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THE NORTH CAPE.

A  
HISTORY OF NOR

FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES

BY  
HJALMAR H. BOYESEN

*WITH A NEW CHAPTER ON THE RECENT HISTORY  
OF NORWAY*

BY  
C. F. KEARY

London  
T. FISHER UNWIN  
PATERNOSTER SQUARE

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TO  
CHRISTIAN BÖRS  
KNIGHT OF ST. OLAF, WASA, AND THE NORTH STAR, CONSUL OF  
NORWAY AND SWEDEN IN NEW YORK, THIS HISTORY  
OF HIS NATIVE LAND IS DEDICATED BY HIS  
FRIEND THE AUTHOR





## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

IN issuing an edition for the Story of the Nations Series of Boyesen's "Norway" the publisher is very sensible of the loss he sustains in the fact that the gifted author is no longer alive to revise and complete the work. A concluding chapter bringing the modern history—political and literary—up to the present time has, however, been supplied by the kindness of Mr. C. F. Keary, author of the "Vikings in Western Christendom," and other works connected with Norse history and literature, as well as of numerous works in other fields.

Hjalmar Hjörth Boyesen was born at Frederiksvärn in Norway, on the 23rd of September, 1848, and received his education in his mother country. He graduated at the University of Christiania in 1868, and the year following he emigrated to America, which was to be henceforth his home. He was appointed Professor of German at Cornell University in 1874, and retained that post till 1880, when he became Gebhard Professor of German and of Scandinavian Literature at Columbia College, New York. Arriving in America with an adequate knowledge of the language, he soon became a proficient in English, and began to write in that language. His first and best known novel, "Gunnar: a Tale of

Norse Life," was published the year of his election to the Cornell professorship; and from that time till his death he wrote voluminously, essays, novels, short stories, and poems. "Idylls of Norway" is the title of his book of verses; "Gunnar" and "Falconberg" are two of his novels; "Tales from Two Hemispheres," "Norseland Tales," and "Ilka on the Hilltip," &c. (the last is the best known of the three), are among his collections of short stories; and his essays on "Goethe and Schiller," and on "Scandinavian Literature," are the most important of his literary studies.

It has not been thought advisable—and it certainly was not necessary—to make any material changes in the body of the book as in its latest edition (1897) it left the author's hands shortly before his death. Boyesen professedly followed in this history very strictly the Saga literature of his own country; and there are necessarily some points in which these narratives come in conflict with the chronicles of other lands or give a somewhat different complexion to the facts than they do. The account of the Battle of Stamford Bridge may be cited as a case in point. But, in the first place, such instances are few; and in the second place, the high value of the Saga literature of Norway precludes all attempt to find any substitute for it for the history of Scandinavia. The revision of the text has therefore been confined to a few verbal alterations and the modernisation of one or two names.



## PREFACE.

---

IT has been my ambition for many years to write a history of Norway, chiefly because no such book, worthy of the name, exists in the English language. When the publishers of the present volume proposed to me to write the story of my native land, I therefore eagerly accepted their offer. The story, however, according to their plan, was to differ in some important respects from a regular history. It was to dwell particularly upon the dramatic phases of historical events, and concern itself but slightly with the growth of institutions and sociological phenomena. It therefore necessarily takes small account of proportion. In the present volume more space is given to the national hero, Olaf Tryggvesson, whose brief reign was crowded with dramatic events, than to kings who reigned ten times as long. For the same reason the four centuries of the Union with Denmark are treated with comparative brevity. Many things happened, no doubt, during those centuries, but "there were few deeds." Moreover, the separate history of Norway, in the time of her degradation, has never proved an attractive theme to

Norse historians, for which reason the period has been generally neglected.

The principal sources of which I have availed myself in the preparation of the present volume, are Snorre Sturlasson: *Norges Kongesagaer* (Christiania, 1859, 2 vols.); P. A. Munch: *Det Norske Folks Historie* (Christiania, 1852, 6 vols.); R. Keyser: *Efterladte Skrifter* (Christiania, 1866, 2 vols.); *Samlede Afhandlinger* (1868); J. E. Sars: *Udsigt over den Norske Historie* (Christiania, 1877, 2 vols.); K. Maurer: *Die Bekehrung des Norwegischen Stammes zum Christenthume* (München, 1856, 2 vols.), and *Die Entstehung des Isländischen Staates* (München, 1852); G. Vigfusson: *Sturlunga Saga* (Oxford, 1878, 2 vols.); and *Um ttmatal i Islendinga sögum i fornöld* (contained in *Safn til sögu Islands*, 1855); G. Storm: *Snorre Sturlasson's Historieskrivning* (Kjöbenhavn, 1878); C. F. Allen: *Haandbog i Fædrelandets Historie* (Kjöbenhavn, 1863); besides a large number of scattered articles in German and Scandinavian historical magazines. A question which has presented many difficulties is the spelling of proper names. To adopt in every instance the ancient Icelandic form would scarcely be practicable, because the names in their modernized forms are usually familiar and easy to pronounce, while, in their Icelandic disguises, they are to English readers nearly unpronounceable, and present a needlessly forbidding appearance. Where a name has no well-recognized English equivalent, I have therefore adopted the modern Norwegian form, which usually differs from the ancient, in having dropped a final letter. Thus Sigurdr (which with an

English genitive would be Sigurdr's) becomes in modern Norwegian Sigurd, Eirikr, Erik, etc. Those surnames, which are descriptive epithets, I have translated where they are easily translatable, thus writing Harold the Fairhaired, Haakon the Good, Olaf the Saint, etc. Absolute consistency would, however, give to some names a too cumbrous look, as, for instance, Einar the Twanger of Thamb (Thamb being the name of his bow), and I have in such instances kept the Norse name (Thambarskelver).

It is a pleasant duty to acknowledge my indebtedness for valuable criticism to my friends, E. Munroe Smith, J.U.D., Adjunct Professor of History in Columbia College, and Hon. Rasmus B. Andersen, United States Minister to Denmark, without whose kindly aid in procuring books, maps, etc., the difficulties in the preparation of the present volume would have been much increased. I am also under obligation to Dr. W. H. Carpenter, of Columbia College, and to the Norwegian artist, Mr. H. N. Gaustå, of La Crosse, Wis., who has kindly sent me two spirited original compositions, illustrative of peasant-life in Norway.

HJALMAR H. BOYESEN.



## CONTENTS.

### I.

	PAGE
<b>WHO WERE THE NORSEMEN ? . . . . .</b>	<b>I-12</b>
The Aryan migrations, 1-3—The physical characteristics of Norway, 4, 5—Early tribal organization and means of livelihood, 6-10—Sense of independence and aptitude for self-government, 10-12.	

### II.

<b>THE RELIGION OF THE NORSEMEN . . . . .</b>	<b>13-24</b>
Theories regarding the origin of the Scandinavian gods, 13-16—The Eddaic account of the creation of the world and of man, 16-18—The world-tree Ygdrasil, 18—The <i>Aesir</i> , their functions and their dwellings, 19-23—Loke the Evil-Doer and his terrible children, 23, 24.	

### III.

<b>THE AGE OF THE VIKINGS.—ORIGIN OF THE VIKING CRUISES . . . . .</b>	<b>25-44</b>
The Norsemen launch forth upon the arena of history, 25—The origin of the viking cruises, 25-27—Kingship among the Scandinavian tribes, 27, 28—The three periods of the viking age, 28-30—The contribution of the vikings to the political life of Europe, 30, 31—Sigfrid of Nortmannia, 31—Godfrey the Hunter, 31, 32—Charlemagne's prophecy in regard to the vikings, 32-34—Hasting's stratagem, 34-36—Ragnar, Asgeir, and Rörek, 36, 37—Thorgisl in Ireland, 38, 39—Olaf the White, 40, 41—The vikings in England, 41—Simeon of Durham's account of the vikings, 42—The character of the vikings at home and abroad, 43, 44.	

## IV.

## HALFDAN THE SWARTHY . . . . . 45-51

The descent of the Yngling race, 45—The sacrifices of Aun the Old, 45—Olaf the Wood-cutter, Halfdan Whiteleg, and Godfrey the Hunter, 46—Birth of Halfdan the Swarthy, 46—Sigurd Hjort and the *Berserk* Hake, 47, 48—Halfdan the Swarthy weds Ragnhild, 48—Ragnhild's dream, 48—King Halfdan's dream, 49—Birth of Harold the Fairhaired, 49—The Finn's trick, 50—King Halfdan's death, 51.

## V.

## HAROLD THE FAIRHAISED . . . . . 52-73

Harold the Fairhaired woos Gyda, 52, 53—Harold's vow, 53—Herlaug and Rollaug, 54—Harold's policy toward the conquered kings, 54, 55—The feudal state, 55—Taxation and the peasants' loss of allodial rights, 55, 56—Haakon Grjotgardsson and Ragnvald, Earl of Møre, 56—Kveld-Ulf and his sons, 56, 57—Erik Eimundsson's invasion of Norway, 57—His meeting with King Harold, 58—The battle of Hafrs-Fjord, 59—Earl Ragnvald cuts King Harold's hair, 59—Harold marries Gyda, 59, 60—Harold's treachery to Thorolf Kveld-Ulf's son, 60-62—Kveld-Ulf's vengeance and migration to Iceland, 62, 63—Duke Rollo in Norway and France, 64, 65—Emigration of discontented magnates, 65, 66—Snefrid, 67—Queen Ragnhild, 68—Erik Blood-Axe's feuds with his brothers, 69-71—Guttorm Sindre, 71, 72—Birth of Haakon the Good, 72—Haakon is sent to Ethelstan, 72, 73—Death of Harold, 73.

## VI.

## ERIK BLOOD-AXE . . . . . 74-86

Erik's meeting with Gunhild, 74-76—Erik kills his brothers, Sigfrid and Olaf, 76—Thorolf, Bald Grim's son, 77—Egil, Bald Grim's son, kills Baard, 78—Egil kills Berg-Anund, 79, 80—Egil's pole of dishonor, 80—Egil ransoms his head by a song, 81-85—Erik is exiled, 86.

## VII.

## HAAKON THE GOOD . . . . . 87-101

Character of Haakon, 87—Proclaimed king of Norway, 88—

Legislative reforms and restoration of allodium, 89—Signal fires, 90—First attempt to introduce Christianity, 90—92—Speech of Asbjörn of Medalhus, 92—The king eats horse-flesh, 92—94—The sons of Erik Blood-Axe make war upon Norway, 94, 95—Battles of Sotones and Agvaldsness, 95, 96—Egil Woolsark, 96, 97—Battle of Fraedö, 96—98—Failure of attempt to Christianize the country, 98—Battle of Fitje (Eyvind Scald-Spoiler), 98—101—Death of Haakon the Good, 101.

## VIII.

## HAROLD GREYFELL AND HIS BROTHERS . . . 102—114

Unpopularity of the sons of Erik, 102—104—Their characters, 104—Harold Greyfell and Eyvind Scald-Spoiler, 105—Treachery of Harold toward Earl Sigurd, 105, 106—Independence of Earl Haakon, 106, 107—Murder of Tryggve Olafsson, 107, 108—Birth of Olaf Tryggvesson, 108—Adventures of Aastrid and Thoralf Lousy-Beard, 108—110—Sigurd Sleva insults Aaluf, 111—Earl Haakon's intrigues in Denmark, 111, 112—Gold-Harold slays Harold Greyfell, 112—Expulsion of the sons of Erik, 113, 114.

