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NOTE: The divisions of the whole Orkneyinga Saga into separate short Sagas is shown above for convenience of reference. A more accurate analysis of the divisions is to be found in the chapter of the Introduction on The Problem of Unity.

ORKNEYINGA SAGA.

CHAPTER 1.

THE DISCOVERY OF NORWAY (1)

Mythol.  
Fl.

There was a king called Fornjotr; he ruled over the land that is called Finnland and Kvoenland. It lies to the East of the sea-gulf that leads towards the White Sea; we call it [Helsingjaland] (2).

O.

Fornjotr had three sons, one called Hler (whom we call Aegir), the second Logi, and the third Kari. The last was the father of Frosti, the father of Snaer (Snow) the Old. The latter's son was named Thorri, who had two sons, one called Norr, and the other Gorr; he had a daughter called Goi.

Lex.Run.

Thorri was a great maker of sacrifices. He had [a large] one every year at mid-winter. It was called "Thorri's Sacrifice," and from it the month took its name (3).

O.

It befell one winter at Thorri's Sacrifice that Goi disappeared. A search party set off, but she was not to be found, and when the month was up, Thorri had a [fresh] sacrifice made, and gave offerings in order to learn what had become of Goi; they called it "Goi's Sacrifice." But for all that they got no news of her.

Three winters later the brothers made a vow that they would go in search of her, and they so shared out the search, that Norr was to search by land, and Gorr was to search among the out-skerries and isles; and he went aboard ship/

ship.

With each of the brothers was a large company. Gorr held with his ships out along the Gulf, and so to the Åland Sea. Then he explored the Stockholm Skerries far and wide, and all the isles that lie in the Baltic; after that he sailed to the islands of Gothland, and thence to Denmark and there he explored all the isles. There he met his kinsmen who had come from Hler the Old in Hlésey (Læssø); and then he held on his course again, [for he heard] nothing of his sister.

Now Norr his brother waited until the snow lay on the moors, and ski-ing was good. He then departed from Kvoenland and across the Gulf<sub>(4)</sub>, and they came to the land of the people called Lapps; it lies beyond Finmark. But the Lapps wished to bar their passage, and a battle took place. But might and magic were with Norr and his men, so that their adversaries went mad with terror as soon as they heard the war-cry and saw weapons drawn; and the Lapps took flight. But Norr journeyed West to Kjølen and was so far from home that they lost touch with men, and shot animals and birds for their food. They travelled till they came to where the streams flowed westwards from the fells. Then they followed the streams and reached the sea. Before them lay a huge fjord like a sea-gulf. There was much land in cultivation, and broad valleys ran down to the fjord. There a band of men gathered to face them, and resolved to do immediate battle with Norr, and the battle fell out as usual. All the army fell where they stood, or fled, while Norr and his men over-ran them, like/

like tares in a cornfield. Norr went round the whole fjord and subdued [all the inhabitants], and made himself king over the districts<sup>(5)</sup> that lay there round the fjord.

Norr stayed there through the [spring and] summer, until the snow lay on the moors. Then he set off up along the dale that lies south from the fjord; the fjord is now called Trondhjem. Some of his men he sent as far as round about Møren. He subdued the land wheresoever he went. And when he came south over the fell that is south of the head of the dale, he made his way south down the [next] dale<sup>(6)</sup> till he came to the great stretch of water that is called Lake Mjøsen. Then he turned west to the hills for he got word that his men had failed to conquer the king named Sokni. Then they came to that district that [is] called Valdres. Thence they marched towards the sea, and came into a long narrow fjord that is now called the Sogn. There he encountered Sokni, and they fought a great battle there, for sorcery had no hold over Sokni. Norr advanced stoutly, and Sokni and he fought in single combat. There fell Sokni and many of his men.

## CHAPTER 2.

### THE JOURNEY OF NORR OVER NORWAY IN

#### SEARCH OF [HIS] SISTER.

After that Norr went up the fjord that lies north from the Sogn. There Sokni had ruled over what is now called Sóknadalr (Sognedålen). Norr stayed there a long/

long time, and it is now called Nórafjörðr (Norumfjorden)<sup>(1)</sup>.

O. There he met his brother Gorr, and neither of them had then heard of [their sister] Goi. Gorr had also subdued all the outermost land on his journey from the south. And therefore the brothers divided the land between them. Norr got all the mainland, and Gorr was to have all the islands between which and the mainland he could sail a ship with rudder set.

After that Norr made an expedition to the Uplands, and came to the place now called Hedemarken, where a king ruled called Hrolfr of Bjarg; he was the son of Svathi the Giant of Dovre in the North.

It was Hrolfr who had taken Goi Thorri's daughter away from Kvænland. He at once went to meet Norr and challenged him to single combat. They fought for long, and neither was wounded. Then they made peace, and Norr married Hrolfr's sister and Hrolfr got Goi.

Fl. | 332. From there Norr turned back north to the kingdom he had subdued, which he called Nórvegr (Norway). He ruled the kingdom while he lived, | and his sons after him, dividing the land between them. And thus the kingdom tended to decrease in size as the kings increased in number, and it was split up into provinces.

(2)

### CHAPTER 3.

O. [OF THE SONS OF GORR].

Mythol.  
332.

Gorr held the isles and thence was called a "Sea-king".<sup>(1)</sup> His sons were Beiti and Heiti, who were Sea-kings/

Sea-kings, and very overbearing men. They repeatedly attacked the realm of the sons of Norr, fought many battles and victory went now to the one, now to the other. Beiti sailed into Trondhjem and harried there. He anchored at the places now called Beitissaerr (Beitstadfjorden) and Beitisstøð (Beitstaden). There he had his ship hauled from Beitstaden inland and North over the Isthmus of Elden, where Namdalen lies to the North. He sat on the poop and held the tiller and claimed for his own all the land that lay to port; and that included many settlements and much unsettled land.

(1)

Heiti, son of Gorr, was the father of Sveithi the Sea-king, the father of Halfdan the Old, the father of Ivarr the Earl of the Uplanders, the father of Eysteinn Rattle, the father of Earl Rognvaldr the Mighty and Wise.

## CHAPTER 4.

O.

## [OF EARL ROGNVALDR].

x874.  
332.

Earl Rognvaldr assisted Haraldr Fairhair to conquer the country (i.e. Norway), and Haraldr granted him the stewardship<sup>(1)</sup> of the two ~~Møre~~ and Romsdalen. He married Ragnhildr, daughter of Nosey-Hrolfr; and one of their sons was that Hrolfr who conquered Normandy<sup>(2)</sup>. Hrolfr was so tall that no horse could carry him; so that he was nicknamed Walking-Hrolfr; and from him are descended the Earls of Rouen and the English kings. Their other sons were Ivarr and Thorir the Silent. Rognvaldr/

Rognvaldr had also illegitimate sons by name Hallathr, and Hrollaugr, and Einarr, who was youngest.

?874.

One summer Haraldr Fairhair sailed West to punish the vikings, as he had grown tired of their depredations, for they harried in Norway during the summer, but spent the winter in Shetland and the Orkneys. He subdued Shetland and the Orkneys and the Hebrides, and sailed right West to the Isle of Man and laid waste the Manx homesteads. He fought there many battles and annexed the land farther West than any Norwegian king has done since.

In one battle fell Ivarr, the son of Earl Rognvaldr. But when King Haraldr sailed home from the West, as compensation for his son he gave to Earl Rognvaldr Shetland and the Orkneys. Earl Rognvaldr however gave both lands to his brother Sigurthr, who was one of King Harald's forecastle men. When the King sailed from the West, he gave Sigurthr the title of "Earl"; and Sigurthr stayed out in the West.

## CHAPTER 5.

0.

### [OF EARL SIGURTHR].

?874.  
332.

Earl Sigurthr became a mighty chief. He made an alliance with Thorsteinn the Red, the son of Olaf the White and Authr the Deep-minded, and they conquered all Caithness and much more of Scotland, <sup>[and]</sup> ~~including~~ Moray and Ross (1). And

x892.

he had a fort built there in the South of Moray. Sigurthr and Maelbrigte Tusk, a Scottish Earl, came to an agreement to meet at a place appointed with forty men each, and settle their/

their quarrel once and for all.

But when the appointed day came Sigurthr suspected that the Scots would play him false. He therefore had eighty men mounted on forty horses. And when Maelbrigte saw them, he said to his men: "Now are we beguiled by Sigurthr, "for I see two men's feet on each side of every horse, and "there must be twice as many men as there are beasts to carry "them. But let us now take heart, and try to account for a "man each, before we die."

Then they got ready to fight.

When Sigurthr saw their intentions he said to his men: "Half of our men shall dismount and take them on their "left flank, when the troops come to close quarters; for we "will ride at them and try to split their ranks asunder."

And so it fell out. There was a stiff fight, but it was not long before Maelbrigte fell and his men with him.

Sigurthr had their heads fastened to his saddlebow in triumph (4). And then they rode home in high feather.

On the way home Sigurthr tried to spur on his horse with his foot, and he knocked his calf against the tusk which stuck out from Maelbrigte's mouth, so that the skin was broken. The sore grew into a painful swelling, so that he got his death of it. And Sigurthr the Mighty is buried in a barrow on the banks of the Oykell.

(5).

890x893. Guthormr was the name of Sigurth's son; he ruled the lands one winter, and died childless.

891x894. When Rognvaldr, Earl of Mōren, heard of the death of father and son, he sent out to the West his son Hallathr, and/

Then came forward Eioarr, his youngest son, and

said/

and King Haraldr gave him the title of "Earl". When Hallathr came out West, he took up house on the Mainland; but the vikings scoured the Isles and the coast of Caithness, killing men and plundering. But when the bondar complained of their wrongs before Hallathr, it seemed to him a hard task to mend their lot; and he grew tired of his high position. He gave up his Earldom, took the rank of Freeman, and afterwards sailed to Norway. And men thought his expedition a huge joke.

## CHAPTER 6.

### EINAR'S EXPEDITION TO THE ISLES.

891x894.  
332.

Two Danish vikings settled down in the Isles, one called Thorir Tree-beard, the other Kalfr Scurvy. When this came to the ears of Rognvaldr, he was much displeased, and called to his presence his sons Thorir and Hrollaugr. (Hrolfr was at that time a-harrying). Rognvaldr asked which of them was willing to go out West to the Isles.

Thorir bade him see about his sailing.

"This my mind tells me," said the Earl, "that here at home will be the most honourable career for thee. Thy path lies not abroad."

Then Hrollaugr said, "Wilt thou that I go?"

The Earl said, "This Earldom will not fall to thy lot, for thy guardian spirits point towards Iceland. There thou shalt increase thy family, and grow to honour in the land."

Then came forward Einarr, his youngest son, and said/

said, "Wilt thou that I go to the Isles? I shall promise thee - what must seem to thee the most fitting service I can do thee - that I shall never again come in thy sight; for here I have little luck to lose; and it is unlikely that my career elsewhere will be less honourable than here."

The Earl said, "Unlikely art thou to become a great chief by reason of thy mother; for she was thrall-born in all her forebears. Indeed it seems to me that the farther away thou farest and the longer thou stayest the better."

Rognvaldr got Einarr a fully-manned ship of twenty thwarts; and Haraldr gave him the title of "Earl".

## CHAPTER 7.

### THE SLAYING OF THE VIKINGS.

Einarr sailed West to Shetland where people thronged to his side. After that he sailed South to the Orkneys, and at once sought an encounter with Kalfr and Thorir. There was a battle, and both the vikings were killed.

About the fight there was a verse made, -

"He gave Tree-beard to the trolls;  
Turf-Einarr slew Scurvy."

After that Einarr brought the land under him, and became the greatest of chiefs. He was the first man to find out how to cut turf from the bogs for fuel, at Torfnes (Tarbatness) in Scotland, for timber was scarce in the Isles. Einarr was a tall man and ugly, one-eyed, yet of all men the most keen-sighted.

## CHAPTER 8.

OF EARL EINARR.c.894.  
332.

When the sons of Haraldr Fairhair became of age, they grew rather overbearing and hard to deal with at home. They kept picking quarrels with the King's Earls, slaying some, and driving others from their lands. Halfdan Long-legs and Guthrothr the Splendid, the sons of Snæfrithr, fell upon Rognvaldr, Earl of Mōren, and killed him, and took possession of his realms.

But when King Haraldr heard of it, he was very angry, and marched against his sons. Halfdan took ship in haste, and sailed out West. But Guthrothr submitted to his father.

In compensation for his father, King Haraldr gave to Thorir his daughter Alofa Harvest-Heal, in addition to his patrimony and the title of "Earl".

Halfdan Long-legs landed in the Orkneys. As soon as news got about that one of King Harald's sons had arrived, men were seized with great terror, and some went and submitted to Halfdan, but Earl Einarr fled from the Isles up into Scotland. Halfdan subdued the Isles and made himself king over them.

But in the same year, Einarr came back, and Halfdan and he came to grips. There was a great battle, and Einarr won the victory. And that night, at dusk, Halfdan leapt overboard his ship.

Then Einarr made a verse:

"No dart see I flying  
From Hrolfr or Hrollaugr.

Our duty it is  
To avenge my father.

Yet/

Yet over the wine-cup  
 At M~~o~~ren, this evening  
 Sits Earl Thorir the Silent,  
 While we struggle here."

Next morning, when it was light, they scoured the islands in search of fugitives. Earl Einarr remarked: "I see something or other on North Ronaldsay, now standing up, and now lying down. It is either a bird or a man, and we shall go to it."

They found Halfdan Long-legs and his friends.

702. Lex.Run. [Earl Einarr carved the bloody eagle on his back by laying his sword in the hollow at the backbone and hacking all the ribs from the back-bone down to the loins, and drawing out the lungs;] (1) and he gave him to Odin as an offering for his victory. (2) Then said Einarr:-

"For sheep-stealing is outlawed  
 Many a fair-bearded man.  
 But I am the slayer  
 Of a great lord's young son.  
 Men tell me of peril  
 Before the proud-hearted king.  
 But no fear, though in Harald's shield  
 I have carved out a hole."

And then this one:-

"Ever happy live I  
 For the keen warriors' blades  
 Have bitten the King's son.  
 'Tis good for a man  
 To do manly deeds.  
 In the isles, o'er the hollow wounds  
 I make the raven sing.  
 To/

To them but now, meseems,  
The carrion kite flieth."

After that he had a howe piled over Halfdan, and  
he made this verse:-

"Fallen is the People's Prince!

Rognvaldr have I avenged,

For my fourth share of the realm.

O'er Long-legs cast a cairn

Hard skatt I pay him!

Victory is ours, brave lads!

The Norns give just judgment."

When news of this came to Norway, Halfdan's  
brothers were highly indignant thereat, and vowed that  
they would sail to the Orkneys and avenge him. But King  
Haraldr contrived to frustrate their voyage.

When Einarr heard of their vow he made this  
verse:-

"Many a chieftain

From many a land

For my life is eager -

And for reason good.

Yet know they cannot

- Until I fall -

Which must lie

'Neath the Eagle's talon.

But/

894x  
332 | Fl.

But some time after, King Haraldr himself sailed out West and landed in the Isles. And Einarr fled from the Isles over to Caithness. But they sent envoys to one another, and so came to terms. King Haraldr imposed a fine on the Isles and fixed the sum at 60 gold marks. Earl Einarr offered to pay the whole fine on condition that the odal rights were made over to him. And the bondar agreed to this; for the rich ones expected to be able to buy back their rights; and the poor ones had no money to pay the fine.

Thus Einarr paid up the fine. And many a year was it that the Earls held all the odal rights, until at last Earl Sigurthr gave them back to the Orkney-men<sup>(3)</sup>.

King Haraldr went back to Norway. But Einarr ruled over the Orkneys for many years and died in his bed. He had three sons, the first called Arnkell, the second Erlendr, and the third Thorfinnr Skull-splitter.<sup>(4)</sup>

934. When Haraldr Fairhair died, Eirikr Bloody-Axe was king for two years.

936.  
Fl. | 0.

<sup>(5)</sup> At that time Hakon Athelstan's foster-son came from England, while Eirikr fled the country. He sailed into the Western Seas and harried in Scotland and the North of England.

937.

When this came to the ears of King Athelstan, he sent envoys to Eirikr and offered him some land; he declared that he had been a good friend of King Harald's and would prove it so to his son; he added that he would make his peace with Hakon his foster-son.

King Eirikr accepted the offer, and he got Northumbria - which is a fifth part of England - to rule over.

But as King Eirikr had little land and many followers, he/

he grew short of money. For this reason he spent the summers a-harrying, and the winters at home in his realm.

939. He continued thus as long as King Athelstan was alive. <sup>Athelstan</sup> ~~He~~ died after being King for fourteen years (6), and after him his brother Edmund came to the throne. He was not such a good friend to the Norsemen as King Athelstan, and was annoyed that King Eirikr should rule Northumbria.

946x. Now, one spring, King Eirikr sailed North to Scotland, and thence to the Orkneys, where he picked up the Orkney Earls Arnkell and Erlendr, sons of Turf-Einarr. Thence he held on to the Hebrides where he further increased his company. Thence he sailed to Ireland, and harried there, and also in Wales. After that he sailed to England, and harried there as he had done elsewhere.

