gnýr, brattir hamrar
blálands Haka strandar,
allt gjálfr eyja þjálfar
út líðr í stað víðis ...²

I understand from W. H. Gardner that Hopkins learnt his Icelandic mainly from works of the American philologist G. P. Marsh (1801-82), which included a *Grammar of the Icelandic Language*.

Hopkins's verse is characterised largely by his sprung rhythms, but also by his attention to alliteration, internal rime and half-rime. To quote a few lines from his poem on the kestrel (Windhover):

¹ See Einar Ól. Sveinsson, *Íslenzkar Bókmenntir í Fornöld* I (1962), 129.

² Text from *Íslenzk Fornrit* VIII, ed. Einar Ól. Sveinsson (1939), 269-70.

I caught this morning morning's minion, kingdom of daylight's
 dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
 Of the rolling level underneath him steady air,
 and striding
 High there, how he rung upon the rein of a whimpling wing
 In his ecstasy! then off, off, forth on swing,
 As a skate's heel sweeps smooth on a bow-bend: the
 hurl and gliding
 Rebuffed the big wind. My heart in hiding
 Stirred for a bird,—the achieve of, the mastery of the thing.¹

Intelligent students who approach the scaldic poetry with an open mind are quick to appreciate its rhythms: they soon learn verses by heart and listen to the alliteration, the internal rimes and consonance. There are other difficulties to face: kennings, imagery. Some critics regard the advanced scaldic kennings as a defect, especially those which are *tvíkennt* or *rekit* and, indeed, they sometimes are stereotypes adding little to the poetry. Many scholars will disagree with me but, as I believe, the kenning is essentially a simile, a picture. It may degenerate and become mere form, prompted even by metrical necessity. Supposing a poet needs a kenning for "man", he may call him *Draupnis dogg-Freyr*,² but this need not mean that he is a very rich man. The kenning does, however, call to the listener's mind the myth of the ring *Draupnir*, dripping its eight gold rings, each of its own weight, every ninth night.

I have quoted only four lines of scaldic poetry, but, in them, Kormákr shows the aesthetic value which can be achieved by a kenning. Anyone can say that the surf roars, but when he says, in the baldest translation: "the surf roars, those steep cliffs of Haki's dark land; all the surge of the belt of islands flows out into the ocean realms", the poet has said a lot more. We have to think of the legendary sea-king,

¹ *Poems and Prose of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, 30 in ed. cited note 1, p. 105.

² Hofgarða-Refr; see *Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, B, I (1912), 295.

Haki, leader of a viking band, laid dead or dying on a burning ship.¹ Haki's land is not land, but sea; that land is dark and luring, and its steep cliffs are the towering waves. In the second couplet, we hear another kenning of a common type: *eyja þjálfar*, the container, belt of islands, and again we read the word *víðir*, the wide one, the seemingly endless ocean. Let us hear how Morris and Magnússon render these lines:

The sea roars, clash the rock-walls
of the blue realm of Haki,
the islands' smiters sweep on
towards the main sea all together ...²

As another specimen, I may quote Morris's and Magnússon's version of Kormákr's last verse, made on his death-bed:

Dunði djúpra benja	The deep wound's dew fell splashing
dogg ór mækis hoggvi,	beneath the dint of edges
bark með dýrum drengjum	and I bore a sword made bloody
dreyrugt sverð, á eyri;	mid brave men on the island.
bera knáttu þá breiðan	Broad blades the gods of battle
blóðvond hjarar Þundar;	aloft that day were bearing,
þó munk, greipa glóðar	yet lo, O wrist-fires' lady,
Gerðr, stráðauða verða.	straw-dead I lie before thee. ³

In Bragi's *Ragnarsdrápa*, at least if I interpret the difficult lines correctly, we find a rather similar image, in which the poet speaks of one of the pictures carved and painted on the shield:

Þats á Leifa landa
laufi fátt ...⁴

i.e. this (picture) is painted on the leaf of Leifi's land. Leifi is again a sea-king, so his land is sea. But there are no leaves at sea. With the

¹ *Heimskringla* I, edition cited in note 6 above, 45.

² *The Story of Kormak*, 114.

³ Text: *Íslensk Fornrit* VIII, 302. Translation from: *The Story of Kormak*, 132.

⁴ *Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning*, B, I, 1. Finnur Jónsson's interpretation differs from mine.

mind's eye we look over the ocean until we see something which is not a leaf, yet looks like one. We see the garishly painted shields, tinted like autumn leaves as they hang over the gunwale of the viking ship; those are the leaves of the sea.

I would like to speak longer about the aesthetic value of scaldic kennings, but have no time. Difficult as they may be to interpret, they are often rewarding.

Many people attending this Congress have read more about scaldic kennings than I have, but I have read nothing so humane, so appreciative as Einar Ól. Sveinsson's *Dróttkvæða þáttur*.¹ The only criticism I have to make of that paper is that it is too short.

I have talked in an entirely personal way with the help of scholars who have written about the aesthetic appeal of scaldic poetry and not less with help from students in England and Australia. The Australians have many disadvantages, such as lack of books, but I think the future of Icelandic studies in the English-speaking world lies there.

¹ First published in *Skírnir* (1947); republished in Einar Ól. Sveinsson's *Við Uppspretturnar* (1956), 34-63.