## IX.

## EARL HAAKON . . . . . 115—133

Earl Haakon defends Dannevirke, 115, 116—Harold Blue-tooth, 117—Haakon's devastations in Sweden and in Viken, 118—Earl Erik and Tiding-Skofte, 119—The funeral feast of the Jomsvikings, 120, 121—Battle in Hjörungavaag, 121—125—The Jomsvikings on the log, 125, 126—Haavard the Hewer, 127—The power and popularity of Earl Haakon, 127, 128—Gudrun Lundarsol, 129—Revolt of the peasants, 130—The earl hides under a pigsty, 130, 131—"Why art thou so pale, Kark?" 131—Kark murders the earl, 132—Haakon's character, 132, 133.

## X.

## THE YOUTH OF OLAF TRYGGVESSON . . . 134—142

Aastrid's flight to Russia, 134, 135—Olaf is sold for a ram, 135—He is taken to Vladimir's court, 135, 136—King



Burislav and Geira, 136, 137—The wooers' market in England, 137—Marriage with Gyda, 137, 138—Olaf's warfare in England, 138, 139—Thore Klakka tries to entrap Olaf, 139, 140—Return to Norway and proclamation as king, 140-142.

## XI.

## OLAF TRYGGVESSON . . . . . 143-172

Olaf Christianizes Viken, 143, 144—Character of old Germanic Christianity, 144-146—Thangbrand the pugnacious priest, 147—The chiefs of Haalogaland, 148—Ironbeard and the peasants of Trøndelag, 149, 150—The Yule-tide feast at Møre, 150-152—Olaf woos Sigrid the Haughty, 152-154—He marries Thyra, 154—Thore Hjort, Eyvind Kinriva, and Haarek of Thjotta, 154-158—Thangbrand in Iceland, 158, 159—Olaf's character, 160—Thyra's tears for her lost possessions, 161—"The Long-Serpent," 161—King Olaf sails to Wendland, 162, 163—Earl Sigvalde's treachery, 163—Battle of Svolder, 164-172—King Olaf's death, 171, 172.

## XII.

THE EARLS ERIK AND SWEYN.—THE DISCOVERY  
OF VINLAND . . . . . 173-181

Division of Norway between the victors at Svolder, 173—Erling Skjalgsson of Sole, 174-176—Earl Erik's character, 176—And attitude toward Christianity, 176, 177—Revival of the viking spirit, 177—Earl Erik abdicates in favor of his brother and son, 178, 179—Bjarne Herjulfsson's glimpse of America, 179—Leif Eriksson's expedition to Vinland, 180, 181—Thorfinn Karlsevne and Gudrid, 181.

## XIII.

## OLAF THE SAINT . . . . . 182-224

Birth and childhood of Olaf the Saint, 182, 183—Viking cruises, 183—Return to Norway, 184—He captures Earl Haakon, 185—His reception by Aastrid and Sigurd Syr, 186, 187—Family council, 187, 188—Support of the shire-kings, 188—The Trønders recognize Olaf as king, 189—Surprised by Earl Sweyn in Nidaros, 190—Battle of Nessje,

190, 192—Earl Sweyn's flight and death, 192—Quarrel with King Olaf the Swede, 193, 194—Björn Stallare's mission, 194-196—Speech of Thorgny the Lawman, 196, 197—Olaf marries Aastrid, 198—Conspiracy of the shire-kings and their punishments, 199—The play of the sons of Sigurd Syr, 199, 200—Rörek's hard fate, 201—His attempt to murder Olaf, 202—The attitude of the tribal aristocracy toward Olaf, 202, 203—Paganism *versus* Christianity, 204, 205—"Where are my ancestors?" 205—Olaf's character and appearance, 205-207—Dale-Guldbrand, 207-210—Slaying of Aasbjörn Sigurdsson, 211—Knut the Mighty bribes the Norse chieftains, 212, 213—Anund Jacob refuses the bribe, 213, 214—Battle of Helge-aa, 214, 215—Death of Erling Skjalgsson, 216—Olaf goes to Russia, 217—Björn Stallare's confession, 218—Olaf returns to Norway, 218—His vision, 220, 221—Battle of Sticklestad, 221, 222—Thormod Kolbruna-Scald, 222-224—Burial of St. Olaf, 224.

## XIV.

## SWEYN ALFIFASSON . . . . . 225-229

Alfifa and the Norse chiefs, 225—Unpopular and oppressive laws, 226—King Olaf canonized, 227—Tryggve Olafsson's defeat, 228—Einar Thambarskelver rebukes Alfifa, 228—Magnus Olafsson returns from Russia, 229—Expulsion of Sweyn, 229.

## XV.

## MAGNUS THE GOOD . . . . . 230-250

Circumstances of Magnus' birth, 230—Magnus and Harthaknut, 231—Jealousies of the chieftains, 232—Magnus and Kalf Arnesson at Stiklestad, 233—Sighvat Scald's Lay of Candor, 234—Sweyn Estridsson rebels, 236, 237—Battle of Lyrskog's Heath, 237—Thorstein Side-Hall's son, 238—Einar Thambarskelver's disagreement and reconciliation with Magnus, 238, 239—Arrival of Harold Sigurdsson, 240—His adventures abroad, 240-242—Magnus' reception of Harold, 243—Harold's alliance with Sweyn Estridsson, 244—Agreement to share the government, 245—The peasant

Toke's speech, 246, 247—Expeditions of Magnus against Sweyn Estridsson, 247, 247—Death of Magnus the Good, 249, 250.

## XVI.

## HAROLD HARD-RULER . . . . . 251-272

The tribal chieftains and the hereditability of the crown, 251, 252—Harold decides to conquer Denmark, 252—Determination to break the power of the aristocracy, 253—Einar Thambarskelver's hostility, 254, 255—Harold marries Thora, 255—St. Hallvard and the founding of Oslo, 256—Burning of Heidaby, 257—Sweyn's pursuits and Harold's stratagems, 257-259—Battle of Nis-aa, 259—Peace of Götha Elv, 260—Feuds with Einar Thambarskelver, 260, 261—Harold tests the loyalty of the chieftains, 261, 262—Högne Langbjörnsson, 262, 263—Murder of Einar and his son, 264—Harold's treachery to Kalf Arnesson and Haakon Ivarsson, 265-267—Arrival of Earl Tostig in Norway, 268—Battles of Fulford and Stamford Bridge, 268-270—Styrkaar and the yeoman, 270-272—Position of the Norwegian Church, 272.

## XVII.

## OLAF THE QUIET AND MAGNUS HAROLDSSON, 273-284

Olaf and Magnus divide the country, 273—War with Sweyn Estridsson, 273, 274—Death of Magnus, 274—Character of Olaf the Quiet, 275, 276—Gradual cessation of viking cruises, 276, 277—Gradual abolition of serfdom, 278—Vikings and merchants, 278, 279—Appearance and appointments of dwellings, 280, 281—Increased splendor of the court, 281, 282—Establishment of guilds, 282, 283—Skule Tostigsson, 283—Death of Olaf the Quiet, 284.

## XVIII.

## MAGNUS BAREFOOT AND HAAKON MAGNUSSON, 285-290

The Trönders proclaim Haakon king, 285—Magnus' expedition to Scotland and Ireland, 285, 286—Death of Haakon, 286—Punishment of his partisans, 286, 287—Warlike spirit of Magnus, 287—War with Sweden, 288—War with Ireland, 289—Death of Magnus in Ulster, 290.

## XIX.

## EYSTEIN SIGURD THE CRUSADER AND OLAF

MAGNUSSON . . . . . 291-305

Division of the land, 291—Sigurd's crusade, 292, 293—Eystein's meritorious activity at home, 294—Hostility of the brothers, 295—The case of Sigurd Ranesson, 295, 296—Borghild of Dal, 297—The "man-measuring," 297-301—Death of Eystein, 301—Ottar Birting, 301-303—Arrival of Harold Gille, 303—Cecilia, 303—Death of Sigurd, 304, 305.

## XX.

## MAGNUS THE BLIND AND HAROLD GILLE . . . . . 306-310

Character of Magnus and of Harold, 306—Battle of Fyri-leiv, 307—Magnus captured and maimed, 307, 308—Sigurd Slembedegn, 308—Harold Gille murdered, 309—Burning of Konghelle by the Wends, 310.

## XXI.

## THE SONS OF HAROLD GILLE . . . . . 311-321

The sons of Harold Gille proclaimed kings, 311—Sigurd Slembedegn allies himself with Magnus the Blind; 311, 312—Inge Crookback's first experience of war, 312—Battles of Krokaskogen, 312, and Holmengraa, 313—Sigurd Slembedegn's fortitude, 313—Arrival of Eystein Haroldsson, 314—Feuds between the brothers, 314-316—Character and appearance of Sigurd Mouth, 314-316—Death of Sigurd, 316—Death of Eystein, 317—Erling Skakke and Gregorius Dagsson, 318-320—Fall of Inge at Oslo, 320—The cardinal's visit, 320, 321.

## XXII.

## HAAKON THE BROAD-SHOULDERED . . . . . 322-325

Christina bribes the priest, 322—Erling Skakke's intrigues, 323—Seeks aid in Denmark, 323, 324—Battle of Sekken, 324.

## XXIII.

## MAGNUS ERLINGSSON . . . . . 326-349

Rebellion of the "Sigurd party," 326, 327—Battle of Ree, 327—Erling's alliance with Archbishop Eystein, 327—Mag-

nus takes the land in fief from St. Olaf, 327, 328—Magnus crowned, 328—King Valdemar's expedition to Norway, 328, 329—The rebellion of the Hood-Swains, 329—Battle of Djursaa, 330—Erling accepts an earldom from Valdemar, 330—Kills his stepson Harold, 332—Eystein Meyla and the Birchlegs, 333, 334—Childhood and youth of Sverre Sigurdsson, 334—337—Sverre becomes the chief of the Birchlegs, 337—Vicissitudes and adventures of the Birchlegs, 337—341—Battle of Kalvskindet, 341—343—Death of Erling Skakke, 343—Social revolution inaugurated by Sverre, 343—345—Battle at Nordness, 346—Warfare between Birchlegs and Heklungs, 346—348—Battle of Norefjord and death of Magnus, 348, 349.

## XXIV.

## SVERRE SIGURDSSON . . . . . 350—378

A dangerous precedent, 350—Erik Kingsson, 351—The lawmen and prefects, 351, 352—The new democracy, 352, 353—Rebellion of the Kuvlungs, 353, 354; the Varbelgs, 354; and the Oyeskeggs, 354—357—Sverre's controversy with the Church, 357, 358—Nicholas Arnesson, 358—Sverre is put in the ban, 359—Origin of the Bagler party, 360, 361—Nicholas shows the white feather, 361—Treason of Thorstein Kugad, 362—The Baglers besiege the blockhouse in Bergen, 362—365—Burning of Bergen, 365—The traitor's return, 366—The Papal bull and Sverre's defence, 366—368—The Bagler's defeated at Strindsö, 369—The great peasant rebellion, 370—373—Sverre's magnanimity, 374—Aristocracy *versus* Democracy, 374, 375—Siege and surrender of Tunsberg, 375, 376—Death of Sverre, 376, 377—His character, 377, 378.

## XXV.

## HAAKON SVERRESSON . . . . . 379—384

Peace with the Church, 379—Popularity of Haakon, 380—Discontent of the queen-dowager, 381—Abduction of Princess Christina, 381, 382—The fatal Yule-tide feast, 382, 383—Death of Haakon by poison, 383—Flight of Queen Margaret, 384.

## XXVI.

## GUTTORM SIGURDSSON AND INGE BAARDSSON, 385-399

The Bagler troop reorganized under Erling Stonewall, 385—Successful ordeal, 386—Death of Guttorm Sigurdsson by poison, 387—Inge Baardsson proclaimed king, 388—Society disorganized by the civil wars, 388, 389—Unbidden guests at the bridal feast, 389, 390—Philip Simonsson made king of the Baglers, 390—Birth and childhood of Haakon Haakonsson, 391, 392—Compromise of Hvitingsö, 393—The intrigues of Haakon Galen, 394, 395—Helge Hvasse and the boy Haakon, 396, 397—Discontent of the Birchlegs, 398—Death of King Inge, 399.