950x954.

King Edmund(7) had set to rule over this part of the country a man called Olaf(8). Now as Eirikr had such a large band of followers, he landed from his ships. Olaf also gathered a huge army and moved to meet him; and there was a great battle. At the beginning of the day the English fell fast, but where one was killed there stepped three in his place. But after midday the Norsemen began to fall, and at last King Eirikr was killed and six kings with him, one of them named Guthormr. Earls Arnkell and Erlendr, Turf-Einar's sons, were also killed.

Now when Gunnhildr and her sons heard that King Eirikr was dead and that he had previously been harrying in England, they decided that they could not live safely in England. They got ready with all speed to sail to the Orkneys where Thorfinnr Skull-Splitter was now Earl. Gunnhild's sons subdued the Isles. They spent the winters in them/

them, but in summer went a-harrying.

956.

While Gunnhildr and her sons were in the Orkneys, they got news that war had broken out between the King of Denmark and King Hakon, Athelstan's foster-son. They were now in some hope of getting some help from Haraldr Gorm's son. They accordingly set sail for the King of Denmark.

O. | Fl.

Before they left the Orkneys, they gave Ragnhildr, daughter of Eirikr and Gunnhildr, in marriage to Arnfinnr, son of Earl Thorfinnr; and Earl Thorfinnr was made Earl in the Isles. He was a mighty chief and a warlike. He died in his bed, and he is buried at Hoxa in South Ronaldsay (9). And he was remembered as a mighty man.

976.

## CHAPTER 9.

THE SLAYING OF HAVARTH.977x  
Fl.

Thorfinnr had five sons, the first called Arnfinnr, the second Havarthr Harvest-Happy, the third Hlothver, the fourth Ljotr, and the fifth Skuli.

Ragnhildr, Eirik's daughter, had her husband Arnfinnr done to death at Murkle in Caithness. And she gave herself in marriage to his brother, Havarthr Harvest-Happy. Havarthr took over the Earldom, and was a good chief, and lucky in his harvests.

Now there was a man named Einarr Butter, a nephew of Havarth's, who was a mighty chief; he had a large following and spent his summers a-harrying. He was present as a guest at a feast at Havarth's; and at the feast these twain/

twain, Ragnhildr and Einarr, had a long talk together. She told him that he was a man well fitted to be a chief, and would suit an Earldom better than his kinsman Havarth; and she added that a woman would be well married to such a man as he. Einarr prayed her not to say such things, and said that Havarth was the most honoured man in the Isles, and she well matched with him.

Ragnhildr answered: "Short must be my wedded life with Havarth now. Truly there must be men in the Isles in whose eyes thou wilt never grow if thou grudgest thyself honourable rank."

After such cajoling from Ragnhildr, ambitious thoughts took hold on Einarr, so that his mind was set on playing the traitor to his kinsman the Earl. They settled it between them that he should slay the Earl, and that she should give herself to him in marriage.

Some time after Einarr began making preparations for the enterprise. There was a soothsayer with him, and the soothsayer said: "Do not thy deed to-day, but to-morrow, else for long years will there be manslaughter within thine own kin."

But Einarr pretended not to hear this warning. Havarth was then in Stennis, and there they met. There was a stiff fight, but it was not long till the Earl fell; and the spot is now called Havarðsteigar (Havarth's Fields) ( / ).

When the news got abroad, Einarr was thought a foul dastard for his deed; with the result that Ragnhildr would not have him consort with her, and declared it was all a lie that she had ever given him any promises. She sent for Einarr/

Einarr Hardchaps, the son of another sister of Havarth's. When they met, she told him she thought shame of ~~the Earl's~~ kinsmen that they were unwilling to avenge ~~the Earl~~<sup>him</sup>, and declared she would do anything to have him avenged. "It is clear enough" she said, "that he will be well thought of by all good men, "who avenges the Earl. And moreover he will be thought "deserving of his realm."

Einarr answers, "It is openly said that thy speech "is often other than thy thought. Wherefore," he says, "he "who does this deed must first have this assurance, that thou "keep the realm in thy hands for him, and also those other "things which to his mind are no less important."

So their counsels ended. Shortly afterwards Einarr Hard-chaps assaulted Einarr Butter and killed him. But Ragnhildr sent for Ljotr the brother of Arnfinnr and Havarthr and married him. Ljotr took over the Earldom and he became a mighty chief.

Einarr Hardchaps had now slain his kinsman, but was no nearer the Earldom than before; and he was very ill-pleased with his lot; and he therefore determined to gather a fighting gang round him and gain the Isles by force. But his following was small, for the Orkney men preferred to serve a son of Thorfinnr Skull-Splitter. And some time afterwards Ljotr had Einarr Hardchaps put to death.

## CHAPTER 10.

### THE BATTLE BETWEEN LJOTR AND SKULI.

Skuli, the brother of Ljotr, went over into  
Scotland/

Scotland, and was there given the title of "Earl" by the King of Scots. (1). Then he came down to Caithness, and gathered a force round him there. And thence he sailed to the Isles where he trumped up a quarrel with his brother Ljotr over the Earldom.

Ljotr in turn mustered an army and marched to meet Skuli. Ljotr had the larger force; but when they met, Skuli was for nothing but fighting. There was a stiff encounter, and Ljotr came off victor; and Skuli fled over to Caithness [and up into Scotland]. Thither Ljotr pursued him, and there wasted some length of time increasing his forces.

Skuli now rode down from the hills with a large army which the King of Scots and Earl Macbeth (2) had got for him. And he and Ljotr met at Dale in Caithness and a mighty battle took place. At the first charge the Scots were the fiercest. Earl Ljotr bade his men defend themselves stoutly and stand as firm as they could. But as the Scots made no impression on them, Ljotr egged on his men, and was himself the fiercest. So things stood for a time, until they broke through the ranks of the Scots, who then took to flight. Skuli tried to make a stand, but at last he fell.

Ljotr took Caithness under him. And there was no love lost between him and the [King of] Scots, for the Scots were very ill-pleased at their discomfiture.

Now, [while Earl Ljotr's force in Caithness was still below full strength], Earl Macbeth came down with a huge army, and they met on Skitten Mire in Caithness. Ljotr had no army fit for a pitched battle. But he charged so fiercely that the Scots gave way before him. There was a short struggle, until those of the Scots who remained alive took to flight/

flight; but many were wounded. Ljotr returned victorious, with a sorely battered train. Earl Ljotr also got that wound of which he died. [And he was much lamented].

## CHAPTER 11.

### A BATTLE.

Hlothver [Thorfinn's son] succeeded Ljotr in the Earldom and was a mighty chief. He married (Eithne) (Auðna), daughter of (Cerbhall) (Kjarval), King of Ireland; and their son was Sigurthr the Stout.

Hlothver died in his bed and is buried at Ham( ) in Caithness. Sigurthr his son took over the Earldom after him. Sigurthr was a mighty chief, with wide dominions. By main force he held Caithness against the Scots, and every summer had a war-cruise abroad. He harried in the Hebrides, in Scotland, and in Ireland.

One summer it happened that (Finnlaech) (Finnleikr) the Scots Earl challenged Sigurthr to a pitched battle on Skitten Mire, and Sigurthr went to consult his mother, who was a wise woman. The Earl told her that the odds must be no less than seven to one.

She answered: "I should have brought thee up these  
 "long years in my wool-basket, had I known that thou wouldst  
 "be minded to go on living for ever and a day. Fate rules a  
 "man's life, and not his own comings and goings. Better is  
 "it to die with honour than to live in shame. Do thou take  
 "this standard here which I have made [thee] with all my magic  
 "arts. For my mind tells me that they before whom it is  
 "borne/

"borne will be blessed with victory; though it will be the  
"death of him who bears it."

The standard, which was in the form of a raven, was a piece of fine needlecraft, and richly embroidered. And when the wind blew upon it, it was as though the raven were spreading its wings for flight. (2).

Sigurthr was very wroth at his mother's words. He gave the Orkneymen their odal rights in return for war-service and crossed to Skitten Mire to meet Earl Finnlaech; and the two armies were drawn up in full battle array. At the first onset Earl Sigurth's standard-bearer was shot down dead. The Earl commanded another man to bear the standard. And it was held up again for a time, but again the bearer fell. Three standard-bearers of the Earl were killed, but he won the day.

And the Orkneymen got back their odal rights.

## CHAPTER 12.

### EARL SIGURTHR IS BAPTISED.

When he came from Wendland, Olaf, Tryggvi's son, spent four years a-harrying in the British Isles before he had himself baptised in the Scilly Isles (1). From there he sailed to England (2) where he married Gytha, sister of Kvaran, King of Ireland (3). After that he stayed for a time in Dublin, until Earl Hakon sent Thorir Hook-fist (4) to the West to lure him thence.

995. Olaf sailed from the West with five ships and came first/

Fl. 10.  
989-993.

993-995.

first to the Orkneys. There he came upon Earl Sigurthr in Osmundwall in South Ronaldsay (5) with three ships, ready to go on a war-cruise. Olaf invited the Earl on to his ship, and said that he wished to talk with him. And when they met, Olaf spoke to him as follows:

"It is my will that thou have thyself baptised and "all those under thee, else thou shalt die on the spot and I "shall bear fire and flame through all the Isles."

When the Earl found himself in this dilemma, he left his decision entirely in Olaf's hands. He had him baptised, and took as a hostage his son, who was called Hundr (or Hundi) or Hvelpr, but the King had him baptised by the name of Hlothver.

997x1000. Then all the Orkneys became Christian. But King Olaf sailed East to Norway, and Hlothver sailed with him.

O. | Fl. | Hlothver lived but a short time. And after his  
998x1000. death Earl Sigurthr repudiated all allegiance to King Olaf. He married the daughter of Malcolm, King of Scots, and their son ~~son~~ was Earl Thorfinnr. Earl Sigurthr had [already] had three other sons [who were still alive], one called Sumarlithi, the second Brusi, and the third Einarr Wrymouth.

1014. Five years (7) after the battle of Svoldr Earl Sigurthr sailed to Ireland to give help to King Sigtryggr Silky-Beard. He set his elder sons over the land, but his son Thorfinnr he handed over to his <sup>grandfather</sup> ~~uncle~~, the King of Scots, to foster.

Apr. 23. When Earl Sigurthr arrived in Ireland he and King Sigtryggr led their army against Briann King of the Irish, and the encounter took place on Good Friday. There was no man who would bear the raven-standard, and the Earl bore it himself/

himself, and fell there, while King Sigtryggr fled. King Briann fell in the hour of victory. ( 8 ).

### CHAPTER 13.

#### [OF THE SONS OF EARL SIGURTHR].

O.

1014.  
Fl.

After the death of Earl Sigurthr, his sons Sumarlithi, Brusi and Einarr took over his realm and divided it into three parts between them.

Thorfinnr, now five years old, was with the King of Scots when his father Sigurthr was killed. The Scots King now gave his <sup>grandson</sup> ~~nephew~~ Thorfinnr Caithness and Sutherland and the title of "Earl", and appointed regents to rule the land with him.

O.

O.

Earl Thorfinnr developed early, and was the tallest and strongest of men, with black hair, [sharp features and grisly aspect] ( 1 ). And when he grew up it was obvious that he was of an ambitious [and warlike] disposition.

The brothers Einarr and Brusi differed in character. Einarr was a hard and ambitious man, cantankerous and a great fighter. Brusi was a mild man, equable of temper, unaffected, and of good conversation. Sumarlithi was more like Brusi in character; he was the eldest of the brothers, and lived the shortest. He died in his bed.

After his death Earl Thorfinnr claimed his realm in the Orkneys. Einarr said that Thorfinnr possessed Caithness and Sutherland, which realm their father had had, and declared that that was larger than a third of the Isles; and he would/

0. would not give Thorfinnr a share [in succession to Sumarlithi]

But Brusi was willing to give up the share, and freely waived any claim to it. "It is not my will," said he, "to covet more of the realm than the third which I hold "by right."

Then Einarr took under him two shares of the Isles. He became a great man and had a large following. He often spent the summer a-harrying, and kept a large levy on land; but he was very unfair in his distribution of plunder.

This enforced service became irksome to the bondar; but the Earl maintained the tight hand and would hear of no one's gainsaying him. Einarr was the most overbearing of men, and brought an exceedingly bad harvest in his realm through the enforced labour of the bondar. But in Brusi's "third" there was a fine harvest and the bondar prospered, so that he became very popular.

#### CHAPTER 14.

##### OF THORKELL FOSTERER.

1016x1018.  
Fl. There was a man called Amundi. He was rich and well-to-do and lived on the Mainland at Hlaupandanes ( / ) in Sandwick. He had a son called Thorkell, in every way the most accomplished of all men, born and bred in the Orkneys. Amundi was a shrewd man, and one of the most honoured in the Isles.

One spring it befell that the Earl, as his custom was, made a large levy. But the bondar grumbled bitterly and/

and brought their cause before Amundi and asked him to speak a good word for them to the Earl.

Amundi said that the Earl would turn a deaf ear, -  
 O. "and little will come of it. [The Earl and I are at present "good friends,] but it will be a risky thing for us two to "quarrel, with our tempers as they are. Indeed," says he, "I will have nothing to do with it."

They then pled their cause before Thorkell. He  
 O. was loath to do anything, but the men [at last] persuaded him to promise his active assistance.

Amundi thought he had made rather a hasty promise.

Now when the Earl held a Thing, (2) Thorkell made a speech on behalf of the bondar, spoke of the needy state of the men, and besought the Earl to spare his people. Einarr answers well, and says that he will give his words consideration. "Till now I had meant to have six ships at sea, but "now they shall not be more than three. But as for thee, "Thorkell, never ask this again."

The bondar thanked Thorkell well for his support. And the Earl went on a viking-cruise and returned in the autumn.

But next spring the Earl made a levy, and held a Thing with the bondar. At this Thorkell made another appeal and besought the Earl to spare the bondar. The Earl answers indignantly and said that the bondar would be very much the worse off for this speech of his. He worked himself into such a passion of rage that he said that another spring they would not both be at the Thing safe and sound. With matters in this pass the Thing broke up.

When Amundi heard of what had passed between Thorkell/

Thorkell and the Earl, he advised Thorkell to go abroad. He sailed over to Caithness to Earl Thorfinnr and lived there (3) for long afterwards. He fostered the Earl when he was young, and was thence called Thorkell Fosterer; and he was the most estimable of men.

0. Many were the men of mark who fled [from their lands] in the Orkneys through the tyranny of Earl Einarr, most of them to Earl Thorfinnr, and some to Norway and other places.

#### CHAPTER 15.

##### THE MEETING OF THE BROTHERS.

1016x1020. Fl. As soon as Earl Thorfinnr came of age, he sent a message to his brother Einarr, and asked him for the third of the realm in the Orkneys which he thought was his.

0. Einarr was in no hurry to diminish his [realm].  
 0. When Earl Thorfinnr learns that, he levies forces from Caithness, [and conveyed a large army over <sup>to</sup> the Orkneys.]  
 0. And when Earl Einarr got news of this, he gathers an army, and goes to meet Thorfinnr, meaning to show him fight [and defend his lands.] Earl Brusi also gathers a force and goes to meet them, and mediates between them. The terms of settlement were, that Earl Thorfinnr should have the third of the Orkney realm that was his by right, but that Earl Brusi and Earl Einarr should put their shares together. Earl Einarr was to be overlord over them and be responsible for their defence. But if one should die before the other, then/

then the survivor was to take over the lands after him. But this settlement was thought unfair, for Brusi had a son called Rognvaldr, and Einarr had no sons.

Earl Thorfinnr set ~~commissioners~~<sup>stewards</sup> over his realm in the Orkneys. | But he lived mostly in Caithness. In summer Einarr was usually a-harrying on the coasts of Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

1017.  
Summer. It befell one summer when Earl Einarr was harrying in Ireland, that he fought a battle in Lough Larne with Conchobhar (Konofogor) King of the Irish; and Earl Einarr suffered a crushing defeat, with great loss of men.

1018.  
Summer. In the following summer, Eyvindr Buffalo-horn sailed West from Ireland, bound for Norway. But as the wind was fresh and the tide against him, Eyvindr turned into Osmundwall (1), and lay there for some time weather-bound.

Now when news of this came to the ears of Earl Einarr, he went with a large force to the spot, captured Eyvindr, and had him put to death;(2) but he gave quarter to most of his men. They sailed East to Norway in the autumn, and came to see King Olafr and told him about Eyvind's death. The King answers little on the matter, but it was obvious that he thought his death a great loss and an insult to himself. He usually said little about things not to his mind.

1018.  
Autumn. Earl Thorfinnr sent Thorkell Fosterer out to the Isles to collect his "skatt" (3). Earl Einarr charged Thorkell with being the prime mover of that rising when Thorfinnr had made his claim out in the Isles. Thorkell left the Isles in haste and sailed over to Caithness. He tells Earl Thorfinnr that he was quite sure Earl Einarr intended his/

his death, had not his kinsmen and friends warned him of it. -  
 "As for me," says he, "I have now two strings to my bow, -  
 "to arrange a meeting with the Earl and thrash it out with  
 "him once and for all; or on the other hand to go further  
 "abroad to some place where he can have no power over me."

1020.  
Autumn.

The Earl urged Thorkell to sail East to Norway to see King Olaf. - "Thou shalt be much honoured," says he, "wherever thou comest among men of rank. And I know from "your tempers - both thine and the Earl's - that you would "be very soon at each other's throats."

1019.  
Autumn.

Then Thorkell got ready and in the autumn sailed to Norway and then to see King Olaf; and he stayed there the winter with the King in high favour. He took Thorkell much into his counsel. He thought - and thought rightly - that

1019-1020.  
Winter.

Thorkell was a wise and very able man. The King noticed from his talk that he had very different stories to tell of the Earls, and was a great friend of Thorfinn, but had hard things to say of Earl Einarr. And early in spring the King sent a ship out West (4) to Earl Thorfinn with a message to the Earl to come East to see the King. The Earl did not fall asleep over the journey, (5) for a promise of friendship accompanied the message.

1020.  
Spring.

"There is foul play afoot."

When Thorkell heard that, he left off his preparations and called to his men. The Earl asked him to get ready and to bring his horse.

## CHAPTER 16.

### THE SLAYING OF EARL EINARR.

Thorkell said that he had work to attend to, and kept going in and out. Earl Thorfinn sailed East to Norway and came to see King Olaf. He was welcomed cordially, and stayed there well through the summer. And when he got ready to return to the West, King Olaf gave him a large and fine warship fully equipped.

1020.  
Hkr.

1020.  
Summer.

Thorkell/

Thorkell Fosterer resolved to sail with the Earl, and the Earl gave him the ship which he had brought from the West in the summer.

The King and the Earl parted on the most friendly terms.

1020.  
Autumn.

Earl Thorfinnr landed in the Orkneys in autumn. And when Earl Einarr got news of this, he got together a large band of men, and lay on board ship. Earl Brusi then went to meet the two brothers, and acted as go-between; and the upshot was that they came to terms and confirmed them with oaths. Thorkell Fosterer was to keep peace and friendship with Earl Einarr; and it was laid down that each should entertain the other at a feast, and that the Earl should make the first visit to Thorkell at Sandwick.

Now when the Earl was there at the feast, he was treated most sumptuously; but he was not in good spirits. The hall was a large one, with a door at either end. ( / ). On the day on which the Earl was to depart, Thorkell was to go with him to his feast. Thorkell sent men in advance to spy out the road they were to take that day; and when the spies came back, they told Thorkell that they had found three ambuscades of armed men; - "And we think" say they, "there is foul play afoot."

When Thorkell heard that, he left off his preparations and called his men about him. The Earl asked him to get ready and said it was high time for mounting horse. Thorkell said that he had much to attend to, and kept going in and out of doors. There were fires on the floor. He came in by one door, and after him a man called Hallvarthr, an Icelfander from the Eastern Fjords, who shut the door after/

Fl. after him<sup>(2)</sup>. Thorkell walked in [along the hall] between the fire and where the Earl was sitting.

"Art thou not ready yet?" asked the Earl.

Thorkell answers, "I am ready now."

Then he hewed at the Earl's head; and the Earl pitched forward on the floor.

Then said the Icelfander, "This is a very smart trick "forsooth - to leave the Earl in the fire and not pull him "out! "<sup>(3)</sup>. He set his pole-axe under the nape of the Earl's neck, and drove it in, and tossed him up on the dais.<sup>(4)</sup>

Thorkell and his companion hastily went out by the door opposite the one through which they had entered; there outside stood Thorkell's men armed to the teeth. When the Earl's men came up to him, he was dead. But they were too stunned to think of avenging him.<sup>(5)</sup> Besides, it all happened in a moment; and no one expected such a deed from Thorkell, for there was to be friendship between the Earl and Thorkell, as had been agreed on. Further, the men inside the hall were mostly unarmed, and many of them in the past great friends of Thorkell's. Thorkell was a lucky man and was thus granted longer life.<sup>(6)</sup>

When he came out, Thorkell had there a band of men not less in strength than that of the Earl. Thorkell then went to his ship and the Earl's men dispersed. That very day Thorkell set sail away towards the East. It was towards 1020. the end of October.<sup>(7)</sup> He landed safe and sound in Norway and went with all speed immediately to see King Olafr and had a cordial welcome. The King approved of the deed; and 1020-1021. Thorkell stayed with him that winter. Winter.

## CHAPTER 17.

THE PEACE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN KING OLAFR  
AND EARL BRUSI.

1020.  
Hkr.

After the death of Earl Einarr, Earl Brusi took that share of the land which Earl Einarr had had before, for there had been many witnesses to the terms on which the brothers Einarr and Brusi had settled their partnership.

But Thorfinnr thought it fairest that each of them have half of the Isles, but still Brusi stuck to the two thirds of the lands that winter.

1021.  
Spring.

In the following spring, Thorfinnr claimed the lands from Brusi, declaring that he wanted half the Isles; (1) but Brusi would not consent to this. They held a Thing (2) and stated their cases. Their friends tried to make a settlement, and the upshot was that Thorfinnr showed that he would be pleased with nothing other than getting one half of the Isles; and he adds that Brusi has no need for more than a third with a disposition such as his.

Brusi replies, "I am content," says he, "to have "the 'third' of the land which I inherited from my father; "and no one has challenged my right to this. But now I have "inherited another 'third' from my brother by lawful settle- "ment. But though I am unable to try conclusions with thee, "brother, yet I will seek another's help rather than yield "up my realm on such terms."

So the meeting broke up. But when Brusi saw that he could not muster enough men to hold his own (3) against Thorfinnr - since Thorfinnr had much the larger realm, and had the support of his <sup>grandfather</sup> ~~uncle~~, the King of Scots - then Brusi/

Brusi made up his mind to leave the land and sail East to see King Olaf; and he took with him his son Rognvaldr who was then ten years old.

When the Earl came to the King, the King received him cordially. The Earl unfolded his errand and told the King the whole state of the case between his brother and himself, and asked the King to help him to hold his realm, at the same time promising him in return his unreserved friendship.

The King made reply, and spoke first of how Haraldr Fairhair had held all the odal rights in the Orkneys, but the Earls had ever since held the land in fief<sup>(4)</sup> but never in actual ownership,<sup>(5)</sup> - "And this is proved by the fact," (937-956). says he, "that when Eirikr Bloody-Axe and his sons were in "the Orkneys, the Earls paid tribute<sup>(6)</sup> to them. And when my (995). "kinsman, Olaf Tryggvi's son, landed there, Earl Sigurthr "thy father became his man.<sup>(7)</sup> Now I have inherited every- "thing from King Olaf, and I will give thee this option, that "thou become my man - when of course I shall give the Isles "to thee in fief; then we shall see whether my assistance "will stand thee in better stead than the support of the King "of Scots will thy brother Thorfinnr. But if thou wilt not "have this option, then I shall see about recovering the "ownership and odal rights which up till now my kinsman and "forefathers have held in the West."

The Earl thought over these words to himself and told them to his friends, and asked their advice as to what he should agree to - whether he should strike a bargain on those terms with King Olaf and become his man. - "But I am "quite/

But things turned out otherwise than the Earl had intended/

intended, for when the Earl came to King Olaf, the whole  
 "quite in the dark as to what will happen to me at our  
 settlement of terms between the King and Earl Brusi was fin-  
 "parting if I say 'no' to him, since the King has openly  
 "declared that claim which he has on the Orkneys. But what  
 "with his own ambition and the fact that we have come here,  
 "he would not scruple to deal as he liked with our decision."

But although the Earl found faults in either course  
 of action, still he chose the option of laying everything  
 in the King's hands, both himself and his realm.

King Olaf then took over from the Earl the govern-  
 ment and defence of all the Earl's inherited lands; and the  
 Earl became his man and confirmed the compact by oaths.

"and, Sir, if thou expectest to be my support  
 "against other chiefs," [said the Earl] "thou hast already

CHAPTER 18. impossible for me to pay thee  
 "homage, for I am already an Earl of the King of Scots, and

#### THE PEACE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE EARLS

#### AND KING OLAF.

News came to Earl Thorfinnr that his brother Brusi  
 had sailed East ~~on a visit~~ to King Olaf to seek his help.  
 But since Thorfinnr had already been to see King Olaf, and  
 had then won his friendship, it seemed to him that his  
 standing in that quarter was already well assured, and he  
 knew that many there would back his cause. Nevertheless he  
 foresaw that there would be more supporters if he appeared  
 in person.

Earl Thorfinnr makes up his mind to get ready with  
 all haste and sail East to Norway, meaning to lag as little  
 as possible behind Brusi, so that his negotiations should  
 not be completed before Thorfinnr reached the King.

But things turned out otherwise than the Earl had  
 intended/

intended, for when the Earl came to King Olafr, the whole settlement of terms between the King and Earl Brusi was finished and done with. And Earl Thorfinnr did not know that Brusi had given up his realm until he met King Olafr.

When first they met, Earl Thorfinnr and King Olafr, King Olafr advanced the same claim to the realm in the Orkneys as he had put to Earl Brusi, and made the same request to Thorfinnr, that he yield to the King the share of the lands of which he had till then been owner.

The Earl answers the King's words courteously and suavely, and speaks in such a way as to imply that he set great store upon the King's friendship.

Fl. - "And, Sir, if thou expectest to need my support against other chiefs," [said the Earl] "thou hast already fully secured it. But it is impossible for me to pay thee homage, for I am already an Earl of the King of Scots, and a vassal of his."

Now when the King noticed in the Earl's answer an evasion of the question he had just put, then the King said: "If thou art unwilling, Earl, to become my man, there is this alternative, that I set a man of my own choosing over the Orkneys; but I desire thee to swear an oath to lay no claim to the lands and to leave him whom I set over the lands in peace and quiet. But if thou wilt not have this course either, then he who rules the lands must look for trouble from thee. Then thou must not be surprised if dale comes to meet hill." ( )

The Earl answers, asking time to think the matter over.

The King complied, giving the Earl time to consult with his men on his course of action.

Then/

Then he asked the King's permission to put the matter off till summer and to go first out West, since, [said Earl Thorfinnr - and that truly - most of] his counsellors were at home; for he was but a child in judgment and in years. ( 1 )

The King bade him choose there and then.

Thorkell Fosterer was then staying with King Olafr. He secretly sent a man to Earl Thorfinnr, bidding him - whatever was in his mind - not to think of parting with King Olafr without a peaceful settlement just when he had come into the King's power.

After such hints the Earl came to the conclusion that there was only one course open to him - to let the King have his own way. ( 2 ) It seemed no advantage to relinquish all hope of himself owning his ancestral lands, and to promise upon oath that foreign interlopers should have undisturbed possession of the realm. But since his departure was a matter of some uncertainty, he made his choice there and then, to put himself in the King's hands and become his man just as [his brother] Brusi had done.

The King observed that Thorfinnr was made of sterner stuff than Brusi and had less liking for such coercion as this. [For this reason] he trusted Thorfinnr less than Brusi. The King saw that Thorfinnr must be counting upon the support of the King of Scots if he broke off this agreement. The King was shrewd enough to observe that during all the negotiations Brusi was acting with reluctance and made no promises but what he meant to keep. But where Thorfinnr was concerned, as soon as he had decided what course he would take, he went into the terms cheerfully and made no scruples whatsoever over the conditions [the/

F1. [the King demanded on the first evening;] (3) but the King had a suspicion that the Earl meant to go back on some of his promises.

CHAPTER 19.

THE DEPARTURE OF EARL THORFINNR.

1021.  
Hkr.

After King Olafr had thought the whole business over he had trumpets blown for a mass-meeting and had the Earls summoned to it.

Then said the King, "I shall now declare publicly the terms of the settlement between the Orkney Earls and myself. They have now agreed to my absolute ownership of the Orkneys and Shetland, and have both become my men, and have pledged themselves to everything by oath. And I shall now grant them in fief as follows—to Brusi one third of the lands, to Thorfinnr another third, just as they had before; but the third share which belonged to Einarr Wry-mouth I have taken into my own keeping because he killed my guardsman Eyvindr Buffalo-horn, a dear friend and fellow of mine. I shall look after that share of the lands as I think best. This also I shall stipulate with you two Earls of mine that I wish you to square accounts ( / ) with Thorkell Amundi's son for the death of your brother Einarr. I wish to lay down the terms of the settlement myself, if you will have it so."

But it was now as in other things, that the Earls agreed to everything that the King said.

Thorkell/

Thorkell then came forward and pledged himself to the King's arbitration in the matter, and so the Thing broke up. King Olafr decided that three landed proprietors' compensation be paid for Earl Einarr; (2) but because of his crime, one third of the compensation was to be remitted.

Earl Thorfinnr then asked leave of the King to depart; and as soon as he got it, the Earl went about his preparations with all speed.

But when he was ready for sailing, it happened one day while the Earl was drinking in his ship that Thorkell Amundi's son suddenly appeared before him, laid his head on the Earl's knees, and bade him do with it as he liked.

The Earl asked why he came in this fashion; -  
 "We came publicly to a settlement, at the King's arbitration. Now stand thou up, Thorkell."

Thorkell did so. He said, (3) "I am satisfied with the terms of settlement made by the King between Brusi and myself; but so far as thou art concerned thou must fix **thine** own terms. The King has awarded me the rights of ownership (4) and residence (5) in the Orkneys; but I know by thy temper that it is impossible for me to come to the Isles, Earl, unless in allegiance with thee. This," says he, "will I promise thee, never to go back to the Orkneys, whatever the King may say about it."

The Earl was silent and took his time in answering. He said, "Wilt thou have it, Thorkell, that I fix the terms of settlement rather than rest content with the King's arbitration? I should then make it the first/

"first condition of our settlement that thou come with me  
 "to the Orkneys, stay with me, and never part from me ex-  
 "cept by my leave and licence; and thy service would be  
 "the defence of the land and all the work that I give thee  
 "to do while we are both alive."

Thorkell says, "This shall be in thy hands, Earl,  
 "like everything else in which I have a choice to make."

Hkr. | 332.

Then Thorkell proceeded to get the Earl to pledge  
 himself | to everything exactly as he had said. (6)

The Earl says that he will see about the compensa-  
 tion later on. But at the same time he took oaths from  
 Thorkell, who then turned at once to sail with the Earl.

As soon as he was ready for sea the Earl set sail;  
 and he and King Olaf never saw each other again.

Earl Brusi stayed behind and was more leisurely  
 in his preparations. But before he put to sea, King  
 Olaf had an interview with him, and said, "I should like,  
 "Earl, to have thee as a trusty friend out in the West.  
 "I mean to let thee have two 'thirds' of the lands to rule  
 "over, as thou hadst before. And I do not wish thee to be  
 "a mere underling, or less influential than thou wast be-  
 "fore, just because thou hast become my man. But I shall  
 "secure thy good faith thus: I desire thy son to stay  
 "behind here. I think, (7) then, that if thou hast my  
 "support, and two 'thirds' of the lands, thou mayest hold  
 "thine own lawfully and well against Thorfinnr."

Brusi agreed thankfully to accept two "thirds"  
 of the lands. He delayed a short time before sailing,  
 and came West to the Orkneys in autumn.

1021.  
 Autumn.

Rognvaldr Brusi's son stayed behind with King  
 Olaf/

Olafr. He was the most handsome of men, with long golden hair like silk. He was tall and strong for his years, and the most accomplished of men both in understanding and manners. He lived a long time with King Olafr.

These facts are referred to in the Ode (drápa) (8) which Ottarr the Black composed upon King Olafr:

"Fair compact you keep  
 With chiefs great and good.  
 As subjects shall Shetlanders  
 Ever be known to thee.  
 No war-eager Prince had we  
 Till now in <sup>the</sup> East  
 Who under his yoke bowed  
 The lands of the West."

1021-1029.

When the brothers Thorfinnr and Brusi came West to the Orkneys, Brusi took two shares of the lands under his rule, but Thorfinnr one. The latter was always in Caithness and in Scotland. Hence Brusi had sole charge of the defence of the Isles. And at that time there were many piratical raids; for the Norwegians and the Danes were doing much harrying on their viking-cruises in the West, and frequently touched at the Isles when they were sailing East or West, and made "ness-raids" (9) there.

Brusi objected to Thorfinn's setting up no defence force for the Orkneys and Shetland while he had all the "skatt" and revenues from his share of the lands.

Thorfinnr therefore made him this offer, that Brusi have one "third" of the lands, but Thorfinnr two thirds/

"thirds" along with the whole responsibility of defence. But although this change did not take place all at once, yet it finally came about that Brusi had one "third" and Thorfinnr two "thirds".

1029.

This happened when Knutr got the realm in Norway and Olafr was in exile.(0)

## CHAPTER 20.

( NO TITLE ).1029x?1035.  
332.

Earl Thorfinnr became a great chief. He was the tallest and strongest of men, ugly, with black hair, sharp features, a big nose and a somewhat swarthy countenance.(1) He was a man of great energy, and greedy both for wealth and honour. He was lucky in battle, skilled in the art of war, and of dauntless courage.