## XXVII.

## HAAKON HAAKONSSON THE OLD . . . . . 400-432

Haakon proclaimed king, 400—Rebellion of the Slittings, 401—Effects of the civil war, 401, 402—The intrigues of Earl Skule, 402-404—Inga of Varteig carries glowing irons, 404-406—Rebellion of the Ribbungs, 407, 408—Skule's double-dealing, 408-410—Assembly of notables in Bergen, 410—Bishop Nicholas' hypocrisy, 411—Sigurd Ribbung renews the rebellion, 412—Haakon's campaign in Vermeland, 412, 413—Duke Skule's leaky ships, 413—Death of Bishop Nicholas and Sigurd Ribbung, 414—Squire Knut as the chief of the Ribbungs, 416—Skule's "Crusade," 416, 417—Skule allies himself with Valdemar the Victorious, 417, 418—Skule called to account, 418-420—Intrigues at the Roman Curia, 420, 421—The plot revealed, 421, 422—Skule proclaims himself king, 423—Battle of Laaka, 424—Skule defeated at Oslo, 425—Death of Skule, 426, 427—Coronation of Haakon, 427-429—His power and fame at home and abroad, 429-431—Expedition to Scotland, and death, 431, 432.

## XXVIII.

## THE STURLUNGS IN ICELAND . . . . . 433-441

Snorre Sturlasson's *Heimskringla*, 433, 434—Snorre's parentage and youth, 434—Character of Snorre, 434—Reykjaholt, 436—Brother feuds, 436—Snorre's visit to Norway, 437—

Plots and counterplots, 437-440—Snorre's death, 440—  
Sturla Thordsson, 440, 441.

## XXIX.

## MAGNUS LAW-MENDER . . . . . 442-450

Cession of Man and the Shetland Isles to Scotland, 442—  
Reasons for and against the cession, 443—Condition of Ice-  
landic society and submission of the island to Norway, 444  
—Magnus as a law-giver, 445-447—The tribal aristocracy  
and the court nobility, 447, 448—Concessions to the Church,  
448, 449—Degeneracy of the old royal house, 450—Death  
of Magnus, 450.

## XXX.

## ERIK PRIEST-HATER . . . . . 451-456

The barons increase their power, 451—Quarrels with the  
clergy, 452—The false "Maid of Norway," 453—Depreda-  
tions of "Little Sir Alf," 453, 454—War with Denmark and  
the Hansa, 454, 455—Capture and death of Little Sir Alf,  
456—Death of King Erik, 456.

## XXXI.

## HAAKON LONGLEGS . . . . . 457-460

Sir Audun's treason, 457—The dukes Erik and Valdemar  
458—Complications with Sweden, 459—War with Denmark,  
460—Death of Haakon, 460.

## XXXII.

## MAGNUS SMEK, HAAKON MAGNUSSON, AND OLAF

## THE YOUNG . . . . . 461-466

Magnus Smek becomes king of Norway and Sweden, 461—  
Duchess Ingeborg's unpopularity, 461, 462—Discontent with  
Magnus, 462—Alliance with Valdemar Atterdag, 462, 463—  
Magnus deposed in Sweden, 463—Haakon's war with Al-  
brecht of Mecklenberg, 464—The power of the Hansa in  
Norway, 464—Death of Magnus, 465—The Black Death,  
465, 466—Olaf the Young, 466.

## XXXIII.

## NORWAY DURING THE KALMAR UNION . . . 467-474

Margaret unites the three kingdoms, 467-469—The Kalmar Union, 469, 470—Reasons for its disastrous consequences, 470-472—Death of Margaret, 472—Erik of Pomerania's misrule and extortions, 472, 473—Christopher of Bavaria, 473, 474.

## XXXIV.

## THE UNION WITH DENMARK . . . . . 475-488

The condition of Norway and Denmark during the union compared, 475, 476—Charles Knuttson elected king of Sweden, 478—Christian I.'s war with Charles Knutsson, 479, 480—Misrule in Norway, 480—The Scottish Isles pawned, 480, 481—King Hans, 481, 482—Christian II.'s accession, 482—His attempt to humble the nobility, 483—The carnage of Stockholm, 483, 484—His vain appeal to the bourgeoisie, 484, 485—Christian's flight, 485—Frederick I., 485, 486—Struggle about the succession, 486, 487—Christian III., 487, 488—Norway becomes a province of Denmark, 488.

## XXXV.

## NORWAY AS A PROVINCE OF DENMARK . . . 489-515

The Reformation introduced, 489, 490—The power of the Hansa broken, 490-492—Frederick II., 492-494—Christian IV.'s interest in Norway, 494—The Kalmar War, 495—Participation in the Thirty Years' War, 495, 496—The Hannibal's feud, 496—Frederick III.'s disastrous war with Sweden, 498—Absolutism introduced, 499, 500—Christian V., 500, 501—Frederick IV.'s accession, 501—The Great Northern War, 502-504—Tordenskjold, 503, 504—Christian VI., 506-508—Frederick V., 508—Christian VII., 508-512—The armed neutrality, 509, 510—Frederick VI. mounts the throne, 512—War with Sweden, 512, 513—Christian August as viceroy, 512-514—The Treaty of Paris, 513—Protest of the Norsemen, 514—Separation from Denmark, 515.

## XXXVI.

## NORWAY RECOVERS HER INDEPENDENCE . . . 516-538

Christian Frederick as viceroy, 516-518—Constitutional con-



vention at Eidsvold, 518-520—War with Sweden, 520, 521—Armistice at Moss, 521—Charles XIII. accepts the constitution, 522—Charles XIV. John becomes king of Norway, 522—His controversies with the *Storting*, 522-526—Henrik Wergeland, 526, 527—Count Wedel-Jarlsberg as viceroy, 527—Oscar I., 528-530—The character of the Norse peasantry, 528-530—Charles XV., 530, 531—Oscar II., and the constitutional struggle, 531-534—Impeachment of the ministry Selmer, 534—"The Pure Flag," 535—Present condition of Norway and her place among the nations, 536—Literature and science, 536-538.

## XXXVII.

## THE RECENT HISTORY OF NORWAY

539-553

The clergy, 539, 540—Sverdrup and the Liberal party, 540, 541—Movement to give Alexander Kjelland a State pension, 541, 542—Question of "open churches," 541—Indignation at the Government's action with regard to Christian Krohg's novel, "Albertine," 542—Proposal to increase the powers of Parish Councils, 542, 543—Cleavage in the Liberal party, 544—Suicide of Richter, dispute between Norway and Sweden over the French Exhibition and representation abroad, 545, 546, 547, 548—Introduction of the "Flag Bill," "Suffrage Bill," 549, 550—Literature, 550-553.



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE.
STONE AXES FROM THE LATER STONE AGE . . . . .	5
STONE USED FOR SHAPING INSTRUMENTS . . . . .	7
STONE HAMMER . . . . .	7
STONE KNIFE „ . . . . .	8
ADZE OF ELK-HORN . . . . .	9
STONE WEDGE . . . . .	9
ROCK PICTURE OF A SHIP AT LÖKEBERG . . . . .	10
ROCK PICTURE AT BORGEN . . . . .	11
BRONZE SWORD . . . . .	14
LOOR OR WAR HORN OF BRONZE . . . . .	15
BRONZE SWORD . . . . .	17
BUCKLES FROM THE EARLY IRON AGE . . . . .	19
THE VIKING SHIP RECENTLY UNEARTHED AT SANDEFJORD . . . . .	26
THE VIKING SHIP, VARIOUS VIEWS OF . . . . .	29
ST. ANSGARIUS THE APOSTLE OF THE NORTH . . . . .	33
IRON IMPLEMENT—USE UNKNOWN . . . . .	35
TWO-EDGED SWORD . . . . .	37
BUCKLE FROM THE IRON AGE . . . . .	39
RUIN OF NORSE TOWER AT MOSÖ . . . . .	43
BUCKLE WITH BYZANTINE ORNAMENTATION . . . . .	51
GILT BUCKLE FOUND AT SKEDSMO . . . . .	72
CYLINDRICAL MOUNTING IN BRONZE . . . . .	76
IRON POINT OF SPEAR, IRON CHISEL . . . . .	84
FRYING-PAN OF BRONZE . . . . .	89

	PAGE.
BREASTPIN OF BRONZE . . . . .	91
OVAL BRONZE BUCKLE . . . . .	93
EGIL WOOLSARK'S MONUMENT . . . . .	96
ORNAMENTAL BRONZE MOUNTING . . . . .	97
CHURCH AT EGILÖ . . . . .	103
SCISSORS AND ARROW-HEAD OF IRON . . . . .	107
HAROLD BLUETOOTH . . . . .	117
RUNESTONE FROM STRAND IN RYFYLKE . . . . .	121
OBLONG BUCKLE . . . . .	133
OLAF TRYGGVESSON'S ARRIVAL IN NORWAY . . . . .	141
OLD NORSE LOOM . . . . .	145
RUNIC STONE FROM GRAN IN HADELAND . . . . .	153
INSTRUMENT OF UNKNOWN USE . . . . .	155
OLD LOOM FROM THE FAEROE ISLANDS . . . . .	159
CHURCH AT MOSTER ISLAND . . . . .	167
SHUTTLES OF IRON AND WHALEBONE . . . . .	175
KNIVES OF IRON FOUND IN HEDEMARK AND HADE- LAND . . . . .	208
ST. OLAF FROM DRONTHEIM CATHEDRAL . . . . .	219
ST. OLAF AND THE TROLDS . . . . .	223
MAGNUS THE GOOD AND KALF ARNESSON AT STIKLESTAD . . . . .	235
MARBLE LION FROM THE PIRÆUS . . . . .	241
POMMEL OF GILT BRONZE FROM THE VIKING AGE . . . . .	250
THE OLD MAN OF HOY . . . . .	271
INTERIOR OF ORKHAUGEN . . . . .	279
HITTERDAL CHURCH . . . . .	299
VILLAGE DURING FISHING SEASON . . . . .	315
THE RAFT SUND IN VESTFJORD . . . . .	331
HORNELEN . . . . .	339
THORGHÄTTEN . . . . .	363
HÖNEFOSS . . . . .	371
VIEW ACROSS THE JORINGFJORD . . . . .	397
WEST FRONT OF DRONTHEIM CATHEDRAL . . . . .	403

*LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.*

xxx1

	PAGE.
OLD NORSE CAPITALS . . . . .	409
ON THE SOGNE FJORD . . . . .	415
A STORM ON THE FJORD . . . . .	419
NORWEGIAN STABBUR OR STORE-HOUSE . . . . .	431
NORWEGIAN SCENERY. LOOKING DOWN THE TRANDAL	435
ALMANNAGJAA WITH THE HILL OF LAWS . . . . .	439
QUEEN MARGARET . . . . .	471
CHRISTIAN I. . . . .	479
BELT WRESTLING . . . . .	491
THE NORTH CAPE . . . . .	493
FREDERICK III., KING OF DENMARK AND NORWAY . . . . .	497
THE CAPERCAILZIE IN NORWAY . . . . .	505
CARVED LINTEL, STABBUR, AND BEER-MUGS . . . . .	507
PEASANTS DANCING . . . . .	511
PRINCE CHRISTIAN FREDERICK, VICEROY OF NORWAY	517
CHARLES XIV. JOHN (BERNADOTTE) . . . . .	521
SKEE-RUNNING . . . . .	525
BRIDE AND GROOM . . . . .	529
PORTRAIT OF OSCAR II. . . . .	533
BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON . . . . .	537
A NORWEGIAN GLACIER. THE RINGDAL . . . . .	551