He was five years old when his grandfather Malcolm King of Scots gave him the title of "Earl" and the overlordship of Caithness, as has already been mentioned. And he was fourteen years old when he fitted out a defence force(2) for his land and went a-harrying in the realms of other chiefs. So says Arnorr Earls' Skald, -

"Reddened the sword's edge  
Did the Prince in the helmet-storm,  
Reddener of raven's claws,  
Yet of fifteen winters,  
No man under Heaven  
Younger than Einar's brother  
Ready/

far and wide over Scotland. Thence he returned to  
 Ready has shown himself  
 Caithness, and Thorkell was his brother. The army of  
 - Valiant and stout of heart -  
 levies also went home.  
 To defend and to conquer".  
 The Earl took up his residence at Puncnahy

and kept Earl Thorfinnr got large forces of men (3) from  
 his kinsman the King of Scots. It was a great help to  
 his realm in the Orkneys that support was so near.

1029  
 (for 1034)(?)  
 and told The King of Scots died (4) just after the  
 brothers Brusi and Thorfinnr had made their settlement.  
 Karl Hundi's son (5) then succeeded to the Scottish realm.  
 He thought he ought to own Caithness as well, like former  
 Scottish kings. He wished to get the "skatts" from that  
 realm as from other places. But Earl Thorfinnr was of  
 opinion that his inheritance from his grandfather was none  
 too large though he had Caithness. He declared that he  
 had got that realm as a gift and would give up none of his  
 "skatts". (6) Much ill-will now arose over this, and they  
 took to harrying in each other's realms. King Karl wish-  
 ed to set a chief over Caithness called Mumtan or  
 Muddan, (7) a nephew of his; and he gave him the title of  
 "Earl".

Muddan then rode down towards Caithness, and  
 raised an army in Sutherland. When news of this came to  
 the ears of Earl Thorfinnr, he mustered an army from all  
 over Caithness, and Thorkell Fosterer also came out from  
 the Orkneys with a large force to join the Earl.

Thorfinnr then marched against Muddan, and he had  
 the larger force. And when the Scots saw that they had  
 the smaller force, they were less anxious about fight-  
 ing, (7) and rode back up into Scotland. Earl Thorfinnr  
 pursued them and subdued Sutherland and Ross and harried  
 far/

far and wide over Scotland. Thence he returned to Caithness, and Thorkell out to the Isles. The army of levies also went home.

The Earl took up house in Caithness at Duncansby and kept five warships there, with just enough men to keep them ready for sea. (8)

Muddan went to King Karl at <sup>Beruvík,</sup> ~~Berwick on Tweed~~, (9.) and told him how his expedition had gone anything but smoothly. King Karl was very angry when he learned that his land had been harried. He at once went on ship-board. He had eleven warships and a large army and sailed North round the coast of Scotland. He sent Muddan back to Caithness with a large army; and the latter rode through Scotland overland. (10) It was agreed that he should come from the landward side, and Thorfinnr would be caught in a cleft stick.

Now it must be told of Karl that he never shortened sail till he got to Caithness; and there was but little distance between him and Thorfinnr. Thorfinnr at that moment decided to board ship, hold out into the Pentland Firth, and make for the Orkneys. But, by that time, so short was the distance between them that Karl and his men spied Thorfinn's sails as he sailed East into the Firth. <sup>And they at once sailed</sup> ~~And there and then they veered round~~ after him. (11)

Thorfinnr and his men had not seen their sails and he set his course East past the Isles, meaning to make for Sandwick. (12) He ran in under Deerness from the East. And at once sent a message to Thorkell (12) to/

to muster an army. (Brusi owned the northernmost part of the Isles and was then there.) (13)

Thorfinnr lay under Deerness, as has been said, and he had arrived late in the evening. But when the sun rose next morning, what should they see first but Karl and his men rowing up to them with eleven ships.

There were now two courses open to him. The first was to leap ashore and leave his ships and all his belongings to his enemies. The other was to take the offensive and trust his luck. (14)

Then Thorfinnr called to his men and bade them get out their arms, and said he refused to beat a retreat; then he gave the order to row against them valiantly. And then each grappled with the ship opposite. (15)

Earl Thorfinnr egged on his men eagerly, and bade them be bold and make the first onslaught a hard one; and few of the Scots, he said, would make a stand.

This battle was both hard and prolonged; and for long it was not clear on which side the scale would turn.

Arnorr tells of this in Thorfinn's Ode, -

"East off Deerness

Our Hero taught Karl

The mail-coat's strange judgment;

Safe were the Prince's lands.

Steadfast in anger,

Flight-scorning, the Mighty Man

Advanced on the chieftain,

Five ships to eleven.

"The/

"The ships drove alongside;  
 On the decks dropped the host.  
 Hard steel swam the battle-ward  
 In dark Scottish blood.  
 Our Prince was stout-hearted.  
 Bows sang, steel bit,  
 Blood flowed, shafts flew,  
 Spear-points glittered."

Fl. Earl Thorfinnr now egged on his men to the uttermost. Then he laid his ship alongside Karl's ship; and then came the stiffest fighting of all. The Scots bunched together on the King's ship just before the mast. And then Earl Thorfinnr leaps off his poop forward into the [King's] ship, and lays about him boldly. When he saw that the numbers were thinning on the King's ship he called on his men to come aboard. And when King Karl saw that, he gave orders to cut the lashings, ( ) [get all the fleet under way, take to the oars,] and stand off to sea. Thorfinnr and his men then threw grappling-hooks to on the King's ship. Thorfinnr ordered his standard to be held aloft, and he himself followed it, and a large band with him. Then Karl leapt from his ship along with those of his men who were on their feet; but most of the band had fallen in that ship. Karl leapt into another ship, and bade them take to the oars, and the Scots took to flight with Thorfinnr in pursuit.

Thus says Arnorr, -

"Shooting of spears made  
 Long battle-thunder.

My/

My mighty Lord routed  
 His mightier foe.  
 Screamed high the battle-bird.  
 Reddened our brands in blood.  
 Won was the victory  
 South off Sandwick."

Karl held on South into the Moray Firth, went ashore there, and mustered a fresh force. Thorfinnr turned back after the battle. Then came Thorkell Fosterer to him, and between them they had a large army. They then sailed South into the Moray Firth after Karl and his men; and as soon as they struck the coast of Scotland they began harrying. ( )

There they learned that Muddan was in Caithness, North in Thurso, and had a large army there. He had even sent to Ireland for men, for he had many kinsmen and friends there; and he was waiting there for these forces. Then Thorfinnr and Thorkell decided on this plan, that Thorkell go North through Caithness with part of the army; but Thorfinnr lay behind off the coast of Scotland and harried there.

Thorkell made a surprise march; and all the common folk of Caithness were trusty and true to him. No word of his journey got before him until he entered Thurso at dead of night; and he took the house ( ) over the heads of Muddan and his men, and set fire to it. Muddan was sleeping in an upper room; and just as he leapt out over the balcony (16) Thorkell hewed at him and came down on his neck and took off his head. After that his men surrendered, but some escaped by jumping. (17)

Many/

Many men were killed, but a very large number were given quarter. follows -

Thorkell remained there for a short time before he returned to the Moray Firth. He had now with him all the forces he had raised in Caithness, and throughout Sutherland and Ross. He met in with Earl Thorfinnr South on the coast of Moray, (18) and told him how his errand had sped. The Earl thanked him heartily for his exertions. Then they both lay there for a time, and went on harrying.

Now it must be told of King Karl that he went up into Scotland after his battle with Earl Thorfinnr and gathered a fresh army. He raised the army from the whole of the South of Scotland, both from the East and from the West, and South as far as Cantyre. And there came to join him that army from Ireland which Muddan had sent for. [He sent far and wide to chiefs for forces; and] the whole army he summoned against Earl Thorfinnr, and they met at Tarbatness in the South of the Moray Firth. (19) There was a great battle, and the Scots had by far the larger army. Earl Thorfinnr was in the van of his troops; he had a gilded helmet ( ) on his head, he was girt with a sword, and had a great spear in his hand which he wielded to right and left. ( ) So is it said ( ) that he stood foremost among all his men. First he charged the Irish ranks, and so fierce were he and his men that they at once gave ground before him and never regained it. Karl then had his standard borne against Thorfinnr. There was then a great struggle, and the upshot was that Karl took to flight; but/

but some men say (20) that he was killed. But Arnorr  
 says as follows:-

"A keen sword at Tarbatness  
 Reddened the wolf's fare.  
 The young Prince wielded it -  
 It was a Monday.  
 Thin swords sang there,  
 South off Oykell  
 There fought with Scotland's king  
 Our valiant Lord.  
 "At the crashing of spears  
 Shetland's Lord in the van  
 Bore high his helm;  
 Exalted in battle  
 He reddened in Irish blood  
 Spear point and sword edge,  
 Stout arm at onset,  
 Kinsman of Hlothver,  
 This gracious Lord of mine,  
 Raising his Welsh shield  
 Rushed on the host."

Earl Thorfinnr continued the pursuit far up  
 into Scotland; and thereafter he marched far and wide  
 throughout the land subduing it. He went South as far  
 as Fife and laid the land under him. Men yielded to  
 him wheresoever he went.

While he was staying in Fife he sent off  
 Thorkell with part of his forces. And when the Scots  
 learned/

332 | 325b.

learned that the Earl had dispensed with part of his army, some of those very men who had submitted to him marched against him. And as soon as the Earl got word of their treachery he called together his forces and marched to meet them. The Scots were less anxious to rebel when they learned that the Earl was ready for them. As soon as he came near the Scots, Earl Thorfinnr prepared for battle, but they had not enough spirit to defend themselves. They promptly took to flight and scattered in all directions to the woods and thickets. And after the Earl had pursued them he called in all his army, and says that he will have the whole province burned in which they then were, and pay the Scots out for their enmity and treachery.

Then the Earl's men went round every village and township (21) and burned right and left so that not a cottage was left standing. They killed all the fighting-men they found, but the women and old men took themselves off to the woods and thickets [with weeping and wailing]. Many people they took captive and put in fetters and drove before them.

Fl.  
332

So says Arnorr Earls' Skald:-

"Humbled the homesteads,  
 Burning in Scotland.  
 Red flame from smoking thatch  
 Shot high; for that day  
 Dire danger failed not.  
 Vengeance for broken word  
 Tried warriors ever give.  
 Thrice/

Thrice ere the fall of leaf  
Triumphed our Chieftain."

After that Earl Thorfinnr marched North over Scotland to his ships ( 22 ) and laid the land under him wherever he went. He then sailed ( 23 ) North to Caithness and stayed there that winter. Each summer after that he had an army of levies out and harried round the coasts of Britain, and he usually lived at home for a short time in the winters.

Earl Thorfinnr did this notable deed in the Orkneys, that he furnished all his Bodyguard and many other men of rank both with meat and ale the whole winter through, so that men had no need to go to the ale-house, ( 24 ) just as it is the custom of kings and earls in other countries frequently to entertain their Bodyguards at Christmas.

So says Arnorr Earls' Skald:-

"In winter (the serpent-slayer),  
Rognvald's fair princely son  
Drank deep the malt flood.  
Then did the Peerless One  
Show forth his glory."

1030x1035

At that time Earl Brusi died. ( 25 ) Earl Thorfinnr then took all the Orkneys under him.

#### CHAPTER 21.

(NO TITLE).

Now it must be told of Rognvaldr Brusi's son,  
that/

1030.  
325b.

that he fought in the Battle of Stiklestad when Saint Olaf the King was killed. Rognvaldr escaped with the other fugitives. He carried off from the field Haraldr Sigurth's son, King Olaf's brother, who was badly wounded. Rognvaldr left him with a small bondi for his wound to heal, while he himself went East over Kōlen to Jämtland, and thence to Sweden to see King Onundr.

Haraldr stayed with this bondi till his wound mended. The bondi then gives him his son as a guide, and they travelled East to Jämtland and thence to Sweden; and they travelled much by stealth. ( 1 ) And when in a thicket they parted, Haraldr spoke this verse ( 2 ), -

"I crawl in base fashion

From wood to wood.

Who knows but that some day

Fame shall be mine."

In Sweden Haraldr went to see Rognvaldr Brusil's son. From there they both journeyed<sup>ey</sup> East to Western Russia, along with a large band of others who had been with King Olaf. They did not stop till they came East to Novgorod to see King Jaroslav. King Jaroslav welcomed them very cordially for the sake of Saint Olaf the King. They were placed in the defence force over Russia along with Earl Eilifr, son of Earl Rognvaldr Ulf's son.

Rognvaldr Brusil's son remained behind in Russia when King Haraldr Sigurth's son went off to Istanbul. Rognvaldr did a spell in the defence force in summer but spent the winters in Novgorod. King Jaroslav thought/

thought much of him and all his people likewise. As was said before, ( 3 ) Rognvaldr was taller and stronger than any other man, the most handsome of men, and of such accomplishments that his match was not to be found. So says Arnorr Earls' Skald, that Rognvaldr fought in Novgorod ten pitched battles:-

"Eager for battle,

A War-god he grew;

Ten showers of the shield-file

Fought he in Russia."

When Einarr Bowstring-Shaker and Kalfr Arni's son, were seeking Magnus Olaf's son East in Russia, Rognvaldr ran up against them in Ladoga. He was just on the point of hurling himself upon Kalfr when Kalfr let him know the purpose of their journey. Einarr told Rognvaldr that Kalfr repented of his crime of killing Saint Olaf the King, and wished to make compensation to his son Magnus. He says that Kalfr wished to raise Magnus to the throne of Norway and strengthen him against the successors of Knutr. ( 4 ) And after that Rognvaldr calmed down. Einarr then asks Rognvaldr to agree to go with them up to Novgorod and plead their cause before King Jaroslav; and to this Rognvaldr agreed. Then they hire horses ( 5 ) for themselves in Ladoga and drive up to Novgorod and go to see King Jaroslav. They explained to him their errand, saying they have grown so tired of the rule of the successors of Knutr, and especially of Alfifa, ( 6 ) that they will do anything rather than serve them any longer. Then they ask King Jaroslav to give them Magnus, son of King Olaf, as overlord. Then Rognvaldr also pleads their cause, and Ingigerthr the Queen, and many others.

The/

The King was loath to give Magnus into the hands of the Norsemen after what they had done to Saint Olafr the King, his father. But it ended thus, that eleven of the most honoured men swore to King Jaroslav an oath that the offer was quite genuine and straightforward. Rognvaldr wished to make a twelfth; but King Jaroslav forbore to take his oath by reason of his good faith. ( 4 ) Kalfr swore an oath to Magnus that he would stay by his side at home and abroad and do everything that Magnus thought was for the increase and security of his realm.

After that the Norsemen took Magnus for their King and submitted to him.

Kalfr and his men stayed in Novgorod till after Christmas. Then they went down to Ladoga, and there they chartered ships. They sailed West in the spring as soon as ever the ice broke.

Rognvaldr Brusi's son then made up his mind to journey with King Magnus. First they went to Sweden (as is told in the Saga of King Magnus), ( 8 ) and thence to Jämtland, and so Westwards across Kólen to Vaerdalen. And as soon as King Magnus entered Trondhjem all the people came and submitted to him. He went out to Nidaros and at a Thing on the Eyrar ( 9 ) he was declared King over all the land.

After that came the dealings between him and King Sveinn, as are narrated in the Lives of the Kings of Norway. ( 10 )

When Rognvaldr Brusi's son came to Norway he learned of the death of his father and [heard also] that Earl Thorfinnr had taken all the Isles under him.  
Rognvaldr/

1036.  
Spring.

332, Fl.



Rognvaldr was now anxious to go to his odal lands and asked the King's leave to do so. King Magnus saw that it was a case of necessity and stood by him well in the matter. King Magnus gave Rognvaldr the title of "Earl", ( 11 ) and three warships all well equipped; and he also gave him [in fief] that "third" of the Isles which King Olafr had kept and had given to his father Brusi. Then King Magnus promised Earl Rognvaldr his unreserved friendship, and told him he might reckon on his support whenever he needed it. They parted good friends. ( 12 )

1037x1038.

332, Fl.

## CHAPTER 22.

OF ROGNVALD'S JOURNEY.

Earl Rognvaldr Brusi's son sailed West to the Orkneys, and went first to those estates ( 1 ) which his father had owned. Then he sent messengers to his kinsman Earl Thorfinnr, asking him for the "third" of the Isles which his father had held. He also made it known to Earl Thorfinnr that King Magnus had given him [in fief] the "third" that King Olafr had owned; and, at the good pleasure of his kinsman Earl Thorfinnr, he asks for these two thirds of the lands. ( 2 )

But at that moment Earl Thorfinnr had his hands full with the men of the Hebrides and the Irish, and he felt himself much in need of help in the way of forces. And/

1037x1038.  
325b.

332, Fl.



And he made this answer to Rognvald's envoys that he may certainly take under his rule the "third" of the Isles which is his by right; - "but as for the 'third' which King Magnus claims as his, we gave in to King Olaf in that matter not so much because we thought it just as because he had the whip hand over us at the moment. And indeed we kinsmen will get on better together the less we talk about this 'third' of the lands. It has long been a source of wrangling. And if Rognvaldr will be a loyal kinsman and supporter, as he may well be for kinship's sake, then I think my realm will be well bestowed, if he gets any pleasure out of it for himself, and it provides us both with forces. His assistance with men is worth more to me than the skatts that I get from it."

After that the messengers went back and told Earl Rognvaldr that Earl Thorfinnr had agreed to give him two "thirds" of the lands, if he will be his supporter and be such a kinsman to him as will do honour to both.

Earl Rognvaldr says that he thought he claimed only what seemed his own. But since Earl Thorfinnr gave up the lands so lightly, he said he would certainly assist him with men, and be his friend in every way, just as their kinship bound him.

Earl Rognvaldr now took under him two shares of the lands; and so things stood that winter.

Now early in spring, Earl Thorfinnr sends a message to his kinsman Earl Rognvaldr, asking him to go/

1039.  
Spring.

325b | 332.

go on a war-cruise with him, and to bring as many men as he can get. And when Rognvaldr got this message, he made ready at once, and mustered a force, and collected every ship he could lay hands on. And when this force was ready, he sailed to meet Earl Thorfinnr. Thorfinnr had now also got his fighting band ready. He gave his kinsman Rognvaldr a cordial welcome, and then they joined forces.

1039.  
Summer.

Those kinsmen Thorfinnr and Rognvaldr harried during the summer round the coasts of the Hebrides and Ireland and far and wide round the West coast of Scotland. Thorfinnr laid the land under him wherever they went. That summer they fought a great battle at a place called Loch Vatten. There was great loss of men. The battle began in the early morning, and those kinsmen won a striking victory.

332 | Fl.

| Arnorr Earls' Skald mentions this battle:-

"Deeds done doughtily  
By my Lord at Loch Vatten,  
By the Tester of Men;  
- I was with him in peril.  
Swiftly the warrior-band  
Bore up the shield-wall  
That Friday morning.  
The grey wolf was gaping  
O'er each bloody corpse."

After this battle they turned back to the Orkneys and lived there quietly that winter.

1037x1038  
-1046.

So eight years passed, while Earl Rognvaldr

held/

held two shares of the Isles, without Earl Thorfinnr finding anything to complain about. But every summer they spent a-harrying, sometimes both together, sometimes each on his own. So says Arnorr:-

"The Man of the Sword,  
Seeking Scotland's throne,  
Ever won victory.  
Fire flamed fiercely,  
Fast fell the Irish host,  
And flower of Welsh manhood."

Those kinsmen pulled well together when they were in company; and if men of less good sense went tale-bearing between them, the disputes were always settled amicably. ~~thrashed out peaceably.~~ (3) Thorfinnr lived for a long time in Caithness, [and Rognvaldr in the Orkneys.]

## CHAPTER 23.

### OF EARL THORFINN'S WAR-CRUISE.

One summer it happened that Earl Thorfinnr was harrying round the Hebrides and coasts of Scotland, and lay off that place called Galloway where Scotland and England meet<sup>(1)</sup>. He had sent a party on to the South of England to make cattle-raids on the coast<sup>(2)</sup>; [for where he lay with his men all the inhabitants had taken themselves off inland, and had driven their cattle with them.]<sup>(3)</sup>

But when the English got word of the expedition of/

1040x1042  
Summer.  
Fl.

0.

of the vikings, they banded themselves together and marched against them, killed all the fighting men, (4) but sent back [the non-combatants] (5) with orders to tell Earl Thorfinnr how they made vikings sick of plundering and pillaging; and to this they added much abusive language.

These men then sailed to Earl Thorfinnr, and told him how ill they had fared. He was very ill-pleased at losing his men; but he said it could not be helped. But he added that he was quite able to pay the English out for the jeers and gibes they made out of the affair. He and they, however, must first part for a space. But if he was spared till next summer, he said [he would pay them a call.] (6)

0.

## CHAPTER 24.

WHEREIN IS TOLD OF EARL THORFINN'S WAR-  
CRUISE TO IRELAND AND ELSEWHERE. (1)

1040-1042.  
Fl.

At that time Harthaknutr ruled over England and Denmark.

1041-1042  
Winter.  
1042.  
Spring.

After that Earl Thorfinnr sailed home to the Orkneys and lived there for the winter. Early in Spring he held a levy (2) over all his realm. Then he sent a message to his kinsman Rognvaldr, and Rognvaldr answered it by holding a levy over all his own realm. Earl Thorfinnr mustered his army from the Orkneys, and from Caithness, and he also got large forces/

forces from Scotland and from Ireland, and from all the Hebrides men came flocking to him. He set forth with all this army to England, as he had promised them [the previous autumn]. Harthaknutr was in Denmark when this happened. And as soon as the Earls struck the English coasts, they began harrying and pillaging. But the chiefs who were set to defend the land marched against them with an army. And there was a great battle and a hard one, and the Earls won the day. After that they marched far and wide through England harrying, killing men, and burning the townships wherever they went. (3)

Of this Arnorr says [in Thorfinn's Ode]:-

"One battle-shower  
 Will the English remember.  
 Ne'er was a greater.  
 There, with his warrior band,  
 Came the Giver of Rings.  
 The keen tempered sword  
 Bit the stout-hearted host.  
 South off the Isle of Man  
 Rognvaldr the Old's son  
 Fell in the fight.

"Upon England's shores  
 The Earl bore his banner -  
 Ever and again  
 Reddening the eagle's tongue.  
 The Prince bade them carry  
 The standard steadfastly.  
 Flame/

Flame flared (the green ~~share~~<sup>foe</sup>)  
 Roofs fell, smoke curled,  
 To heaven rose the fiery gleam,  
 While the armed band pursued."

Earl Thorfinnr fought two pitched battles in England, but on the other hand fought many skirmishes with great manslaughter. He lay there almost the whole summer through, and in autumn he returned home to the Orkneys [and settled down there] for the winter.

1042.  
 Summer.  
 Autumn.

Winter. O.

#### CHAPTER 25.

##### KALFR FLIES TO THE ORKNEYS.

At this time, Kalfr Arni's son was banished by King Magnus. He sailed West to his kinsman Earl Thorfinnr, (Earl Thorfinnr had then to wife Ingibjorg Earls' mother, daughter of Earl Finnrr Arni's son). (1) Kalfr then stayed with Earl Thorfinnr in the closest intimacy; he had a large following of his own, and this was a source of considerable expense to the Earl. And there were many who now told him plainly that he should not let Rognvaldr have the two shares of the Isles [any longer,] with the heavy expenses he was himself incurring. And upon that Earl Thorfinnr sent men out to the Isles, to ask Earl Rognvaldr for the "third" [of the Orkneys] which had belonged to Einarr Wry-mouth(2).

1036x.  
 Fl.

1042x1046

O.

O.

O.

But when this message arrived, the Earl brought the matter before his friends [and councillors]; after/

after that he calls Earl Thorfinn's envoys to his presence. Rognvaldr tells them, that that share of the Isles which [Thorfinnr lays claim to] (3) he got in fief from King Magnus and the King spoke of it as his patrimony. Now, said he, King Magnus had power to decide which of them should have that share of the Isles. But, he said, he would not give it up, [so long as] it was the King's will that it be his. (4)

On this the envoys went away, and they recount their message to Earl Thorfinnr; they said it was not likely that he would gain his end without a struggle.

Now when Earl Thorfinnr heard this he was very angry, and said it was unfair that King Magnus should have his brother's inheritance. He says that that had been agreed to more because they had been under King Olaf's thumb at the time, than because it was a just partition of the inheritance. - "To my mind, Rognvaldr "gives me scant return for [my good will in] letting him "keep the realm in peace and quiet all this time, if now "I cannot come near my brother's inheritance without "fighting for it."

So angry was Earl Thorfinnr over this that he immediately sends men to the Hebrides and up into Scotland, and mustered an army; he gave it out that he must march against Earl Rognvaldr and so gain by force (5) what he could not get by peaceful settlement.

Now when this comes to the ears of Earl Rognvaldr, he calls his friends to him, and complains to them that Earl Thorfinnr his kinsman means to bring an army and make war on him. Then he asked what forces they are willing to give him, and said he was unwilling to/

to give up what was his without one trial of strength. But when he asked them their judgment in the matter, there was great diversity of opinion. Some backed up Earl Rognvaldr and said it was no disgrace<sup>(6)</sup> that he was unwilling to partition his realm. But there were some who said it was no crime<sup>(6)</sup> of Thorfinn's to wish to have the realm for a time, when Rognvaldr had already held [so long] that share which had belonged to Earl Einarr; besides, they said, Rognvaldr would be ill-advised to enter the field against Thorfinnr with such an army as he could muster from the two shares of the Isles, whereas Thorfinnr had his third share, and Caithness, a large part of Scotland and all the Hebrides.<sup>(7)</sup> There were some men who proposed a diplomatic settlement; they besought Earl Rognvaldr to offer Earl Thorfinnr one half of the Isles, and in this way he might preserve the ties of kinship.

But when Earl Rognvaldr saw how each had a way of his own but were one and all against his making any resistance, he spoke out his own mind. He said he would not partition his realm by any arrangement, [nor pit his strength against Earl Thorfinnr when he knew that Earl Thorfinnr had much the larger force]. He declared that he would rather give up his realm for a space, seek King Magnus his foster-brother, and find what forces the King will get him to defend his realm.

After that he makes ready for the voyage and sails East to Norway; and he loses no time till he comes to King Magnus. And when he arrives he tells the King the whole state of affairs.

The/

The King gives Earl Rognvaldr a kindly welcome and invites him to stay with him as long as he liked, and to take of him fief as large as would keep himself and his men in comfort.

But Earl Rognvaldr told the King that he wished to get a force from him to gain possession of his realm.

King Magnus said he would certainly supply him with men from his own army for the purpose he asked.

0. Rognvaldr stayed a short time in Norway before he made ready to sail West to the Orkneys; and he had a large and [well equipped] force [of the strongest and most matchless of men,] which King Magnus had given him. And with him went a message from King Magnus to Kalfr Arni's son, to the effect that he would get back his rights of ownership and residence(?) in Norway if he took Earl Rognvald's part in his dispute with Earl Thorfinnr.

## CHAPTER 26.

### THE BATTLE OFF ROBERRY.

?1046.  
Fl.

Earl Rognvaldr sailed from Norway West towards the Orkneys, and made land in Shetland, gathered men about him, and thence sailed South to the Orkneys. He summoned his friends to his side, and increased his forces thence.

0. Earl Thorfinnr was [over] in Caithness [at the time], and news soon reached him of Earl Rognvald's expedition; he [at once] mustered an army from Scotland and the Hebrides.

Earl/

Earl Rognvaldr immediately sent the message of King Magnus to Kalfr Arni's son, and Kalfr took well to all that the King had said.

0. Earl Rognvaldr drew his forces together in the Orkneys, meaning to cross to Caithness; and when he sailed into the Pentland Firth, he had thirty [ships, all large and in good trim.] There came to meet him Earl Thorfinnr with sixty ships, most of them small. They met off Roberry and at once fell to. (1)

Kalfr Arni's son had also arrived on the scene with six<sup>(2)</sup> ships, all large; but he took no part in the fighting.

0. And now begins the hardest of battles. Each Earl egged on his men. But after things had gone on so for a time, the scale of losses turned against Earl Thorfinnr; this was mainly due to the difference in the height of the ships. Thorfinnr had a large and well manned ship, and held the van boldly. But when his smaller craft were cleared, [Rognvald's men came alongside the big ship and attacked Earl Thorfinnr on both sides.]<sup>(3)</sup> It was a most critical moment for [him]. Many men were killed on the Earl's ship, and some were badly wounded [and mutilated]. (4)

702, 0. Earl Rognvaldr egged on his men to climb aboard. But when Thorfinnr saw to what a pass he had come, he got his ship hacked clear of the grappling ropes and rowed towards the land.<sup>(5)</sup> He had [eighty]<sup>(6)</sup> dead men carried ashore from the ship; [and] there landed all those who were disabled through wounds.

702, 0.

Then Thorfinnr bade Arnorr Earls' Skald go ashore; he was in the Earl's company, and a close friend of his.

He/

He called. He went ashore, and spoke a verse:-

for Earl Thorfinnr. [Thus says Rognvaldr's

Skald]. (7) "Loath is this fellow

- Hide it I cannot -

To fight against Brusi's son,

Good though it be

To defend one's lord stoutly.

A poser for me,

A trial for friendship,

If these war-greedy Earls

Must fight it out here."

Earl Thorfinnr mans his ship with the best men he had left. Then he sailed to Kalfr, and asked his help. ["Thou canst not buy back the friendship of King Magnus now,"] he said, ["when he has already outlawed thee]. (7) And thou gotst no good out of it even when thou didst have his whole friendship. And so thou canst guess that if Rognvaldr defeat us and he and King Magnus extend their realm out here in the West, thou wilt not be welcome here. But if we win, thine will be no small share of what falls to my lot. We two shall be at no man's beck and call (8) here in the West if we pull together in this matter. And thou wouldst not like to have it on thy conscience that thou art cowering here like a cat in a cairn while I do battle for the freedom of us both. There are also ties of kinship between us, so that it seems the more fitting that we should join forces, for those against thee are none of thy blood."

Now when Kalfr had heard Thorfinn's arguments,  
he/

0.

and, owing to the big difference in the height of the  
 he called to his men and bade them make ready for battle  
 ships, speedily cleared them. For when the Norwegian  
 for Earl Thorfinnr. [Thus says Bjarni Gullbra's  
 levies saw the ships beside them cleared, they slipped.  
 Skald]:-(9)

"Kalfr, I have heard how  
 so that now only one vessel was left with the Earl's  
 Thou foughtst with Finn's kinsman,  
 ship.  
 And swiftly at sea  
 Then the tide of battle began to turn. So  
 Set thy ships 'gainst the Earl;  
 says Arnorr Earls' Skald:-  
 With zeal to destroy  
 Bore down on Brusi's son;  
 And mindful of vengeance  
 - Thy heart was on fire -  
 Fought for Earl Thorfinnr."

0.

Now both Earl Thorfinnr and Kalfr began to row  
 forward together. And when they came to grips, Thor-  
 finnr's host showed signs of flight, while many were kill-  
 ed. Earl [Thorfinnr] laid his ship against Earl Rogn-  
 vald's, and there the hardest fighting took place.  
 So says Arnorr Earls' Skald:-

ship, and many of Earl Rognvald's men were killed. And  
 "I beheld both my patrons,  
 when Rognvaldr saw the Earl's ship, and that he could  
 In Pentland Firth, hewing  
 win no victory, he had the  
 At each other's men.  
 stepping back to flight. The day was  
 Deep grew my sorrow.  
 new for the Earl's men were falling. Earl  
 Blood streaked the sea,  
 Rognvaldr's ship was very tight, and he  
 Blood fell on shield-rim, -  
 East to West  
 Bespattered the ship.  
 Rognvaldr  
 Black blood oozed  
 stay with him. He lived with him for a  
 time.

Kalfr went for the smaller ships of Rognvaldr,  
 and/

and, owing to the big difference in the height of the ships, speedily cleared them. Now when the Norwegian levies saw the ships beside them cleared, they slipped their ships from the grappling ropes and took to flight, so that now only one vessel was left with the Earl's ship.

Then the tide of battle began to turn. So says Arnorr Earls' Skald:-

"The warrior Prince,

Scion of Endill,

Had all but conquered

These ancient lands.

Many his men,

Yet not of his realms.

The army betrayed

The Lord of the Shetlanders."

And now that the main body had fled, Kalfr and Earl Thorfinnr made a joint attack on Earl Rognvald's ship, and many of Earl Rognvald's men were killed. And when Rognvaldr saw how things stood, and that he could win no victory over Thorfinnr and Kalfr, he had the grappling ropes cut, and took to flight. The day was now far spent, and darkness was falling [fast]. Earl Rognvaldr sailed out to sea that very night, and so East to Norway. He lost no time till he came to King Magnus. He received him well, as before, and bade him stay with him; and Earl Rognvaldr lived with him for a time.

## CHAPTER 27.

"things must happen." [If I reach the Isles] and take  
EARL THORFINNR LAYS THE ISLES UNDER HIM. Victory

was would hardly be won, if at all, with a large force.

"But if Now it must be told of Earl Thorfinnr that on  
 the morning after the battle he had his ships rowed  
 round the Isles in search of fugitives. Many were kill-  
 ed, while some surrendered, to him as soon as he wished.

And after Then Earl Thorfinnr laid all the Isles under  
 him. He made every man pay homage to him, even those  
 who had been previously pledged to Rognvaldr. Then he  
 took up house in the Orkneys (1) with a large following,  
 getting provisions for his own use over from Caithness.  
 But Kalfr Arni's son he sent to the Hebrides, setting  
 him there to secure his support.

Now after Earl Rognvaldr had lived in Norway  
 for a time with King Magnus, he told the King that he  
 wished to return [West] to the Orkneys. Now when the  
 King heard that, he said it was folly to go far before  
 [winter was over and] the ice broke up and the sea was  
 clear; but he added that he would let him have ships  
 and such fighting-men as he needed [and a sufficient  
 crew]. Earl Rognvaldr replies to the effect that it is  
 not his will to be losing King Magnus' men for him.  
 He said that there would be nothing but wholesale  
 slaughter if he led an army against Thorfinnr and Kalfr,  
 so great a realm had they over there in the West.  
 "But now I mean," said he, "to hold West with one ship,  
 "and man it of the best. Thus I expect that no news  
 "[of us] will get there before us. Then one of two  
 "things/

?1046.  
 Fl.