## INDEX.

### A

- Aabo, 514  
Aachen, 31, 32  
Aake, the Yeoman, 58  
Aal, Jacob, 518  
Aale Hallvardsson, 373  
Aaluf, 111  
Aamunde Gyrdsson, 312  
Aanrud, Hans, 552  
Aaros, 237  
Aasa, 32  
Aasa, Haakon Grjotgardsson's daughter, 60  
Aasbjörn Sigurdsson, 211, 212  
Aasbjörn of Medalhus, 92  
Aasen, Ivar, 538  
Aasgerd, wife of Egil Baldgrim's son, 78, 79  
Aasta, mother of Olaf the Saint, 182, 186, 187, 188, 199, 200, 240  
Aastrid, queen of Olaf the Saint, 197  
Aastrid, Olaf Tryggvesson's mother, 108, 109, 134, 135  
Aastrid, Olaf Tryggvesson's sister, 148  
Aastrid, daughter of Thirik, 153  
Aastrid, wife of Earl Sigvalde, 163, 171  
Aasulf of Austraat, 426  
Abel, mathematician, 538  
Absalon, Bishop, 330, 359, 379  
Adalbert of Bremen, 272  
Adeler, Kort, 500  
Aeger, 23  
Aelgifa, see Alfifa  
Aesir, 13, 14  
Africa, 32, 298  
Agdeness, 294, 300  
Agder, 32, 47, 147, 173, 324  
Agmund Skoftesson, 288  
Agnes, Queen of Denmark, 456  
Agnes, daughter of Haakon Longlegs, 478  
Agvaldsness, 95, 211  
Aker, 416, 492  
Akershus, 459, 481, 486, 503  
Akron, 293  
Albrecht of Mecklenburg, 463, 464, 467, 468, 469  
Alexander Newsky, 430  
Alexander IV., Pope, 430  
Alexander I., Emperor of Russia, 510, 514  
Alexander III., King of Scotland, 430, 442, 453  
Alexius I., Comnenus, 293  
Alexius III., Angelus, 360  
Alf Askman, 100  
Alf Erlingsson, 453-456  
Alf Guldbrandsson, 207  
Alfheim, 21  
Alfhild, mother of Magnus the Good, 230  
Alfifa, 225-229  
Alfonso the Wise, 430  
Alfvine, 137, 138  
Allogia, see Olga  
Almannagjaa, 439  
Alsted, 248  
Althing, 159, 436  
Amboise, 34  
America, 31, 179

- Amsterdam, 474  
 Amund Sigurdsson Bolt, 473  
 Andres Skjaldarband, 399, 423  
 Andvake, 372  
 Anglesey, 288  
 Anglo-Saxon, 41, 138, 147  
 Anker, Peder, 518  
 Anna Kolbjörnsdatter, 503  
 Ansgarius, St., 32  
 Anund, 145  
 Anund Jacob, King of Sweden,  
   198, 213, 214, 217, 218  
 Apostles, Church of the, 294  
 Arctic Circle, 494  
 Arinbjörn Thoresson, 78, 82, 85  
 Armfelt, General, 504, 512  
 Arnbjörn Jonsson, 413, 424  
 Arnmodlings, 255  
 Aryans, 1, 2, 3, 5  
 Asaheim, 13  
 Asgard, 13, 18, 19, 20, 23  
 Asgeir, 36  
 Asia, 1, 13, 240  
 Ask, 18  
 Askatin, 442  
 Aslak Erlingsson, 179  
 Aslak Rock-Skull, 124  
 Astrid, Sverre's first wife, 380  
 Audhumbla, 16  
 Audun Huggleiksson, 451, 457  
 Aun the Old, 45  
 Aura-Paul, 364  
 Austrian, 498
- B
- Baard, steward of Erik Blood-  
   Axe, 78, 79  
 Bagler, 360-401, 407, 413  
 Balder, 21, 22  
 Bald Grim, 57, 62, 63, 77, 78, 79  
 Baldwin, 293  
 Baltic, the, 94, 237, 277, 312, 463  
 Bank of Norway, 522  
 Beauvois, 36  
 Belts, the, 356  
 Bene Skindkniv, 401  
 Bengt Algotsson, 463  
 Beorthric, 41  
 Berg-Anund, 79, 80
- Bergen, 280, 294, 307, 309, 316,  
   323, 324, 327, 328, 345, 346,  
   347, 348, 349, 354, 356, 359,  
   362, 365, 366, 375, 376, 388,  
   390, 392, 398, 410, 413, 417,  
   420, 422, 424, 428, 429, 457,  
   462, 465, 473, 478, 480, 488,  
   492, 494, 506  
 Bergljot, 119, 178, 261, 264  
 Bergthor's Knoll, 158  
 Bernadotte, Jean Baptiste, 513,  
   515, 519-528, 531, 546  
 Bernsdorff, Andreas, 509  
 Bertrand of Tripolis, 293  
 Bevje-Aa, 320  
 Biadmuin, 289  
 Bifrost, 17  
 Birchlegs, 333-407, 414, 425, 426,  
   427  
 Birger, Earl of Götland, 333,  
   336, 337  
 Birger Magnusson, King of Swe-  
   den, 456, 458, 459, 461  
 Bjarkemaal, 221  
 Bjarkö, 211, 212, 451, 462  
 Bjarne Erlingsson, 451, 452  
 Bjarne Herjulfsson, 179  
 Bjelke, General, 498  
 Björgvin, see Bergen  
 Björn, King of Sweden, 196  
 Björn Egilsson, 311  
 Björn Ironside, 34  
 Björn, a peasant, 109  
 Björn the Merchant, 71, 182  
 Björn Stallare, 194, 195, 197,  
   218  
 Björnson, Björnstjerne, 535, 537,  
   538, 542, 544, 552  
 Björn, the yeoman, 77, 78, 79  
 Black Death, the, 465, 466  
 Blanca of Namur, 462, 463  
 Blekinge, 463, 498  
 Bör, 16  
 Bogesund, 483  
 Bohemia, 1  
 Borg, see Sarpsborg  
 Borgar-thing, 253, 361, 445  
 Borghild, daughter of Olaf of  
   Dal, 297  
 Bornhöved, 417

- Bornholm, 498  
 Brage, 22, 45, 120  
 Bratsberg, 155, 317  
 Bredablik, 21  
 Bremangerland, 339  
 Bremen, 147, 272  
 Brenn Islands, 231  
 Brigida, Harold Gille's daughter,  
     333  
 Brising, 23  
 Bristein, 354  
 Brömsebro, 496  
 Brunkeberg, 480  
 Brynjulf, 129  
 Bue the Big, 122-126  
 Bugge, Prof. Sophus, 153  
 Bull, Ole, 538  
 Bure, 16  
 Buris Henriksson, 330  
 Burislav, 136, 142, 154, 162  
 Buste, 110  
 Bute, 431  
 Byzantine, 360
- C
- Candor, Lay of, 234  
 Canterbury, 147  
 Cantire, 431  
 Cape Cod, 180, 181  
 Capercailzie, the, 505  
 Carolingians, 36  
 Carrara, 34  
 Catholic, 487, 489  
 Cecilia, second queen of Sigurd  
     the Crusader, 304  
 Cecilia, daughter of Sigurd  
     Mouth, 332, 336, 382  
 Celestin IV., Pope, 427  
 Charlemagne, 31, 32, 33, 230  
 Charles the Bald, 36  
 Charles the Simple, 64, 65  
 Charles Knutsson Peasant, 473,  
     478, 479, 480  
 Charles Sunesson, 312  
 Charles V., Emperor of Ger-  
     many, 483  
 Charles IX., King of Sweden,  
     495  
 Charles X. Gustavus, 498
- Charles XII., King of Sweden,  
     501, 502, 503  
 Charles XIII., 513, 520, 522  
 Charles XIV. John, see Berna-  
     dotte  
 Charles XV., King of Norway  
     and Sweden, 530, 531  
 Christ-Church, 284, 428  
 Christian I., 478-481  
 Christian II., 481-487  
 Christian III., 487-492  
 Christian IV., 494-496  
 Christian V., 500, 501  
 Christian VI., 506  
 Christian VII., 508  
 Christian VIII., see Christian  
     Frederick  
 Christian August, of Augusten-  
     borg, 512, 513  
 Christian Frederick, 515-522  
 Christiania, 256, 494, 503, 508,  
     522  
 Christiania Fjord, 46  
 Christiansand, 494  
 Christina, wife of Erling Skakke,  
     318, 322, 332  
 Christina, Sverre's daughter, 380,  
     381, 383, 384, 393  
 Christina, wife of Haakon Galen,  
     382, 384, 387, 395, 398, 410,  
     412  
 Christina, daughter of Haakon  
     the Old, 430  
 Christopher I., King of Den-  
     mark, 430, 453  
 Christopher of Bavaria, 473, 474,  
     478  
 Christopher, Count of Olden-  
     borg, 487  
 Churl's Head, the, 190, 191  
 Clement, St., 193, 227  
 Clyde, Firth of, 431  
 Constantinople, 240, 264, 293,  
     302, 376  
 Conqueror, see William the  
 Copenhagen, 219, 455, 459, 462,  
     477, 498, 499, 506, 509, 510  
 Count's Feud, the, 487, 490  
 Cowimen, see Kuvlungs  
 Crane, the, 157, 164, 165

Crimean War, the, 530  
 Crookmen, see Baglers  
 Curia, the Roman, 422, 452  
 Cuthbert, St., 42

## D

Dagfinn Peasant, 375, 404, 405  
 Dalarne, 472  
 Dale-Guldbrand, 207, 208, 210  
 Dalsland, 288  
 Dannebrog, the, 502  
 Dannevirke, 116  
 Dav, 332  
 Delling, 17  
 Dingeness, 113  
 Ditmarsken, 481  
 Djursaa, 258, 330  
 Domesday Book, 63  
 Donald Bane, 285  
 Donmouth, 42  
 Dorchester, 41  
 Dorestad, 36  
 Dovre Mountain, 286, 294, 300,  
 517  
 Drontheim, 54, 91, 92, 118, 121,  
 140, 148, 189, 219, 220, 403,  
 465, 478, 479, 492, 498, 504,  
 508, 517, 522  
 Drontheim Fjord, 54, 71, 107,  
 140, 362  
 Dublin, 38, 40, 139, 238  
 Dumbarton, 40  
 Durham, see Simeon of  
 Dutch, 474, 485, 495, 498, 500  
 Dynekilen, 503, 504

## E

Eadburg, 41  
 Eadgar the Etheling, 285  
 Eadwine, Earl, 268  
 Ecgfridh, 42  
 Edda, the Younger, 434  
 Edward the Confessor, 236  
 Edward I., 453  
 Egil Aaslaksson, 287  
 Egil, Bald Grim's son, 62, 77-84  
 Egil Woolsark, 96, 97  
 Eidsivia Law, the, 47, 210, 445  
 Eidskog, 337

Eidsvold, 70, 210, 414, 516, 518,  
 519, 520, 522, 532  
 Einar Thambarskelver, 162, 169,  
 170, 178, 179, 189, 190, 191,  
 192, 217, 227, 228, 229, 231,  
 232, 233, 236, 237, 238, 239,  
 243, 244, 246, 247, 249, 252,  
 254, 260, 261-265  
 Einar the Priest, 375  
 Eindride Einarsson, 238, 239, 264  
 Eindride the Young, 327, 328  
 Elgeseter, 426  
 Elivagar, 16  
 Ellisif, queen of Harold Hard-  
 Ruler, 242, 235, 260, 272, 274  
 Elsinore, 455  
 Embla, 18  
 Engelbrekt Engelbrektsson, 472,  
 473  
 England, 1, 12, 28, 31, 40, 41,  
 42, 43, 72, 79, 80, 81, 84, 88,  
 90, 91, 128, 137, 138, 139,  
 142, 147, 177, 179, 183, 184,  
 185, 207, 212, 213, 217, 228,  
 236, 268, 273, 276, 277, 278,  
 283, 287, 292, 347, 375, 443,  
 446, 447, 453, 454, 465, 509,  
 510, 512, 513, 514, 530  
 Enköping, 464  
 Erik, Archbishop, 358, 379, 387  
 Erik Blood-Axe, 68, 70-86, 88,  
 94, 95, 99, 102, 160, 182  
 Erik Eiegod, 288  
 Erik Eimundsson, 57, 58, 196  
 Erik Emune, 312  
 Erik Eriksson Lisp, King of  
 Sweden, 412  
 Erik Glipping, 453, 454  
 Erik Gudrödsson, 32  
 Erik Haakonsson, Earl, 119, 121-  
 127, 163-181, 184, 215, 254  
 Erik, King of Hórdeland, 52  
 Erik Kingsson, Earl, 351  
 Erik Magnusson, Duke, 458,  
 459, 461  
 Erik Magnusson, son of Magnus  
 Smek, 462, 463  
 Erik Mened, 455  
 Erik of Ofrestad, 108  
 Erik Plowpenny, 453



- Erik of Pomerania, 467-474  
 Erik Priest-Hater, 451-456, 459  
 Erik the Red, Archbishop, 179, 181  
 Erik the Saint, 380  
 Erik the Victorious, King of Sweden, 152, 196  
 Erik the Younger, King of South Jutland, 68  
 Erlend of Husaby, 391  
 Erlend Haakonsson, 129, 130  
 Erling Eriksson, 106  
 Erling Haakonsson, 121, 123, 128  
 Erling Skakke, Earl, 318, 319, 322-343, 350, 355, 357, 360  
 Erling Skjalgsson of Sole, 148, 162, 164, 174, 176, 178, 179, 190, 192, 210, 211, 212, 216, 217, 318  
 Erling Stonewall, 385, 386, 387, 390  
 Erling Vidkunsson, 462  
 Erne, Loch, 38  
 Ernst, Herzog, 242  
 Eskil Lawman, 412  
 Essex, 138  
 Esthonia, 135, 196  
 Estrid, daughter of Sweyn Forkbeard, 236  
 Ethelred II., 138, 139, 183  
 Ethelstan, 72, 73, 79, 80, 85, 150  
 Eugene III., Pope, 320  
 Euphemia of Arnstein, 457, 459  
 Europe, 465, 483, 523, 526, 527, 538  
 Eystein, Earl of Hedemark and Vestfold, 76  
 Eystein Erlendsson, 327, 347, 354, 357, 358  
 Eystein Haroldsson, 314-317  
 Eystein Magnusson, 291-301, 317, 329  
 Eystein Meyla, 333, 334, 336  
 Eystein Orre, 255, 270  
 Eyvind Kinriva, 154, 156, 157  
 Eyvind Lambe, 57, 59  
 Eyvind Scald-Spoiler, 98, 99, 100, 105, 154  
 Eyvind Skreya, 79, 100
- F
- Faeroe Isles, 40, 43, 158, 159  
 320, 333, 334, 336, 380  
 Falköping, 468  
 Fall River, 180  
 Falsen, Judge, 518  
 Falsterbro, 466  
 Fenris-Wolf, 21, 23  
 Fensal, 22  
 Finland, 196, 512, 513  
 Finmark, 74, 173, 495, 506  
 Finn Arnesson, 255, 265, 266, 267  
 Finn Eyvindsson, 170  
 Finns, 3, 50, 61, 67, 74, 278, 295  
 Fitje, 98  
 Fjölne, 45  
 "Flag Bill," 549  
 Flanders, 28  
 Flensburg, 472  
 Florsvaag, 356  
 Folden, 46, 190, 256, 320, 425  
 Folkvang, 23  
 Folkvid the Lawman, 332, 336, 382  
 Fontenelle, 36  
 Formentera, 292  
 Fors, 317  
 Forsete, 22  
 Fraedöe, 96  
 France, I, 36, 43, 64, 137, 277, 430, 509, 527, 530  
 Fredensborg, 504  
 Frederick, Count Palatine, 487, 488  
 Frederick I., 485, 486  
 Frederick II., Emperor of Germany, 418, 430  
 Frederick II., King of Denmark and Norway, 492  
 Frederick III., 496-500  
 Frederick IV., 501, 502, 506  
 Frederick V., 508  
 Frederick VI., 509-516  
 Frederickshald, 500, 503  
 Frederickshamn, 513  
 Frederickstad, 492  
 Fredericksteen, 503, 504, 520  
 Freke, 20  
 Frey, 21, 45, 144, 150, 207

- Freya, 22, 23  
 Freydis, 181  
 Fridkulla, 288  
 Frigg, 22  
 Frisian, 205  
 Frosta-thing, 88, 91, 92, 149,  
 359, 445  
 Frosten, 150, 189  
 Fulford, 268  
 Funen, 245, 455, 498  
 Fuxerne, 288  
 Fyrileiv, 307
- G
- Gahn, Colonel, 520  
 Gall, St., 32  
 Gallia Narbonensis, 32  
 Gamle Eriksson, 94, 97  
 Gardarike, see Russia  
 Gaudale, 129, 341  
 Gaule, 79  
 Gaul River, see Gula Elv  
*Gauter*, see Goths  
 Gautland, 118, 152  
 Geira, 136, 162  
 Georgios Maniakas, 240, 242  
 Gerd, 21  
 Gere, 20  
 German, 3, 25, 31, 44, 430, 464,  
 468, 471, 480, 483, 488, 492,  
 494, 495, 496, 501, 506, 508,  
 521  
 Germany, 115, 277, 430, 457,  
 465, 496, 530  
 Ginnungagap, 16  
 Giske, 451, 462, 481  
 Gisla, wife of Duke Rollo, 65  
 Gissur the White, 127  
 Gissur the White, 158  
 Gissur Thorvaldsson, Earl, 440,  
 444  
 Gjallar Bridge, 21  
 Gjallar Horn, 21, 22  
 Gjeble Pedersson, Bishop, 490  
 Glommen, 194  
 Godfrey the Hunter, see Guðrød  
 Gold-Harold, 112, 113  
 Goldlegs, 356  
 Gorm the Old, 53, 86, 214
- Götha Elv., 231, 257, 259, 260  
 Götland, 333  
 Gottland, 463, 473, 496  
 Goths, 3  
 Gran, 153  
 Great Northern War, the, 502  
 Greece, 137, 138  
 Greeks, 3, 44, 240, 293  
 Greenland, 158, 179, 180, 181,  
 320, 430  
 Gregorius Dagsson, 316, 317-320  
 Gregory IX., Pope, 421, 427  
 Grib, Peter, 504  
 Grieg, J., 538  
 Griffenfeld, 501  
 Grim, see Bald Grim  
 Grim Keikan, 423  
 Grimkel, Bishop, 207, 227  
 Grjotgard Haakonsson, 106  
 Gude, J., 538  
 Gudleik Gerdskje, 278  
 Gudny Bödvar's daughter, 434  
 Gudolf of Blakkestad, 407  
 Gudrid, wife of Thorfinn Karls-  
 evne, 181  
 Guðrød Björnsson, 88, 102, 105,  
 107  
 Guðrød Eriksson, 104, 107, 113,  
 160  
 Guðrød Haroldsson, 60  
 Guðrød the Hunter, 31, 32, 46  
 Guðrød, King of Hadeland, 199  
 Guðrød, King of the Hebrides,  
 320  
 Guðrød Ljome, 68, 69  
 Guðrød Meranagh, 286  
 Gudrun, daughter of Ironbeard,  
 152  
 Gudrun Lundarsol, 129  
 Gula Elv, 120, 465  
 Gula-thing, 79, 89, 210, 445  
 Guldberg, Ove, 508  
 Guldbandsdale, 207, 208, 210,  
 245, 495, 517  
 Gungner, 20  
 Gunhild, Queen of Erik Blood-  
 Axe, 74-86, 94, 95, 99, 100,  
 101, 102, 104-114, 130, 134  
 Gunhild, mother of Sverre, 334  
 Gunnar of Gimse, 311

Gunnar Grjonbak, 352  
 Gunvor, 153  
 Gustavus Adolphus, 495, 496  
 Gustavus IV., 512  
 Gustavus Trolle, 483  
 Gustavus Wasa, 484, 487  
 Guttorm, Archbishop, 400, 410, 411  
 Guttorm Eriksson, 94, 95  
 Guttorm Haroldsson, 60  
 Guttorm Ingesson, 395  
 Guttorm, son of Sigurd Hjort, 47, 48, 52, 53, 62  
 Guttorm Sigurdsson, 385, 387  
 Guttorm Sigurdsson, 199, 200  
 Guttorm Sindre, 71  
 Gyda, wife of Harold the Fair-haired, 52, 53, 59, 60  
 Gyda, wife of Olaf Tryggvesson, 137, 142, 228  
 Gyldestjerne, Knut, 486

## II

*Haakonarmaal*, 101  
 Haakon Eriksson, Earl, 178, 179, 184-186, 215-218  
 Haakon Galen, 377, 382-398, 402, 410, 412, 414  
 Haakon Grjotgardsson, 56, 60  
 Haakon, Gunhild's emissary, 109  
 Haakon Haakonsson the Old, 391-433, 437-444  
 Haakon Ivarsson, 259, 264-268  
 Haakon Jonsson, Lord High Steward, 467  
 Haakon Longlegs, 451, 456, 457-461  
 Haakon Magnusson, son of King Magnus Haroldsson, 274, 285, 286  
 Haakon Magnusson, son of King Magnus Smek, 461-466  
 Haakon Paulsson, 287  
 Haakon Sigurdsson, Earl, 106, 107, 110-134, 139, 163, 166, 173, 254, 261  
 Haakon Sverresson, King of Norway, 370, 377, 379-385, 391, 404  
 Haakon the Broad-Shouldered, 316, 319, 320, 322-326  
 Haakon the Good, 72, 73, 80, 87-101, 105, 106, 150, 160, 294, 446  
 Haakon the Old, a Swedish Peasant, 110, 134  
 Haalogaland, 56, 60, 148, 154, 155, 158, 211, 366  
 Haarek Gand, 48  
 Haarek Haroldsson, 60  
 Haarek of Thjotta, 148, 154-156, 158, 233  
 Haavard the Hower, 124, 127  
 Hadeland, 50, 51, 153, 199, 203  
 Hadrian IV., Pope, see Nicholas Breakspere  
 Hadulaik, 121  
 Hafrs-Fjord, 59, 60, 63  
 Hagustald, 121  
 Hake, a Berserk, 47, 48  
 Haldor Brynjulfsson, 320  
 Halfdan Haalegg (Longlegs) 68, 69  
 Halfdan Sigurdsson, 199, 200  
 Halfdan the Swarthy, Gudröds-son, 32, 46-52, 318, 432  
 Halfdan the Swarthy, Haralds-son, 60, 71, 72, 76  
 Halfdan the White, 60  
 Halfdan Whiteleg, 46  
 Halland, 214, 266, 267, 273, 307, 418, 453, 454, 460, 462, 463, 498  
 Hallkel Agmundsson, 451, 452, 456  
 Hallkel Jonsson, 355, 356  
 Hall of the Side, 158  
 Hallvard Vebjörnsson, St., 256, 322  
 Hals, 258  
 Hamar, 321, 420, 421, 492  
 Hamburg, 32  
 Hampshire, 138  
 Hamson, Knut, 552  
 Hannibal's Feud, 496  
 Hans, King of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, 481, 482  
 Hans, son of Frederick I., 487  
 Hans Kolbjörnsson, 503  
 Hansa, see Hanseatic League