Fl. 325.

?1046.  
 Winter.

O.

O.

Fl.

"things must happen. [If I reach the Isles] and take  
 "them by surprise, I may then win such a speedy victory  
 "as would hardly be won, if at all, with a large force.  
 "But if they are forewarned of our coming, then we can  
 "still let the sea take care of us."

King Magnus bade him make the voyage as he  
 thought fit, but come back to him as soon as he wished.  
 And after that Rognvaldr makes ready for his voyage,  
 O. [and has a single ship,] and chooses his men carefully  
 for it. Several of the King's Body-guard agreed to  
 O. sail with him. Thus he had a force of picked men [in  
 his ship]. And when all was ready for sea, they set  
 Fl. sail. It was in the beginning of winter, [and they  
 got a fair wind.]

## CHAPTER 28.

### OF THORFINNR AND EARL ROGNVALDR.

?1046.  
 Winter.  
 325,

O. Earl Rognvaldr made land in Shetland, and there  
 he learned that Earl Thorfinnr was in the Orkneys and  
 had no very large force [for his Body-guard]; for he was  
 not expecting war in mid-winter. Rognvaldr now set his  
 course South to the Orkneys without delay. Earl Thor-  
 finnr was then on the Mainland and heedless of danger.  
 But as soon as Rognvaldr reached the Orkneys, he halted  
 for a space till he had news of Thorfinnr, and he ap-  
 proached so stealthily that no one was aware of them  
 till they had secured all the doors of the house in  
 which/

which Thorfinnr and his men were. It was night, and most of the men were asleep; but the Earl was still sitting up drinking.

Fl.

And in the Rognvaldr and his men set fire to the whole homestead. (1) Now when Thorfinnr was aware of the attack he sent [men] to the doors and bade them find out who led the assailants. (2) Then the word was passed that Earl Rognvaldr had arrived.

325a,O,Fl.

Fl.

Then men leapt to their weapons, but could make no resistance, for none of them could get out. The dwellinghouse suddenly burst into flames. Thorfinnr asked permission to leave the house [for those to whom quarter should be given].. And this appeal was passed to the Earl, and he allowed all the women and bondmen [to leave]; but he said that most of Earl Thorfinnr's Body-guard would be no better to him alive than dead. Then those to whom quarter was given were pulled out.

325a,Fl.

Immediately the whole homestead blazed up. Earl Thorfinnr broke through ~~under~~ [a wooden partition (3) at the back of the house] and leapt out thence with his wife Ingibjorg in his arms. It was pitch dark and moonless, (4) and he got away through the smoke unperceived by the Earl's men. That very night, alone in a boat, he rowed over to Caithness.

Earl Rognvaldr burned the whole homestead and all the men inside who were refused exit. And there was no man but believed that Earl Thorfinnr had perished with them.

After that Earl Rognvaldr scoured the Isles and/

and laid them under him. And he sent word over to Caithness and thence to the Hebrides that he meant to have as his own all the realm that Earl Thorfinnr had had. And in this no man gainsaid him.

Earl Thorfinnr lived in hiding with his friends in various places in Caithness; and not a word got out that he had escaped from the burning.

## CHAPTER 29.

### THE DEATH OF EARL ROGNVALDR.

Earl Rognvaldr took up house in Kirkwall, (1) and there laid in all the stores which he needed for the winter. He had a large following and kept open house.

But a little before Christmas Earl Rognvaldr went with a large following to Papa Stronsay for malt to be brewed for Christmas. And that evening, while they were on the island, they sat for a long time beside a roasting fire (2); and he ordered the man who kindled the fire to go and fetch fuel.

Now the Earl made a slip of the tongue: he said this, "We shall be old enough before this fire is burnt out." (3) But he meant to say that they would be warm enough before this fire was burnt out. And when he noticed his mistake, he said, "I have never made a slip of the tongue till now, so far as I remember; and it comes now to my mind that King Olafr my foster-father said at Stiklestad, when I noticed his slip of the tongue, that, if it so befell that I made a slip of the tongue/

1046.  
325.

1046.  
Christmas.

tongue, I should have but a short time to live. It may(4) be that kinsman Thorfinnr is alive."

And at that moment they learned that the farmstead(5) was surrounded by men. Earl Thorfinnr had arrived.

He and his men immediately set fire to the dwellinghouse, and piled a heap of fuel against the doors. Earl Thorfinnr gave permission to all except the Earl's men to leave; and when most of the men were pulled out, a man came out into the doorway alone in linen clothes, and Thorfinnr then bade his men lend a hand to the deacon.(6) But the latter put his hands on the balk of wood across the doorway(7), and vaulted so high out over the balk and the ring of men that he landed further down and immediately vanished in the darkness.

Thorfinnr then ordered his men to keep track of him, saying that there went Earl [Rognvaldr];- "That feat is his and none other's."

They [then] went in search of him, and split into groups. Thorkell Fosterer went along by the sea seeking him; and they heard a dog barking on the rocks on the shore. Earl Rognvaldr had had [with him] his lap dog, and he gave the Earl away. They killed him there and then among the rocks.(8) But some men say that Thorkell Fosterer slew him because there were no other men dared do it. He had sworn to do all those things that seemed to Thorfinnr more for the safety of his realm than before.

Thorfinnr and his men stayed the night on the island/

island. The whole company who had come thither with Rognvaldr were killed.

Next morning they took the cargo ship, (10) loaded it with the malt, and went aboard, leaving the shields that had belonged to Rognvaldr and his men on stem and stern. (11) And they allowed no men to be seen on the ship except followers of the Earl.

Then they rowed to Kirkwall. And when Rognvald's followers on the fore-shore (12) saw them, they thought it must be Earl Rognvaldr come back; whereupon they went to meet him, many of them weaponless. Earl Thorfinnr had thirty men seized on the spot and put to death. Most of them were of King Magnus' Body-guard, and friends of his. The Earl gave quarter to one of King Magnus' Body-guard and bade him sail East to Norway and take King Magnus the news.

## CHAPTER 30.

F1.

### [THE BURIAL OF EARL ROGNVALDR]

1046.  
325a.

The body of Earl Rognvaldr was conveyed to Papa Westray and there buried. Men said that he had been one of the most popular and accomplished of the Orkney earls; and many men took his death sorely to heart.

After that Earl Thorfinnr laid all the Orkneys under him, and now no man said him nay.

1047.  
Spring.

News of these doings reached Norway early in Spring/

Spring. King Magnus was deeply grieved at the death of  
 O. [his friend] Earl Rognvaldr, and declared at once that he  
 would avenge him, if he got the chance. But at that  
 moment he had a great war on with Sveinn Ulf's son, who  
 (1046) had then had himself made king over Denmark. At that  
 moment there arrived in Norway Haraldr Sigurth's son, a  
 kinsman of King Magnus, and King Magnus made over to him  
 the half of Norway. They acted as joint kings over  
 (1046-1047) Norway for one winter; then they levied an army from all  
 Norway and set off South to Denmark.

Now as they lay under the Seløen, two warships  
 ran into the harbour and up to King Magnus' ship. From  
 one warship stepped a man in a white cloak and cowl, then  
 aft along [King Magnus'] ship, and so up on to the poop.  
 The King was sitting over his meat. The man greeted the  
 King, bowing to him, and took up a loaf of bread and  
 broke it and ate a piece. The King accepted his greet-  
 ing, and handed over to him his cup when he saw that he  
 was eating the bread. The man raised the cup and said:

"We want peace, messmate."

The King gazed at him and said: "Who art thou?"

"I am Thorfinnr Sigurth's son."

"Art thou Earl Thorfinnr?" says the King.

"So am I called out West there," says he.

"But I have come here with two twenty-oared ships, very  
 "well manned considering the choice we had. Now I will  
 "row this force along with thee, if thou wilt accept  
 "help from me. But my fate shall lie wholly in God's  
 "power and thine, my lord, [because of the grave deeds  
 "I have done against thy will.]"

The men began to gather round to hear their  
 talk/

talk. The King was slow to answer. He spoke thus:  
 "It is true, Earl Thorfinnr, that I did not mean that  
 "if we ever met as we do now thou shouldst be able to  
 "tell of our parting. But as things stand now, it ill  
 "becomes my honour to have thee put to death. Thou  
 "shalt come with me now. But as for terms of settle-  
 "ment, I shall declare them at my leisure."

Thorfinnr bade the King good-bye and went back  
 to his ship. The King lay for a very long time in the  
 Seløen, and there mustered an army from Viken. He  
 meant to sail thence South along the coast of Jutland  
 when he got a fair wind. Earl Thorfinnr had long talks  
 with the King. The King treated the Earl in friendly  
 fashion and took him much into his counsels.

325a | Fl. It befell one day | that the Earl went aboard  
 the King's ship and went aft to the poop. The King  
 bade him sit down beside him. The Earl sat down, and  
 they drank together and were in high spirits. There  
 stepped on to the poop a man in a red kirtle, tall and  
 of warlike bearing. He greeted the King. The King  
 received his greeting graciously, for he was one of the  
 King's Body-guard. The man began to speak, saying:

"I have come to find thee, Earl Thorfinnr."

"What dost thou want with me?" says the Earl.

0. "I wish to know", [said the man], "whether thou  
 "wilt pay me compensation for my brother, whom thou  
 "hadst put to death out West in Kirkwall with others of  
 "King Magnus' Bodyguard."

"Hast thou not heard," says the Earl, "that  
 "it is not my custom to pay money for men I have had  
 "put/

"put to death? And the reason is that to my mind I have  
"had very good cause when I have any one put to death."

"I care not how thou has dealt with other men,"  
0. [said the man],"if thou make compensation for him for  
0. "whom I claim it. Besides, I left there [much] (1) pro-  
"perty, while I myself was shamefully treated. It is my  
"duty to sue for my brother and myself, and I am going to  
"have satisfaction in the matter. But the King may as  
"well pardon any offence done against him if he thinks it  
"of no consequence that his Body-guard are led out and  
"cut down like sheep."

The Earl answers: "I see it is all the better  
0. "for me that thou hast not the whip hand over me, [but I  
"over thee]. Art thou not the man to whom I gave quart-  
0. "er there [on that occasion]?"

"Quite right," said he, "Thou hadst the chance  
"to kill me on the spot like the rest."

Then answers the Earl: "It is true, as the say-  
"ing goes, that 'much happens that is least expected."  
"I did not think then that I should ever find myself in  
"the position of paying for being too merciful to my  
"enemies. But now I am paying for having given thee  
"quarter. Thou wouldst not be reviling me here in the  
"presence of chiefs this day, if I had had thee killed  
"like the rest of thy fellows."

The King looked at the Earl and said: "Still  
"the fact leaks out, Earl Thorfinnr, that thou thinkest  
"that thou hadst too few of my Bodyguard put to death  
"without paying compensation."

By this time the King was as red as blood.  
At this the Earl sprang up, and went down from the poop  
into/

into his own ship. It was dead calm that evening. But in the morning when men awoke, a fair breeze had arisen, and they rowed at once out from the harbourage. The King then sailed South into the Kattegat with all his fleet. The Earl's ship stood [out West] towards open water at the beginning of the day, and as the day waned, the Earl turned his course due West into the open sea. There is nothing to be told of him till he came to the Orkneys, and settled down there in his realm.

1047.  
Summer.

King Magnus and Haraldr sailed to Denmark and remained there that summer. King Sveinn would not come out and face them, but stayed at Skanór with his army. That summer King Magnus caught that illness of which he died. [But before his death] he declared before all the people that he gave the whole Norwegian realm to his uncle Haraldr.<sup>(2)</sup>

#### CHAPTER 31.

##### THE EARL'S MESSAGE TO THE KING.

1047.  
Fl.  
0.

Earl Thorfinnr now ruled the Orkneys and all [the rest of] his realm. Kalfr Arni's son was also usually with him; sometimes he went a-roving in the West, and harried round the coasts of Scotland and Ireland; he also visited England and was for a time chief of the King's Body-guard[there.]

<sup>(1)</sup>  
When Earl Thorfinnr heard of the death of King Magnus, he sent envoys East to Norway to King Haraldr with h/

0. with a message of goodwill, and [bade them say] ( ) that he wished to be his friend. Now when the message came to the King, he took it well, and the King promised him his friendship. And when this message came back to the Earl, he got ready for his journey, and took East two twenty-oared ships, and more than a hundred men, all fine picked fellows. ( ) He then sailed East to Norway and found the King in Hordland. He welcomed him very cordially, and at their parting the King gave him handsome gifts. From there the Earl sailed South along the coast, and so to Denmark; there he skirted the coast and found King Sveinn at Aalborg. The latter bade the Earl come to see him and gave him a sumptuous feast.

1048x

The Earl then gave out that he meant to go South to Rome (3). Now when he came to Germany, he met there the Emperor Henry (4), who welcomed the Earl most cordially, and gave him many magnificent gifts; he got from him a large number of horses. The Earl then rode on his journey South. He arrived at Rome, and there he visited the Pope (5) and got absolution from him for all his sins.

0.

Thence the Earl turned homewards [and that journey was his most famous one.

The Earl then settled down quietly, and kept peace throughout his realm]. (6)

He now gave up warring-cruises, and turned his mind to the government of his land and people, and to the making of laws. He lived usually in Birsay, and had Christ's Kirk built there, a magnificent church. ( ) There was first set up the Bishopric of the Orkneys.

Earl Thorfinnr married Ingibjorg Earls' Mother [who was the daughter of Earl Finn'r Arni's son] (7)  
They/

They had two grown-up sons; one was called Paul and the other Erlendr. They were tall handsome men, wise and gentle, taking more after their mother's side. The Earl loved them dearly and likewise the whole people.

CHAPTER 32.

OF THE DEATH OF EARL THORFINNR THE MIGHTY.

F1. Earl Thorfinnr held all his realm till the day of his death; and it is truly said that he has been(1) the most powerful of all the Orkney Earls. He owned nine Earldoms(2) in Scotland and all the Hebrides, and a large realm in Ireland(3). So says Arnorr Earls' Skald,-

"From far Tuscar Skerries  
To Dublin, the people  
To a generous Lord  
Were subject. And truly  
I tell men of Thorfinnr."

?1065 Earl Thorfinnr was five years old at the time when Malcolm King of Scots, his grandfather, gave him the title of Earl; and after that he was Earl for seventy(4) years. He died in the latter days of Haraldr Sigurth's son.(4) He was buried in Christ's Kirk in Birsay, which he had had built. There was much grief for the Earl's death [in the Orkneys and] in his own hereditary lands;(5) but in those lands which he had brought under him by the sword, it seemed to many a hard lot to live under his rule. Many realms that the Earl had subdued fell away and men sought protection for themselves under the hereditary/

hereditary chiefs in their realms. It was soon plain that there were to be great losses on the death of Earl Thorfinnr. (6)

(7) The following verses were composed about the battle between Earl Rognvaldr Brusil's son and Earl Thorfinnr:-

"Hard strife was there  
Where Earls were in combat.  
Battle taught many a man  
The lesson of death.  
Our dear friends fought  
In spear-shower off Robery.  
Many a mild man  
Met sorrow there.

"The bright sun shall darken,  
Earth shall sink down  
Deep in the dusky sea,  
Heaven shall be rent in twain,  
Seas shall engulf the hills,  
'Ere Prince to the Isles come  
Greater than Thorfinnr,  
- God be his aid -  
Protector of men."

### CHAPTER 33.

#### THE BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF PAUL AND ERLENDR, AND GENEALOGIES.

Now the sons of Earl Thorfinnr took the realm  
after/

after him. Paul was the elder, and likewise the greater in authority. They did not divide the land between them, but yet they usually saw eye to eye in all their dealings.

0. [After Earl Thorfinn's death] Ingibjorg Earls' mother married Malcolm King of Scots, nicknamed Longneck. Their son was Duncan King of Scots, father of William the Nobleman; (1) his son was called William the Prince (1), whom all the Scots wished to take as their King.

?1065x Earl Paul Thorfinn's son married the daughter of Earl Hakon Ivar's son, and they had many children. One of their sons was called Hakon. They had a daughter called Thora, who was married in Norway to Halldorr son of Brynjolfr Camel [the Elder]; Brynjolfr was their son's name. His son's name was Halldorr and he married Gyri thr (2) Dag's daughter. Another of Paul's daughters was called Ingirithr, who was married to Einarr, Vosse-Crow. Herbjorg was the name of Paul's third daughter; she was the mother of Ingibjorg the Highborn, who was married to Sigurthr of Westness, and their sons were Hakon Pike and Brynjolfr. Sigri thr was a daughter of Herbjorg, ~~the~~ mother of the children of Hakon the Younger and of Herbjorg whom Kolbeinn Lump married. Ragnhildr was the name of Earl Paul's fourth daughter; she was the mother of Benedict, father of Ingibjorg, mother of Archdeacon Erlingr. Bergljot was the name of a daughter of Ragnhildr, who was married to Havarthr Gunni's son; their sons were Magnus, ~~and~~ Hakon Claw, ~~and~~ Dufniall and Thorsteinn.