- Hanseatic League, 453, 454, 455,  
 460, 464, 474, 480, 485, 490,  
 509  
 Hansteen, astronomer, 538  
 Hardeland, 41  
 Harold, Earl of the Orkneys, 355  
 Harold, grandson of Sigurd the  
 Crusader, 332  
 Harold Bluetooth, 86, 94, 95,  
 110-120, 138, 161, 410  
 Harold Gille, 303-311, 313, 314,  
 320, 322, 333, 337, 346, 382,  
 386  
 Harold Godwinson, 268, 269,  
 272  
 Harold Greyfell, 94, 100, 102-  
 114  
 Harold Grönske, 152, 182  
 Harold Hard-Ruler, 199, 200,  
 201, 221, 240-274, 278, 283,  
 286, 308  
 Harold Ingesson, 349  
 Harold the Fairhaired, 31, 49,  
 50-74, 87, 88, 99, 105, 130,  
 134, 139, 140, 152, 155, 174,  
 176, 177, 182, 183, 187, 188  
 198, 201, 226, 231, 245, 251,  
 252, 256, 275, 276, 318, 350,  
 378, 433, 460  
 Harthaknut, 229, 231, 234, 236  
 Hastings, 34, 35, 36  
 Hastings, 272  
 Haug, 232  
 Hauk, 155  
 Haukby, 284  
 Hebrides, 40, 43, 63, 288, 311,  
 312, 394, 480  
 Hedemark, 48, 51, 76, 203, 210  
 Heiberg, Gunnar, 550, 553  
 Heidaby, 257  
 Heimdal, 22  
 Heimskringla, 13, 45, 433, 440  
 Hekla, 465  
 Heklungs, 345-348  
 Hel, 23, 24  
 Helge Hvasse, 396, 397  
 Helge-aa, 215  
 Helgeness, 237  
 Helgeö, 413, 421  
 Helheim, 24  
 Hellenes, 1  
 Helluland, 180  
 Heming Haakonsson, 119  
 Henrik of Schwerin, 410  
 Henry I., King of England, 292  
 Hercules, Pillars of, 34  
 Heredhaland, 41  
 Herjedale, 496  
 Herlaug, King in Naumdale, 54  
 Herluf Hyttefad, 482  
 Hettesveiner, see Hood-Swains  
 Himinbjarg, 22  
 Hindoos, 2, 3  
 Hingsavl, 455  
*Hirskraa*, 445  
 Hitterdale Church, 299  
 Hjalte Skeggesson, 194  
 Hjörungavaag, 121, 122  
 Hlade, 127, 132, 148, 149, 152, 189  
 Hnos, 23  
 Höder, 22  
 Höfudlausn, 85  
 Högne Langbjörnsson, 262, 263  
 Höland, 502  
 Hönefoss, 371  
 Höner, 18  
 Hörda-Kaare, 318  
 Hördeland, 52, 98, 140, 147, 324  
 Hörgadal, 435  
 Holberg, Ludvig, 506  
 Holland, 485, 488  
 Holmengraa, 313  
 Holstein, 485, 496, 501, 515, 530  
 Holy Land, 171, 218, 292, 298,  
 308, 376  
 Hood-Swains, 329  
 Hornboresund, 312  
 Hornelen, 339  
 Hrimfaxe, 17  
 Hugditrich, 242  
 Hugin, 20  
 Humber, 81  
 Hvergelmer, 16  
 Hvitingsöe, 393, 400  
 Hyrning, 161, 162

## I

- Ibsen, Henrik, 535, 538, 550  
 Iceland, 40, 44, 62, 63, 77, 79,  
 80, 85, 146, 158, 159, 202, 320,  
 430, 433-441, 443, 444, 465

- Icolmkill, 38  
 Ida, plain of, 20  
 Idun, 22  
 Ilevolds, 296, 345  
 India, 2  
 Inga of Varteig, 391, 404, 405  
 Inge Baardsson, 284, 385-400, 402  
 Inge Crookback, 311-321, 323, 349, 353, 358  
 Inge, chief of the Baglers, 360, 361, 380, 421  
 Inge, King of Sweden, 288  
 Ingeborg, queen of Magnus Law-Mender, 451, 452, 453, 454  
 Ingeborg, daughter of Erik Priest-Hater, 456, 459  
 Ingeborg, daughter of Haakon Longlegs, 458, 459, 461  
 Ingegerd, daughter of Harold Hard-Ruler, 268, 272  
 Ingegerd, daughter of Olaf the Swede, 195, 197, 217, 218  
 Inger of Oestraat, 485  
 Ingerid, Queen of Harold Gille, 311, 314, 386  
 Ingjald Ill-Ruler, 45  
 Ingrid, queen of Olaf the Quiet, 274  
 Innocent III., Pope, 366, 379  
 Innocent IV., Pope, 429  
 Iona, 38  
 Iranians, 2  
 Ireland, 1, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 138, 228, 277, 287, 289, 295, 303, 309  
 Irishman, 303, 304, 313  
 Iron Ram, 169  
 Ironbeard, 149, 151, 152  
 Irip, Valkyria, 123  
 Isabella Bruce, queen of Erik Priest-Hater, 456  
 Isabella, queen of Christian II., 483  
 Italic tribes, 1, 3  
 Italy, 292  
 Ivar, King in Limerick, 40  
 Ivar Assersson, 307, 308  
 Ivar Darre, 348  
 Ivar of Fljod, 295  
 Ivar Steig, 349  
  
 J  
 Jaabæk, Sören, 528  
 Jacob, Count of Halland, 454  
 Jaederen, 59  
 James III., King of Scotland, 480  
 Jaroslav, 217, 218, 240, 242  
 Jaxartes, 1  
 Jemteland, 194, 198, 294, 300, 459, 496, 498  
 Jerusalem, 233, 291, 293  
 Jews, 32, 44, 530  
 Jösse Eriksson, 472  
 Johan Karl, 546  
 Johannes, see Hans  
 Jomsborg, 120, 237  
 Jomsvikings, 120-128, 163  
 Jon Birgersson, Archbishop, 321  
 Jon, chief of the Kuvlungs, 353  
 Jon Kutiza, 345  
 Jon Loftsson, 434  
 Jon the Red, Archbishop, 448, 452  
 Jonvolds, 365  
 Juliana Maria, queen of Frederick V., 508  
 Jumièges, 36  
 Jutland, 41, 68, 95, 116, 236, 237, 257, 324, 330, 453, 485, 495, 496, 498  
  
 K  
 Kalf Arnesson, 217, 222, 228, 229, 231, 232, 233, 235, 255, 265, 266  
 Kalfsund, 459  
 Kalmar, 301, 455, 467, 469, 470, 479, 495  
 Kalvskindet, 343, 344, 345  
 Karelen, 196  
 Kark, 130, 131, 132  
 Karlsevne, 181  
 Karshoved, 190  
 Kelts, 1  
 Kent, 138  
 Ketil Calf, 190, 199

- Keyser, Rudolf, 538  
 Kiel, 515, 516, 520, 523  
 Kielland, Alexander, 538  
 King's Mirror, 441  
 Kirkevaag, 432  
 Kjelland, Alexander, 541  
 Kjögebugt, 502  
 Kjölen, 4  
 Klerkon, 135, 136  
 Klypp Thorsson, 111  
 Knaeröd, 495  
 Knut Alfsson, 481  
 Knut Eriksson, King of Sweden,  
   358, 385  
 Knut Haakonsson (Squire K.),  
   396, 410, 416, 424, 425  
 Knut the Mighty, 179, 185, 212-  
   218, 225, 226, 229, 231, 232,  
   236, 243, 261, 268  
 Knut Porse, 461  
 Knut VI., King of Denmark,  
   368  
 Kolbjörn Stallare, 171  
 Kolbjörn the Strong, 209  
 Konghelle, 152, 198, 274, 288,  
   310, 319  
 Kongsberg, 494, 503  
 Krag, Vilhelm, 553  
 Krebs, Colonel, 502  
 Kringen, 495  
 Krogh, Christian, 526, 542  
 Krokaskogen, 313  
 Krummedike, Hartvig, 477  
 Krummedike, Henrik, 481, 482  
 Krupp, 536  
 Kruse, Colonel, 502  
 Kurland, 196  
 Kuvlungs, 353, 354  
 Kveld-Ulf, 56-63, 77
- L
- Laaka, 424, 425  
 Labrador, 180  
 Laerdal, 119  
 Landnama Book, 63  
 Laps 3, 495  
 Largs, 431  
 "Lars," 491  
 Latin, 378  
 Leif Eriksson, 179, 180, 181  
 Leipsic, 515
- Lesö, 257  
 Lie, Jonas, 538  
 Lie, Sophus, 538  
 Lier, 520  
 Limerick, 40  
 Lim Fjord, 258  
 Lindesness, 173, 179, 210, 531  
 Lindholm, 468  
 Lindisfarena, 42  
 Lodin, 135, 143  
 Lodur, 18  
 Löwen, Colonel, 563  
 Löwenskjold, 527  
 Lofoten, 315, 331  
 Loire, 34  
 Loke, 23  
 London, 73, 538  
 Long-Serpent, The, 162, 164-  
   169  
 Lothair, 37  
 Louis the German, 32, 37  
 Louis the Pious, 32  
 Louis IX., 430  
 Louis XIV., 500  
 Löwenhaupt, Count, 545, 547  
 Lübeck, 457, 486, 487, 490, 495  
 Luna, 34  
 Lunge, Vincentz, 477, 485, 487,  
   488  
 Luther, 485, 486  
 Lutheran, 489, 490, 506, 519  
 Lutter and Barenberge, 495  
 Lützwow, General, 503  
 Lykke, Nils, 485  
 Lyrskogs Heath, 237
- M
- Maelsechnail, King of Meath, 38,  
   39  
 Magne, Bishop, 304, 305  
 Magnus Barefoot, 285-290, 295,  
   303, 308  
 Magnus Birgerson Barnlock,  
   King of Sweden, 449, 455, 456,  
   458  
 Magnus Birgerson, the Younger,  
   459, 461  
 Magnus Eriksson Smek, King  
   of Norway and Sweden, 461-  
   465

- Magnus Erlingsson, King of Norway, 323-349, 351, 355, 356, 385, 388, 401, 427, 428  
 Magnus Haroldsson, 273, 274  
 Magnus Law-Mender, 442-451, 453, 457, 494  
 Magnus the Blind, 297, 305-313  
 Magnus the Good, 218, 229-250, 251, 254, 255, 265  
 Maid of Norway, The, 453, 457  
 Malcolm, 285  
 Malmfrid, 302, 304  
 Man, island of, 288, 289, 320, 394, 442  
 Maniakes, see Georgios  
 Marcus of Skog, 326, 327  
 Margaret, see Maid of Norway  
 Margaret, queen of Magnus Barefoot, 288  
 Margaret, queen of Sverre, 358, 362, 381, 382, 383  
 Margaret, queen of Haakon the Old, 407, 413  
 Margaret, queen of Erik Priest-Hater, 452  
 Margaret, Reigning Queen of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, 462, 463, 466, 467-472  
 Margaret, daughter of Christian I., 480  
 Maria, relative of the Empress Zoë, 242  
 Maria, daughter of Harold Hard-Ruler, 268, 272  
 Maria, daughter of Harold Gille, 322  
 Markere, Earl, 268  
 Markland, 180  
 Massachusetts, 180, 181  
 Mathias, Bishop, 334, 335  
 Matrand, 521  
 Mecklenburg, 410, 463, 467, 469  
 Medalhus, 130  
 Mediterranean, 318  
 Michael, Church of St., 294  
 Military Academy, 508  
 Mimer, 18  
 Minne, 311  
 Mjoiner, 20  
 Mjösen, 199, 321, 380, 408, 413, 421  
 Molière, 506  
 Mönnikhofen, Coløhel, 435  
 Möre, 56, 59, 64, 69, 130, 150  
 Moors, 292, 300  
 Mora, 197  
 Moss, 521  
 Moster, 72, 140, 158, 167  
 Mosterö, 167  
 Motzfeldt, Captain, 518  
 Muirkertach, 286, 289  
 Munch, P. A., Prof., 378, 538  
 Munin, 20  
 Munk, Erik, 492  
 Munk, Ludvig, 492  
 Munkeliv, 294, 480  
 Muspelheim, 16, 17  
  