These are all the Earl's descendants and ~~persons~~ goethingar ~~of rank~~ (3) in the Orkneys, and these men all come into the saga later. (4)

Earl/

Earl Erlendr Thorfinn's son married a lady called Thora; the daughter of Sumarlithi Ospak's son; Ospak's mother was Thordis, daughter of Hallr of Sida. Their sons were Erlingr and Magnus, and their daughters Gunnhildr and Cecilia; the latter was married to Isaac and their sons were Eindriithi and Kolr. Jaddvor was the name of an illegitimate daughter of Erlendr; Borgarr was the name of his son.

CHAPTER 34.

WHEREIN IS TOLD OF THE SLAYING OF KING

HARALDR AND THE DEATH OF HIS DAUGHTER.

When these brothers Paul and Erlendr had taken over the realm in the Orkneys [and had ruled but a short time there], Haraldr Sigurth's son came East from Norway with a large army. He made land first in Shetland, and thence sailed to the Orkneys. There he left behind Queen Ellisif and their daughters Maria and Ingigerthr. From the Orkneys he gathered a large force. Both the Earls made ready to sail with the King.

From there the King sailed South to England, landed at a place called Cleveland, [invaded it forthwith], and captured Scarborough. Thereafter he lay off Holderness, and fought a battle there, and won. On the Wednesday next before St. Matthew's Day ( ) he fought a battle at York with Earls Waltheof and Morkere. There fell Morkere [but he won the victory]. On Sunday [after Sermon] (1) the castle that stands at Stamford Bridge fell into the hands/

1066.  
Fl.  
0.

0.

Sept. 20.

0.  
Sept. 24.

0.  
Sept. 25.

hands of King Haraldr. [On Monday after] he went ashore to settle things in the town. [In the ships] he left behind him his son Olaf, the Earls Paul and Erlendr, and his kinsman Eysteinn Blackcock, <sup>(Orri)</sup> [son of Thorberg Arni's son,] <sup>(2)</sup> While disembarking King Haraldr was met by Haraldr Godwin's son with a huge army. [There was at once a great battle], and in the struggle Haraldr Sigurth's son was killed.

0.

0.

0.

After the King's death Eysteinn Blackcock and the Earls went ashore and put up a hard fight; [and the battle was called "Blackcock's Storm" (Orraél) or Blackcock's Battle" (Orrahrið)]. There fell Eysteinn Blackcock and almost all of the army of the Norsemen. Then after the battle King Haraldr gave leave to Olaf Harald's son and to the Earls to quit England, and to all their men who had not fled [or were killed in the battle.] <sup>(3)</sup>

1066.  
Autumn.  
0.

Olaf sailed out in the autumn <sup>(4)</sup> from Ravenseer and so to the Orkneys. And [they then learned that] on the very day at the very hour that Haraldr was killed Maria his daughter died suddenly. And men say that they had but one life between them.

1066-67.  
Winter.  
0.

Olaf stayed the winter in the Orkneys and lived in closest friendship with the Earls his kinsmen; [for] Thora King Olaf's daughter and Ingibjorg Earls' mother were cousins. <sup>(5)</sup>

1067.  
Spring.

In the spring Olaf sailed East to Norway and was there made King along with his brother Magnus.

0.  
1067x.

0.

Now while the brothers [Paul and Erlendr] ruled the Orkneys, there was warm friendship between them for a good long time <sup>(6)</sup>. But when their sons began to grow up, Hakon and Erlingr became exceedingly overbearing, [while] Magnus/

0. Magnus was [pious and even-tempered. But] (7) all of them  
 were tall and strong and proper men in all things. Hakon  
 Paul's son wished to take the lead over the brothers Magnus  
 and Erlingr his kinsmen; he thought he was of higher birth  
 than the sons of Erlendr, because he was son of the daught-  
 er of Earl Hakon Ivar's son and Ragnhildr, daughter of King  
 0. Magnus the Good. [He therefore] (8) wished that his  
 friends should have the lion's share of everything rather  
 than those who were hangers-on of the sons of Erlendr.  
 0. But Erlendr would not hear of his [friends] (9) having the  
 worst of it there in the Isles. Things came to such a  
 pass that the kinsmen could not keep company without quar-  
 relling, and there was danger of strife between them.  
 0. Then their fathers (10) took the matter (up) with them, [and  
 bade them] settle their differences. A meeting was then  
 0. arranged. [But when the brothers Paul and Erlendr met  
 and began to speak,] it was soon plain that each of them  
 leant towards his own sons; and they came to no agreement.  
 A quarrel now arose between the brothers, and they parted  
 on bad terms. And many thought that a piece of very ill-  
 luck.

CHAPTER 35.

THE PEACE-MEETING of MAGNUS and HAKON.

0. After that well-disposed men mediated between  
 them and sought to set them at one [again]. A meeting  
 to discuss terms was then fixed for them on the Mainland.  
 At that meeting a settlement was made providing that the  
 Isles/

Isles be divided into two parts as they had been between Thorfinnr and Brusi. ~~King of the Swedes, after he was out-~~

0. ~~lared by~~ So things stood for a time. Since he had grown up Hakon was always away harrying. He now became exceedingly overbearing, and bullied the servants of [Erlendr and his sons]. (1) The upshot was that a quarrel broke out between them and they advanced each against the other with a large force. ~~[Paul's son] stayed in Sweden for a time.~~

0. ~~and King~~ Havarthr Gunni's son and all the rest of the Earls ~~son of reah~~ goethingar gathered together one day and mediated between them. Erlendr and his sons now refused to make peace so long as Hakon was in the Isles. Now as their friends ~~were~~ thought that there was much at stake in this difference of theirs, they entreated Hakon not to let that stand in the way of a settlement, and quit the Isles at once. They said it would be wise for him to sail East to see the many well-to-do kinsmen he had in Norway and Sweden. M<sup>2</sup> [Partly through the arguments of the men, and partly because Hakon was envious of his kinsmen in the Isles and liked the idea of getting to know the ways of other chiefs, he] [granted them their request and] [sailed away East from the Isles] (2) Thus a settlement was made between them by the advice of good men.

x1093. 0. [After that Hakon sailed East to Norway to] (3) King Olafr the Silent; this was in the latter days of his reign. Hakon stayed there for some time. Then he journeyed East to Sweden to see King Ingi Steinkell's son, who received him well. He found there friends and kinsmen of his own. The former popularity of Hakon his mother's father/

father brought him much honour there. He had held the realm from Steinkell, King of the Swedes, after he was outlawed by Haraldr Sigurth's son. He had been held in the highest honour there both by King and people. Another grandson of Earl Hakon Ivar's son was Hakon who was nicknamed the Norwegian; he was father of Eirikr the Wise who was king of Denmark after King Eirikr the Ever-Memorable.

Hakon [Paul's son] stayed in Sweden for a time, and King Ingi [and his people] made much of him. But when some time had passed in this way, home-sickness came over him to sail West to the Isles.

Christianity was then young in Sweden. There were still many men who dabbled in the black art and believed that they got by that means certain foreknowledge of many future events. King Ingi was a good Christian and all sorcerers were anathema to him. He spent much time in putting down these bad customs which for long had gone hand in hand with heathenism. But the chiefs of the land and the greater bondar grumbled sourly when fault was found with their barbaric habits. And things came to such a pitch that the bondar chose another king who still held to sacrifices - Sveinn the Queen's brother, who was called Sacrifice-Sveinn.

At his instance King Ingi was outlawed to West Gothland. But the end of their quarrel was that King Ingi took the house over Sveinn's head and burned him in it. After that he took the whole land under him, [and continued to put down heathen customs and ceremonies]. (4).

## CHAPTER 36.

OF THE WORDS OF THE SOOTHSAYER.

c.1093.  
Fl.

Now when Hakon Paul's son was in Sweden, he heard that there was in the land a certain man who practised prophecy and had second sight, whether by the black art or otherwise. A strong curiosity seized on Hakon to find what he could learn about his own fate. And he went therewith [to seek] this man, and found him after some time in [a forest township] (1). He frequented feasts there and told the bondar about their harvest prospects and other matters. Now when he found the man, he enquired of him whether a realm would fall to his lot or any other stroke of luck.

The soothsayer asked what manner of man he was.

He told him his name and family, that he was the son of the daughter of Hakon Ivar's son.

Then said the soothsayer: "Why dost thou want to get foreknowledge or prophecy from me? Knowest thou not that thy nearest of kin have no fancy for such men as I? It must surely satisfy thy need to go and find out thy fate from thy kinsman Olaf the Stout, [King of Norway], in whom you put all your trust. But I doubt whether he would condescend to tell thee what thou art curious to know. Or else he may not be such a clever fellow as thou makes him out to be."

Then answers Hakon: "I will speak no ill of him. I mean that I would be unworthy to receive foreknowledge from him rather than that he should be so unworthy that I could not get foreknowledge from him. But I have come/

0. M<sup>1</sup>.  
 "come to see thee, because I have been thinking that nei-  
 "ther of us need [despise]<sup>(2)</sup> the other because of his own  
 "virtues or religious beliefs."

0. The [soothsayer] answers: "I am glad to find that  
 "thou thinkest it right to place all thy trust in me and  
 "mine<sup>(3)</sup> rather than place it in that faith which thou  
 "and the rest of thy kin uphold. Truly, men who meddle  
 "with such things are made of strange stuff. They keep  
 "fasts and wakes and think that thus they will be given  
 "foreknowledge of such things as they wish to know.  
 "And although they put themselves to such trouble, yet the  
 "more pains they take, the less they learn of what they  
 "want to know. But we put ourselves to no self-torture<sup>(4)</sup>  
 "and yet always obtain foreknowledge of those things in  
 "ignorance of which our friends think it unwise to live.  
 "But, to come to the point, thou art going to get this  
 "help from me; for I know that thou thinkest it more  
 "likely to be able to hear the truth from me than from  
 "the priests<sup>( )</sup> of King Ingi, in whom he thinks fit to  
 "put all his trust. Thou shalt come [to me] three nights  
 "hence. Then we shall try if I can tell thee something  
 "of those things that thou wishest to know."

0. After that they parted; and Hakon stayed there  
 in the township. And after three nights had passed, he  
 went to find the soothsayer. He was now in a house  
 all alone, and he drew his breath heavily when [Hakon]  
 entered. He stroked his forehead with his hand and said  
 it had cost him much pain before he had the foreknowledge  
 of those things which he wished to know of the future.

Hakon then said that he would like to hear  
 [what/

O. M<sup>1</sup>. [what he had to say] (5).

The soothsayer began to speak: "If thou wilt know  
 "thy fate, it is a long tale to tell, for there is a great  
 "future in store for you; ( ) and out of thy life and  
 "actions shall come great events. And it is my belief  
 "that in the end thou shalt be sole ruler over the Orkneys;  
 "but mayhap thou wilt think it a long time to wait. I  
 "think also that thy descendants shall rule there [for long  
 "afterwards]. But from the journey that thou next takest  
 "West to the Orkneys, great events will come to pass when  
 "its immediate consequences have come and gone. Thou  
 "shalt also in thy day have a crime committed which thou  
 "shalt either atone for [with difficulty] (6) or not at all,  
 "before the God in whom thou believest. But thy footsteps  
 "lie further out into the wide world than I can see. And  
 "yet I think thou shalt be buried in Northern parts. Now  
 "I have told thee all that I can at the moment. Decide  
 "now for thyself what good thou hast got out of thy errand."

Hakon answers: "A great tale thou tellest, if it  
 "be true. But I mean my fate to be better than thou hast  
 "made it. It may even be that thou hast not seen it  
 "truthfully."

The soothsayer bade him believe it as he liked,  
 but said it would [all] come to pass.

[And so they parted.]

## CHAPTER 37.

### OF THE SCHEMES OF HAKON PAUL'S SON.

After that, Hakon went to see King Ingi and  
 stayed/

0. stayed with him a short time [before he made up his mind to  
 1094. sail for the British Isles]; then he got the King's leave  
 to depart. Hakon went first to Norway to see his kinsman  
 King Magnus; and he gave him a cordial welcome. There he  
 got news from the Orkneys, that Earl Erlendr and his sons  
 had it all their own way, and were very popular, while Paul  
 his father had very little interest in the realm. He also  
 gathered from his questions to men who had come from the  
 West, and spoke to him confidentially, that the Orkneymen  
 were not over anxious for him to go West from there. They  
 lex.Run.O.M<sup>1</sup>. had had [till now] good peace and quiet, but were afraid  
 that if Hakon came West he would stir up strife and blood-  
 shed.

0. Now when Hakon turned the matter over in his mind,  
 it seemed to him not unlikely that these kinsmen would hold  
 the realm from him, but make it risky for him if he came  
 West without a large army. He made up his mind to ask  
 [his kinsman] King Magnus (1) to come with him to his realm  
 in the Orkneys.

## CHAPTER 38.

### HAKON'S INTERVIEW WITH KING MAGNUS.

1094x. This took place after King Magnus had had Thorir  
 Fl. of Steig and Egil put to death and had [thus] freed the  
 0. land of all civil strife. Hakon was a shrewd fellow and  
 thought he could read in King Magnus' mind, when he talked  
 0. to him, that the King was becoming ambitious and eager to  
 attack the realms of other chiefs. Hakon [therefore  
 began/

began to] tell the King that it were a lordly thing to lead out a force of levies, and harry out in the West, and take [the Isles](1) under him as Haraldr Fair-hair had done. He adds that if he took the realm in the Hebrides, it were then an easy matter to harry in Ireland and Scotland; and if he subdued the lands in the West,(2) that thence he might reinforce himself with the aid of the Norsemen against the English, - "and so avenge Haraldr Sigurth's son thy grandfather."

And when they had talked it over, it turned out that the idea made a strong appeal to the King; he said that it was spoken well and worthily, and near to his own mind. - "But this shalt thou remember, Hakon," says the King, "that if I do this at thy prompting and persuading "and go out West with an army, thou must not be surprised "if I lay vigorous claim to realms that lie there in the "West and make no distinctions of men in the matter."

Now when Hakon heard this pronouncement, he was not so well pleased, having an inkling of what the words meant. He now gave up persuading the King to any expedition. But there was little need of it, for after the interview the King sent word round his whole realm, that a force of levies would be going out. He made it known to the whole people, that he meant to take the army out West, whatever might thereafter befall on his voyage.

All over the land, men got ready for the expedition. On this voyage King Magnus had with him his eight-year-old son Sigurthr, a promising boy.

## CHAPTER 39.

## 0. [OF KING MAGNUS' WAR-CRUISE]

1098.  
Fl. While the brothers Paul and Erlendr ruled the Orkneys, there came from the East out of Norway King Magnus [son of King Olaf the Silent]. He had a large army. There came with him many landed proprietors, Vithkunnr John's son, Sigurthr Hrani's son, Serkr from Sogn, Dagr Eilif's son, Skopti from Gizki, Ogmundr, Finnur and Thorthr, Eyvindr Elbow, the King's Marshal, (1) Kali from Agder Sæbjorn's son, son of Thorleifr the Wise whom Hallfrothr maimed, and his son Kolr. Kali was a very wise man, dear to the King, and a good skald.

When King Magnus came to the Orkneys, he seized the Earls Paul and Erlendr, and sent them East to Norway, but set his son Sigurthr over the Isles, and got him a body of Councillors. (2) King Magnus went on to the Hebrides, and the Earl's sons, Magnus and Erlingr, sons of Erlendr, and Hakon Paul's son went with him.

0. Now when King Magnus came to the Isles <sup>he</sup> [at once] ~~he~~ began to harry, first in Lewis; and it he subdued. And in that cruise he subdued the whole of the Hebrides, and seized Logmathr, son of Guthrothr, King of the Hebrides. Thence he sailed South to the coast of Wales and fought a great battle in ~~Menai~~ <sup>Menai</sup> Strait with two Welsh Earls, Hugh the Stout, and Hugh the Proud; [they were brothers to Kostnami, who was at that time King of Ulster in Ireland.] (3)

0. (supp. by M<sup>2</sup>) While the men were unsheathing their weapons and making/

making ready for fight, Magnus Erlend's son sat down aft in the well, (4) and made no move to arm himself. The king asked why he was sitting down. He said he had no quarrel with any man there; - "therefore I will not fight." [Then] said the King: "Go down under the deck, (5) and lie not here "among men's feet, if thou durst not fight; for I do not "think that religious belief is at the bottom of this."

Magnus took a Psalter and sang through the fighting but did not go into shelter. The battle was both long and hard, and there was both missile hurling and sword-play. For a long time no one could make out on which side the scale would turn. King Magnus shot from a hand-bow, and another man from Helgeland beside him. Hugh the Proud fought valiantly. He was so clad in plate armour that nothing was seen of him but his eyes. King Magnus gave the man from Helgeland the order that they both shoot at him together, and they did so. One arrow struck his nose-bridge, but the other pierced | his eye and entered his head. And that was reckoned the King's shot. There fell Hugh the Proud.

After that the Welsh fled. They had lost a large number of men, but King Magnus won a great victory, although he had lost many good men, and a large number were wounded. So it was said of this battle:- (6)

"Spear clanged on shield,  
Blood streamed on helmet.  
The Prince clasped his bow,  
The ruler of Agder, dashed into the woods;  
Shooting with might and main.  
Shields rang with bowstrings' hail,

The/

O. M<sup>1</sup>.

Fl. | 325a.