 N  
 Nanna, Balder's wife, 21  
 Napoleon I., 510, 513, 515, 519, 520, 526  
 Naumdale, 54  
 Nessje, 190  
 New England, 181  
 Nicholas Arnesson, Bishop, 358-362, 365, 366, 374, 380, 386, 388, 390, 393, 407, 411, 413, 414  
 Nicholas Breakspeare, Cardinal, 320, 321  
 Nicholas, Church of St., 294  
 Nicholas Simonsson, 322, 324  
 Nid River, 140  
 Nidarholm, 308  
 Nidaros, 148, 156, 189, 192, 207, 213, 215, 227, 232, 253, 260, 262, 274, 284, 286, 294, 311, 320, 324, 334, 338, 341, 345, 347, 354, 361, 362, 366, 368, 369, 381, 384, 387, 389, 390, 392, 400, 404, 413, 416, 422, 424, 426  
 Nidhögger, 16, 18  
 Nifheim, 16, 18  
 Nils Henriksson, 485  
 Nimwegen, 36  
 Nis-aa, 259-266

- Njaal, 158  
 Njord, 21, 22, 23  
 Noatun, 21  
 Nordfjord, 339  
 Nordhordland, 309  
 Nordland, 363  
 Nordmore, 96, 193, 287, 366  
 Nordness, 346  
 Nordraak, Richard, 538  
 Norefjord, 348, 349  
 Normandy, 64  
 Normans, 12  
 Norns, 18  
 Northampton, 225  
 North Cape, 411, 493, 531  
 North Sea, 184, 258, 336  
 Northumberland, 41, 80, 81, 137, 268, 269  
 Nortmannia, 31  
 Norway's Lion, 527  
 Norway's Welfare, Society for, 514  
 Nyborg, 498  
 Nyköping, 459
- O
- Odd, 22  
 Oder, 120  
 Odin, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 45, 46, 84, 118, 123, 128, 144, 150, 205, 207  
 Oelve Nuva, 57, 59  
 Oelve of Egge, 207  
 Oerebro, 513  
 Oere-thing, 140, 229, 230, 246, 253, 322, 323, 334, 346, 380, 388, 395, 396, 400, 423  
 Offa, 41  
 Ofrestad, 108, 109  
 Oieren, Lake, 329  
 Olaf, son of Harold the Fair-haired, 76  
 Olaf, Chief of the Oyeskeggs, 355  
 Olaf of Dal, 297  
 Olaf Engelbrektsson, Archbishop, 488  
 Olaf Kvaran, 137  
 Olaf Magnusson, 291, 296, 301  
 Olaf Nilsson, Sir, 479, 480  
 Olaf the Quiet, 268, 272-285, 293, 294  
 Olaf the Saint, 49, 179, 182-224, 227-232, 248, 252, 255, 261, 267, 275, 278, 282, 293, 294, 318, 327, 357, 396, 400, 423, 428  
 Olaf the Swede, 152, 163, 166, 173, 192, 193, 194, 195, 197  
 Olaf Tryggvesson, 108, 130-174, 177, 178, 179, 182, 183, 184, 187, 188, 189, 195, 198, 205, 206, 218, 228, 318, 446  
 Olaf the Unlucky, 329, 332  
 Olaf the White, 40  
 Olaf the Woodcutter, 46, 57  
 Olaf the Young, 461, 466  
 Oidenborg, 475, 476, 478, 487, 494  
 Ole the Russian, 136  
 Olga, 136, 137, 142  
 Oplands, 88, 174, 188, 190, 199, 210, 267, 268, 285, 287, 329, 370, 393, 400, 413, 416, 422, 424, 445  
 Ordinance, the, 489, 494  
 Orient, the, 242  
 Orkdale, 54, 189  
 Orkhaugen, 279  
 Orkneys, 40, 43, 63, 69, 88, 113, 114, 127, 176, 233, 268, 272, 279, 288, 289, 308, 355, 394, 430, 432, 457, 481  
 Orm Jonsson, 437  
 Orm King's-Brother, 346, 349  
 Orm Lyrgja, 129  
 Oscar I., 528-530 [549  
 Oscar II., 531, 538, 543, 547, 548,  
 Oslo, 256, 306, 312, 320, 322, 323, 359, 361, 369, 370, 381, 383, 390, 411, 413, 414, 425, 426, 456, 459, 492  
 Ottar Birting, 302, 303, 314, 316  
 Otto I., Emperor of Germany, 115  
 Otto II., Emperor of Germany, 115  
 Oxus, the, 1  
 Oyeskeggs, 355, 356, 357, 360



## P

Paderborn, 31  
 Paris, 36, 513, 520, 538  
 Paul, Bishop of Hamar, 420, 421  
 Paul, Earl of the Orkneys, 288  
 Persia, 2  
 Peter III., Emperor of Russia, 508  
 Peter Kolbjörnsson, 503  
 Peter of Husastad, 411  
 Peter Skulesson, 423  
 Peter, St., 427  
 Peter Steyper, 377, 381, 382, 388  
 Philip, Don, 430  
 Philip Simonsson, 386, 390, 393, 400, 401  
 Piraeus, 241  
 Poland, 498, 502  
 Pomerania, 163, 473, 513  
 Pontecorvo, 513  
 Prestebakke, 512  
 Protestantism, 487, 495  
 Prussia, 136, 163  
 Pultawa, 501

## R

Rafnista race, 56  
 Raft Sund, 331  
 Ragnar, a viking, 36  
 Ragnar Lodbrok, 34, 198, 214, 231, 236  
 Ragnfred Eriksson, 113  
 Ragnhild, queen of Harold the Fairhaired, 68  
 Ragnhild, queen of Halfdan the Swarthy, 47, 48  
 Ragnhild, daughter of Magnus the Good, 265, 266, 267  
 Ragnvald, Earl of Möre, 56, 59, 64, 69  
 Ragnvald, son of Erik Blood-Axe, 80  
 Ragnvald Rettilbeine, 68, 71  
 Ragnvald, Earl of Vestergötland, 195  
 Ran, 25  
 Ranafylke, 317  
 Randsfjord, 51, 108

Ranrike, 57, 173, 284  
 Ratibor, 310  
 Raud the Strong, 156, 157, 162  
 Raumarike, 46, 51, 173, 199, 210  
 Raumsdale, 193  
 Reas, 135  
 Ree, 327, 334, 338, 433  
 Reformation, the, 486  
 Reidar Grjotgardsson, 313  
 Reidar Messenger, 360, 361, 375, 376, 380  
 Reidulf, a Birchleg, 389  
 Rein, 416  
 Reinald, Bishop, 308  
 Revolution, the French, 509, 524  
 Revolution, the July, 527  
 Reykjaholt, 436, 440  
 Rhine, The, 37  
 Ribbings, 407, 408, 412-416  
 Richard the Fearless, Duke of Normandy, 65  
 Richard the Good, Duke of Normandy, 65  
 Richter, 543, 544, 545  
 Rimul, 131, 140  
 Ring, King, 188  
 Ringeness, 190, 199  
 Ringerike, 47, 51, 183, 186, 199, 244, 503  
 Robert Bruce, 456  
 Robert Guiscard, 292  
 Robert the Magnificent, Duke of Normandy, 65  
 Robin Hood, 341  
 Roe, Bishop, 335, 380  
 Rörek, King, 188, 199, 201, 202, 206  
 Rörek, Viking, 36  
 Rogaland, 174, 324  
 Roger, Duke, 292  
 Rolf the Walker, see Rollo  
 Rollaug, King in Naumdale, 54  
 Rollo, Duke of Normandy, 56, 64, 65  
 Rome, I, 31, 34, 36, 171, 214, 308, 359, 421, 422, 438  
 Roskilde, 498  
 Rostock, 469  
 Rother, King, 242  
 Rouen, 36  
 Rousseau, 508

- Rügen, 163  
 Russia, I, 134-137, 142, 192, 217,  
 218, 229, 232, 239, 240, 277,  
 501, 502, 508, 509, 510, 512,  
 513, 514, 515, 530  
 Rydjökel, 329  
 Ryfylke, 121
- S
- Saemund Jonsson, 436, 440  
 Saemund the Learned, 434  
 Saltö Sound, 346, 361  
 Sandness, 61  
 Saracens, 240, 318  
 Sarpen, 194,  
 Sarpsborg, 194, 197, 213, 391, 492  
 Sars, Prof., 538  
 Sars, J. E. Prof., 538  
 Saudung Sound, 185  
 Saurbygd, 337  
 Saxons, 51, 42, 146, 236  
 Scandinavia, 470  
 Schiller, Friedrich, 418  
 Sciences, Academy of, 508  
 Scotland, 40, 43, 80, 113, 114,  
 137, 268, 285, 287, 314, 431,  
 442, 443, 452, 456, 480  
 Seeland, 244, 248, 510  
 Sehested, Hannibal, 477, 496  
 Seine, The, 36  
 Sekken, 324  
 Selmer, Chr. August, Prime Min-  
 ister, 532, 534  
 Selven, 71  
 Serpent, The, 157  
 Shetland Islands, 43, 176, 355,  
 430, 442, 481  
 Short-Serpent, The, 162, 165  
 Sicily, 240, 241  
 Side-Hall, 238  
 Sidon, 293, 299  
 Sif, 21  
 Sigar of Brabant, 405  
 Sigfrid, King of Nortmannia, 31  
 Sigfrid Haroldsson, 60, 76  
 Sighvat Scald, 230, 234, 260, 261,  
 262  
 Sighvat Sturlasson, 436, 440  
 Sigmund Brestesson, 158  
 Sigrid the Haughty, 152, 154, 161  
 163, 169, 182  
 Sigrid, daughter of Earl Sweyn,  
 179  
 Sigrid, sister of Thore Hund,  
 212  
 Sigrid, wife of Ivar of Fljod,  
 295  
 Sigrid, wife of Haldor Brynjulfs-  
 son, 320  
 Sigtrygg, King in Waterford, 40  
 Sigurd, Bishop, 147, 157, 208,  
 211, 220  
 Sigurd of Haalogaland, 155  
 Sigurd Borgarklett, 362, 364  
 Sigurd the Crusader, 289, 291-  
 305, 309, 310, 313, 318, 323,  
 329, 332, 427  
 Sigurd, Earl of Hlade, 87, 90, 93,  
 95, 98, 102, 105, 106  
 Sigurd Eriksson, 134, 135  
 Sigurd Haakonsson, 121  
 Sigurd Hjort, 47, 48  
 Sigurd Jarlsson, 355-357, 360,  
 362, 364, 365  
 Sigurd Jonsson, 473, 478  
 Sigurd Lavard, 370, 380, 385  
 Sigurd Marcusfostre, 326  
 Sigurd Mouth, 311-321, 326, 327,  
 332, 334, 335, 336, 351, 382,  
 387, 388  
 Sigurd, alleged son of Magnus  
 Erlingsson, 355  
 Sigurd Ranesson, 295, 296, 297  
 Sigurd Ribbung, 407, 408, 410,  
 412, 414  
 Sigurd of Reyrr, 323, 324, 326,  
 327  
 Sigurd Rise, 68  
 Sigurd Sigurdsson, 307  
 Sigurd Slembedegn, 308, 309,  
 311-314  
 Sigurd Sleva, 104, 111  
 Sigurd Syr, 182, 183, 186-190,  
 192, 199, 221, 240  
 Sigurd Tavse, Archbishop, 421,  
 422  
 Sigurd Wool-String, 287  
 Sigvalde, Earl, 120, 123, 163,  
 164, 171

- Silgjord, 155  
 Simeon of Durham, 42  
 Simon Kaaresson, 354  
 Simon Skaalp, 317, 322  
 Sinclair, Colonel, 495, 518  
 Siric, Archbishop of Canterbury, 147,  
 Skaane, 214, 242, 259, 463, 466,  
 468, 498, 502, 513, 530  
 Skade, 21  
 Skage Skoftesson, 119  
 Skagen, 324  
 Skara Stift, 464  
 Skegge Aasbjörnsson, see Iron-  
 beard  
 Skinfaxe, 17  
 Skiringssal, 46, 51  
 Skraellings, 181  
 Skuld, 18  
 Skule Baardsson, Duke, 284, 395-  
 427, 432, 437, 438, 440  
 Skule Tostigsson, 283  
 Slavs, 1, 237  
 Sleipner, 20  
 Sleswick, 31, 237, 257, 472, 495,  
 530  
 Slittings, 401, 402, 404, 407  
 Smaaland, 301  
 Smaalenene, II  
 Snarfare, 62  
 Snefrid, wife of Harold the Fair-  
 haired, 67, 68, 71, 183  
 Snorre Sturlasson, 13, 45, 49, 52,  
 66, 72, 74, 160, 186, 254, 276,  
 421, 433-441, 444  
 Snorrelaus, 436  
 Söndmöre, 122, 193, 217, 324,  
 411, 495  
 Sogn, 119, 234  
 Sognefjord, 179, 210, 348, 349,  
 415  
 Sognesund, 228  
 Sognings, 348  
 Solveig, 438  
 Sonartorek, 85  
 Sotoness, 95  
 Sound, The, 116, 242, 453  
 Stamford Bridge, 268, 269, 272,  
 283, 287  
 Stang, F., Prime-Minister, 534  
 Stanger, 332  
 Stavanger, 59, 321, 358, 359  
 Steen Sture the Elder, 480, 481,  
 482  
 Steen Sture the Younger, 482,  
 483, 485  
 Steinker, 189  
 Steinkil, King of Sweden, 267  
 Stenbock, Magnus, 502  
 Stig, Marshal, 454  
 Stiklestad, 212, 221, 227, 232,  
 235, 240, 255  
 Stockholm, 464, 469, 480, 484,  
 485, 532  
 Storm, Prof. Gustav, 538  
*Storthing*, 521-534  
 Strand, 121, 183  
 Strindsö, 369  
 Struensee, 508, 509  
 Stub, Rev. Kjeld, 496  
 Stuf Katsson, 254  
 Sturla Sighvatsson, 421, 438, 440  
 Sturla Thordsson, father of  
 Snorre Sturlasson, 434  
 Sturla Thordsson, nephew of  
 Snorre Sturlasson, 45, 440, 442  
 Sturlungs, The, 433-441, 443  
 Styrbjörn, 214  
 Styrkaar Stallare, 270, 271  
 Supreme Court, 522  
 Surtur, 16  
 Sussex, 138  
 "Suffrage Bill," 549, 550  
 Suttung, 20  
 Svang, 408  
 Svanhild, daughter of Earl Ey-  
 stein, 76  
 Svante Nilsson Sture, 482  
 Sverdrup, Prof., 516, 518, 540-545  
 Sverdrup, John, Prime Minister,  
 534  
 Sverke, King of Sweden, 368  
 Sverre Sigurdsson, 195, 333-379,  
 382, 385, 386, 388, 391, 393,  
 396, 404, 407, 423, 432, 446,  
 450  
 Svolder, 157, 163, 173, 178, 193  
 Sweyn, a pretender, 287  
 Sweyn Alfasson, 225-229, 233,  
 287, 292

- Sweyn Estridsson, 236, 237, 244,  
 245, 247, 248, 250, 252, 257,  
 258, 259, 265, 266, 267, 268,  
 273, 274, 276  
 Sweyn Forkbeard, 116, 118, 119,  
 138, 139, 154, 161-166, 168,  
 173, 177, 214  
 Sweyn Haakonsson, Earl, 119,  
 121, 122, 173-181, 186, 187,  
 189, 190-193  
 Sweyn, Rörek's servant, 201
- T
- Tacitus, 25  
 Taylor, Bayard, 491  
 Tegelsmora, 223  
 Telemark, 338, 340  
 Thamb, 162  
 Thames, The, 42  
 Thangbrand the priest, 146, 147,  
 158, 159  
 Thirty Years' War, 495  
 Thjostulf Aalesson, 311, 312  
 Thor, 20, 21, 22, 128, 144, 151,  
 204, 208, 209, 224  
 Thora, wife of Earl Haakon, 119  
 Thora, wife of Harold Hard-  
 Ruler, 255  
 Thora Guttorm's daughter, 309  
 Thora Moster-Pole, 72  
 Thora of Rimul, 130  
 Thora Saxe's daughter, 308  
 Thoralf Lousy-Beard, 108, 109,  
 135  
 Thorbjörn Hornklove, 59  
 Thord Sturlasson, 436  
 Thore, Archbishop, 393, 395  
 Thore Herse, 77, 78  
 Thore Hjort, 148, 154, 156  
 Thore Hund, 211, 212, 222, 233  
 Thore Klakka, 139, 140  
 Thore Sel, 211  
 Thore of Steig, 245, 262, 274,  
 286, 287  
 Thorfinn Karlsevne, 181  
 Thorgeir, brother-in-law of Olaf  
 Tryggvesson, 161, 162  
 Thorgerd, Valkyria, 123  
 Thorghaettan, 363  
 Thorgils Thoralfsson, 135  
 Thorgils, 224, 227  
 Thorgisl, 38, 39, 40  
 Thorgny the Lawman, 195, 196  
 Thorkell Dyrdill, 164, 165  
 Thorkell Leira, 124, 125, 126  
 Thorleif, Bishop, 480  
 Thormod Kolbruna-Scald, 221,  
 222  
 Thorolf, Bald Grim's son, 77, 78,  
 79  
 Thorolf, Kveld-Ulf's son, 57-60  
 Thorsberg, 362  
 Thorstein, a peasant, 109  
 Thorstein Kugad, 362, 366  
 Thorstein, son of Side-Hall, 238,  
 239  
 Thorvald Eriksson, 181  
 Thrond the Priest, 391  
 Thrudvang, 20  
 Thyra, queen of Olaf Tryggves-  
 son, 154, 161, 168, 171, 214  
 Tiber, 34  
 Tidemand, Adolf, 538  
 Tiding-Skofte, 119  
 Tilly, General, 495  
 Tilsit, treaty of, 510, 512  
 Toke, a peasant, 246  
 Tordenskjold, 503, 504  
 Torstenson, General, 496  
 Tostig Godwineson, Earl, 269,  
 270, 283  
 Tours, 34  
 Toverud, 512  
 Trangen, 512  
 Travendal, 501  
 Trøndelag, 54, 70, 80, 87, 88,  
 102, 106, 130, 140, 148, 177,  
 178, 189, 193, 220, 234, 255,  
 285, 287, 324, 327, 340, 352,  
 358, 366, 368, 398, 445  
 Trønders, 94, 95, 106, 107, 148,  
 149, 189, 193, 207, 227, 228,  
 232, 265, 285, 286, 311, 327,  
 328, 340, 368, 423, 498 \*  
 Trollhaettan, 288  
 Tromsø, 429  
 Tryggve Olafsson, son of Olaf  
 Haroldsson, 76, 83, 94, 95,  
 102, 105, 107, 108, 144

- Tryggve Olafsson, son of Olaf  
   Tryggvesson, 228  
 Tunsberg, 201, 306, 324, 327,  
   334, 354, 375, 376, 380, 388,  
   390, 413, 449  
 Tunsberghus, 481  
 Turf-Einar, 69  
 Turges, 38  
 Turks, 2, 500  
 Tyr, 21  
 Tyrker, 180
- U
- Ueland, Ole Gabriel, 328  
 Ugerup, Erik, 485  
 Ulf Thorgilsson, Earl, 214, 215,  
   236  
 Ulf Uspaksson, 255  
 Uller, 22  
 Ulster, 289  
 Unas, 334, 335  
 University of Norway, 514  
 Upland, 223,  
 Upsala, 45, 195  
 Urd, 18  
 Urökja Snorresson, 440  
 Utgard, 17
- V
- Vaagen, 294, 299  
 Vaerdalen, 220, 221, 222, 232  
 Vagn Aakesson, 122-127  
 Valdalen, 217  
 Valdemar Atterdag, 462, 463  
 Valdemar Birgersson, King of  
   Sweden, 449  
 Valdemar, the Great, 323, 327-  
   330, 345  
 Valdemar Magnusson, . Duke,  
   456, 458, 459  
 Valdemar the Victorious, 386,  
   387, 410, 417, 418  
 Valders, 52, 127  
 Valfather, 19  
 Valhalla, 19, 84, 101, 204  
 Valkendorf, Christopher, 490  
 Valkyries 19, 84, 123, 204  
 Vandals, 156
- Vanir, 14, 21  
 Varangians, 240, 241  
 Varbelgs, 354, 355, 423, 425  
 Ve, 13, 16  
 Vebjörn, 256  
 Venice, 241  
 Venetian, 500  
 Venus, 22  
 Verdande, 18  
 Vermeland, 57, 58, 267, 332, 337,  
   412, 464  
 Versailles, 501  
 Vesteraalen, 331  
 Vestergötland, 195, 267, 312, 464,  
   468, 481  
 Vestfjord, 331  
 Vestfold, 46, 51, 57, 76, 190, 412  
 Vestgoths, 268  
 Viborg, 485  
 Viborg-thing, 231, 237, 252  
 Vidar, 22  
 Vidrar, 84  
 Vige, 156  
 Vikar, Chief of the Varbelgs,  
   354, 423  
 Viken, 57, 64, 76, 88, 94, 102,  
   105, 107, 110, 118, 119, 143,  
   144, 147, 160, 213, 245, 256,  
   266, 273, 285, 307, 319, 323,  
   324, 327, 330, 332, 337, 345,  
   351, 356, 361, 370, 388, 391,  
   393, 400, 407, 408, 410, 411,  
   422, 425, 445, 498  
 Vile, 13, 16  
 Vingulmark, 57, 173  
 Vinland, 180, 181  
 Vinold, Archbishop, 467  
 Virgin Mary, The, 144, 146, 396  
 Visby, 463  
 Vitalie Brethren, 469, 473  
 Vladimir, 134, 136, 137, 142  
 Voltaire, 508  
*Vornedskab*, 475  
 Vors, 111
- W
- Wallenstein, 418  
 Waterford, 40  
 Wedel-Jarlsberg, Count, 518, 527

Welhaven, J. S., 536, 550	Wismar, 469
Wendland, 136, 142, 161, 162, 163, 168, 237, 330	Wollin, 120
Wends, 236, 237, 310, 312	Y
Wener, Lake, 288	Ygdrasil, 18
Wergeland, Henrik, 526, 531, 536	Ymer, 16, 17
Wergeland, Rev. Nicolai, 518, 550	Ynglings, 31, 40, 45, 57, 62
Wessex, 41	Yngve, 45
Widukind, 31	York, 81, 268
William the Conqueror, 12, 56, 65, 272, 277, 283	Yotun, 16, 17, 21, 23
William Longsword, 65	Yotunheim, 17, 18, 21
William of Sabina, Cardinal, 428	Z
	Zoë, Empress, 242