The host fell. There our King,  
 Lord of the Horthar,  
 Dealt to the doughty Earl  
 Death in the fight."

Now in the morning, when men went to breakfast in  
 the King's hall, they found that King Magnus had taken  
 Then King Magnus took possession of Anglesey which  
 was the most southerly land possessed by any previous Nor-  
 wegian king. (Anglesey is a third part of Wales).

Kali Sæbjorn's son had been badly wounded in  
 Menai Strait  
~~Anglesey Sound~~, but not mortally.

After that King Magnus turned back along the  
 South coast of Scotland.

#### CHAPTER 40.

(TITLE OBLITERATED).

King Magnus had made Magnus Erlend's son his  
 trencher-bearer, and he always waited at the King's table.  
 But after the battle in ~~Anglesey Sound~~ <sup>Menai Strait</sup>, King Magnus took a  
 great dislike to him, and said he had behaved unmanfully;  
 [he was not wounded although he had not taken shelter.] (1)  
 One night, while King Magnus lay off the coast of Scotland,  
 Magnus Erlend's son escaped from King Magnus' ship, when a  
 good opportunity of escaping from the King seemed to be  
 presented to him. He leapt overboard and swam ashore, and  
 arranged his berth so that it seemed as if a man was lying  
 in it. When he came ashore he dashed into the woods;  
 and he was in [only] his underclothing. He knocked his  
 foot, and bruised it badly. (for he was bare-foot) and for  
 the/

1098.  
 325a.

Fl. (supp. by  
 O. and M<sup>1</sup>).

O. M<sup>2</sup>.

the meantime could not walk any further. He came to a large oak tree, climbed up into its branches, and there bound up his foot, and hid himself among the branches for some time.

Now in the morning, when men went to breakfast in the King's ship, the King asked where was Magnus Erlend's son. He was told that he was asleep in his berth. The King bade them wake him, and said that something more than sleep must have come over him if he lay longer than other men. But when they came to his berth<sup>(1)</sup> he was missing.

The King then ordered a search for him, and let loose the blood-hounds. And when the hounds were set loose, they struck the trail at once, ran towards the wood, and came up to the tree, up which Magnus was [concealed]. Then one hound ran round and round the oak tree baying. Magnus had a wooden stick in his hand, and he hurled it at the hound, and struck it on the flank. The hound dropped its tail between its legs, and dashed down to the ships, and the rest after it.

The King's men did not find Magnus. He hid for a time in the wood, and was next heard of in the Bodyguard of Malcolm, King of Scots,<sup>(3)</sup> and he stayed there for a time. But sometimes he was in Wales with a certain bishop<sup>(4)</sup>; sometimes he was in England, or in various places with his friends. [But] he did not visit the Orkneys during the life of King Magnus.

CHAPTER 41.

(NO TITLE).

King Magnus held on his course from the South  
along/

along the coast of Scotland. (1) And there came to meet him envoys from Malcolm King of Scots, and they offered him terms of peace. They declared that the King of Scots would give him all the Isles that lay out to the West of Scotland between which and the mainland a ship might sail with rudder set. (2) But when King Magnus came North to Cantyre he had a cutter drawn over the Isthmus of Cantyre. The King held the tiller, and so got possession of the whole of Cantyre; it is better than the best island in the Hebrides, (3) with the exception of the Isle of Man. It projects to the West from Scotland, (4) and [there is] a narrow isthmus at the landward end, so that ships are frequently hauled over.

King Magnus held on thence into the Hebrides and sent his men into the Scottish sea-lochs (5). He got them to row in hugging the shore on one side, and out hugging it on the other, (6) and thus he claimed as his own all the islands down the West of Scotland. (7)

1098-1099.  
Winter.

Then the King made it known that he would stay the Winter in the Hebrides, but he gave leave to those who he thought had urgent business (8) to sail home. But when the levies heard of that, they became home-sick and grumbled badly about their absence from home.

The King held a meeting with his army and his Councillors. He went and examined the wounds of his men. Now the King found Kali Sæbjorn's son, and he asked about his wounds. Kali said they had mended but little, and said he did not know what turn they would take.

The King asked Kali's advice.

Kali answers: "Is it not the case, King, that thy  
"friends/

"friends are now deserting thee?"

The King said he did not think that could be.

Kali advised the King to hold a muster-at-arms, and review his forces. The King did so and found many men missing. And when the King told this to Kali, then Kali said this:-

"How do thy chiefs

- Mighty men at the Thing -

Make return for thy gifts?

The ribbed ships quiver

In Western tide-streams.

Try us, O King."

The King answers:-

"Little good have I got

From the gear I thought fit

To give to my merry men.

But still shall this pliant prow

Climb o'er the billow."

Then the King kept a lookout for deserters and refused leave to those who had not yet gone. (9)

While King Magnus was in the Hebrides [at this time], he took for a wife to Sigurthr his son Blathmuine (Bjaðmynja), daughter of Muirheartach (Myrkjartan), [son of Toirdelbach (Thjalbi)], the Irish King of Connaught. Sigurthr was at this time nine years old, and the maiden five years.

That winter Kali Sæbjorn's son died of his wound. In ~~Anglesey Sound~~ <sup>Menai Strait</sup> had fallen Sigurthr Skewer, a kinsman of Kali's; he was a landed-proprietor in Agder.

## CHAPTER 42.

THE BIRTH OF KALI.

1099.  
Spring.  
325a.

King Magnus left the Hebrides early in Spring. He sailed first to the Orkneys. There he learned of the death [of the Earls] out in the East. [Erlendr] had died in Nidaros, and was buried there, and Paul in Bergen. (1) In the Orkneys that spring King Magnus gave Gunnhildr, Earl Erlend's daughter, to Kolr Kali's son as compensation for his father's death, and some property came with her as including the estate of Paplay. a dowry, ~~and a farm ( ) in Paplay.~~ As for Erlingr son of Earl Erlendr, some men say that he fell in ~~Anglesey Sound,~~ <sup>Menai Strait,</sup> but Snorri Sturluson says that he had fallen in Ulster with King Magnus. (2)

(1103).

325a | Fl.

[At his marriage] Kolr Kali's son became a landed proprietor under the King, and sailed East to Norway with the King and home to Agder with his wife, and settled down on his estates. Kolr and Gunnhildr had two children, a son named Kali, and a daughter Ingirithr. They both gave high promise, and were very affectionately brought up.

## CHAPTER 43.

[KING MAGNUS IS SLAIN IN IRELAND].

0.  
1102.  
Fl.

1102-1103  
Winter.

1103.  
August 24.

After King Magnus had ruled the land for nine years, he sailed out West from his lands and harried in Ireland, and spent a winter in Connaught; but in the following summer, on St. Bartholomew's Day, he fell in Ulster. After that friends went to Norway and tried to

make/ Now/

Now when King Sigurthr in Orkney heard of the death of his father, he at once sailed East to Norway, and was there made King along with his brothers, Eysteinn and Olafr.

Sigurthr left behind him in the West the daughter of the Irish king.

1104x1105.

A year or two after the death of King Magnus, Hakon Paul's son came over from the West, and the King gave him the title of "Earl" and such of the realm as was his birth-right. (1) He then sailed out West and took under him the realm in the Orkneys. He had always been one of King Magnus' following during his lifetime. As is told in the Ode (drápa) that was made upon Hakon Paul's son, (2) he was with him in a war-cruise East in Gothland.

1106.

## CHAPTER 44.

MAGNUS GETS THE TITLE OF EARL.1106.  
Fl.

When Earl Hakon had held the realm in the Orkneys for a short time, there came over from Scotland Magnus son of Earl Erlendr, and demanded his inheritance. This pleased the bondar mightily, for he was popular with every one. He had there much kith and kin, who dearly wished to get him the realm. His mother (1) had married a man [of rank] called Sigurthr; their son was Hakon the Elder; they had the estate of Paplay ( ).

0.

0., M<sup>2</sup>.

When Earl Hakon heard that Earl Magnus had landed in the Isles, he gathered forces about him, and refused to give up the [Orkneys, or (divide up) the realm which he had there]. After that friends went between them and tried to make/

make a settlement. In the end they agreed to this, that Hakon gave up half the realm, if he got the consent of the Kings of Norway, [and thus the quarrel was averted].

0.

1106x?11112.

Magnus at once sailed East to Norway to see King Eysteinn (for Sigurthr was then away on a journey to Jerusalem). (2) King Eysteinn gave him a very cordial welcome, and gave up to him his inheritance - the half of the Orkneys, and the title of "Earl". Earl Magnus sailed out West to his realm; and his kinsmen and friends there and all the people rejoiced. ~~were glad [to see him].~~ He and Hakon lived like good kinsmen while their friends conducted affairs. There was now peace and plenty in the Orkneys so long as their friendship lasted.

## CHAPTER 45.

OF EARL MAGNUS.

F1.

Saint Magnus the Earl of the Isles was the most accomplished of men in all things, tall of stature, valiant and bright of countenance, rigid in morals, fortunate in battle, a sage in wisdom, of ready tongue and lordly mind; openhanded and large-hearted, shrewd in counsel and the most popular of men; of fair and affable speech to good men and true, but hard and unsparing towards robbers and vikings. He put to death many men who plundered the bondar and common people. He had murderers and thieves seized, and punished rich as well as poor for robbery and theft and all misdeeds. He showed no favouritism in his judgments; he valued divine justice more highly than distinctions of rank. He was open-handed to chiefs and men of/

of rank, but he always showed most charity to the poor. In all things he kept straitly the commandments of God and chastised his flesh in many ways which in his glorious life were revealed before God, but hidden before men. He made manifest his faith when he sought the hand of a maiden of the most noble family in Scotland, and entered upon wedlock with her; (1) He consorted with her ten years in such wise that he fulfilled the lusts of neither of them and was pure and clean from all carnal sins. And if he felt temptation coming over him, he bathed in cold water and prayed for the intercession of God. There were many other fine qualities and noble virtues which he revealed to God himself, but concealed from men.

CHAPTER 46.

OF MAGNUS AND HAKON.

The kinsmen Magnus and Hakon kept watch and ward over the land for a time, just so long as they were on good terms. So is it said in the poem(1) on the subject, they that fought with the chief called Domhnall (Dufnjall), [who was the son of Earl Duncan (Dungaðr)], who was second cousin to the Earls; and he fell before them.

There was a man of rank called Thorbjorn whom they put to death in Burra Firth in Shetland. [And it is said that they took the house over his head and burned him in it]. Many were the deeds of which the poem tells which they both had a hand in; but here they are not told at length. (2)

But when the kinsmen had ruled the land for a time/

1107-?1117  
Fl.

M<sup>2</sup>.

O. M<sup>2</sup>.

time, it came about, as often happens, and always may, that a number of mischief-mongers contrived to break up their good fellowship. Then malcontents gathered more about Hakon, for he was very jealous of the popularity and lordliness of his kinsman Magnus. This meeting for an established peace and final settlement between them was to be in Egilsay in Easter week the next spring.

## CHAPTER 47.

OF EARL MAGNUS.

Two men of Earl Hakon's following are specially named as being by far the worst of the busybodies between the kinsmen - Sigurthr and Sighvatr Socks. So strong did the slander grow upon the tongues of evil men that the kinsmen mustered forces and each Earl went to meet the other with a large company. They both proceeded to (1) the Mainland, where the meeting place of the Thing (2) of the Orkneymen was. And when they arrived there, each drew up his forces and got ready for battle.

There were with the Earls nearly all the chief men (3) [in the Orkneys,] and there were many common friends who did their level best to set them at one. Many [of these] now courageously and of their own goodwill mediated between them. This meeting was in Lent [a little before Palm Sunday]. And since [their] many well-wishers took it in hand to avert a breach between them and would stand by neither to the detriment of the other, they bound themselves to a settlement with oaths and by the right hand of fellowship. (4)

And after some time had passed, Earl Hakon with false/

x?11117.  
Fl.

0.

0. M<sup>2</sup>.

"It may be that will come to pass which was foretold of  
false heart and fair words, called a meeting on a day  
appointed between himself and the blessed Earl Magnus,  
[to settle it] that nothing should disturb or nullify their  
fellowship and the established peace just made between  
them. This meeting for an established peace and final  
settlement between them was to be in Egilsay in Easter week  
the next spring.

This [proposal] pleased Earl Magnus, being as he  
was a very whole-hearted man, without any suspicions, de-  
ceit and greed of gain. And each was to have two ships  
and an equal number of men. (5) They both swore to keep  
the terms of peace that the wisest men [from both parties]  
had thought fit to lay down between them.

0.  
?1117.  
Easter.

Now when Eastertide was past, each made ready for  
this meeting. Earl Magnus summoned to him all those men  
[in his realm] whom he thought most eager for peace and  
most likely to do their best for [both] kinsmen. He had  
two ships and exactly the agreed number of men. And when  
he was ready for sea, he sailed for Egilsay.

And as they were rowing in calm and smooth water,  
there rose a wave [under] (6) the ship that the Earl was  
steering, and it broke over the ship just where the Earl  
sat. The Earl's men were filled with amazement at this  
occurrence, that a wave should break in a calm sea where no  
man had known of it to have broken before, and in deep  
water too.

Then said the Earl: "'Tis no wonder you are sur-  
prised at this [miracle or portent that was never seen  
before]. Now my mind tells me that this is my death-omen.  
It/

0. (supp. by  
M2.

0. M<sup>1</sup> (supp. by M<sup>2</sup>.) "It may be that will come to pass which was foretold of  
 "Earl Hakon [that the son of Earl Paul would commit the  
 "foulest of crimes]. We shall regard our situation in  
 "none other light than that to my guessing kinsman Hakon  
 "does not mean to play fair with us at this meeting."

The Earl's men grew heavy of heart at these words, when he spoke of his short hope of life. And they bade him take heed for his life, and not go [further] trusting in Earl Hakon.

Earl Magnus answers: "Our voyage shall still go on, "and may God's will be done therein." (7)

#### CHAPTER 48.

#### THE ATTACK OF EARL HAKON ON EARL MAGNUS.

?1117.  
 Easter.  
 Fl.  
 0.  
 April 15.

Now it must be told of Earl Hakon that he summoned to him a large force and had [eight]<sub>(1)</sub> warships, all well manned for instant action. And when the army was mustered, the Earl makes it known to them that he means so to settle up with Earl Magnus at their meeting, that they would not both of them [be rulers] over the Orkneys [thereafter]. Many of his men showed themselves well-pleased at his plan, adding to it many wicked suggestions.<sub>(2)</sub> Among the worst of those to acclaim his plan were Sigurthr and Sighvatr Socks.

0. Then the men laid on their oars with might and main, and advanced with furious energy. In the Earl's ship was Havarthr Gunni's son who was [brother-in-law and a/

a good friend to both the Earls, and a permanent Councillor of Hakon's.] (3) Hakon had hidden from him his plot which Havarthr would certainly have no hand in. And when he learned that the Earl was so resolute upon this plot, he leapt overboard the Earl's ship and took to swimming, and swam to an uninhabited island. (4)

Earl Magnus with his band of men arrived first in Egilsay. And when they espied Earl Hakon coming, they saw that he had eight warships, then he knew for certain that there was foul play afoot. Earl Magnus went up inland over the isle with his men, and [betook himself to] the church (5) to pray, and was there that night. Now his men offered to stand on guard for him. The Earl answers: "I will not put your lives in peril for my sake. And if "there be no peace made between us kinsmen, then be it as "God wills." Then his men felt that what he had said

0.(supp. by M<sup>2</sup>) [when the wave fell on him] was coming true. Now since he knew already the hours of his life - whether by his second sight or from divine knowledge - he would not flee 0.(supp. by M<sup>2</sup>) nor shirk meeting his enemies. [He did not go into the church for any other reason than that he wished to save his life. There he prayed earnestly to God and commended himself into His hand] [and had a Mass sung for him] F1. [and took the sacrament]. M<sup>2</sup>.

0. April 16. [Early next morning he left the church and two others with him, and [went] down by another way to the shore to a hiding place, and prayed again to God.] (6)

CHAPTER/

## CHAPTER 49.

THE OFFERS OF EARL MAGNUS.

Hakon and his men came ashore in the morning, and ran first to the church and ransacked it, and did not find the Earl. [They then sought him throughout the rest of the island. When Earl Magnus saw this,]<sup>(1)</sup> he calls out to them and tells them where he was; he bade them seek nowhere else for him. And when Hakon spied him, he and his men leapt down to him with yelling and clatter of arms.

Earl Magnus was [on his knees] at his prayers when they reached him. And when he had finished his prayers and crossed himself, with steadfast heart he said to Earl Hakon: "Thou didst not well, kinsman, to go back on thine oaths, and it is much to be hoped that thou dost this more through the malice of others than of thine own. Now I will offer thee three choices, of which thou shalt make one, rather than break thine oaths and have me put to death innocent."

Hakon's men asked what were his offers.

"The first," [said the Earl] "is that I would go South to Rome, or right out to Jerusalem and visit holy places, and take abroad two ships fully equipped [and well-manned], and seek betterment for both our souls. This I would swear, never to come back again to the Orkneys [while I live]."

[Hakon and his men] at once [refused this].

Then said Earl Magnus: "Now since my life is in your hands, and [since] I have been in many things a sinner<sup>(2)</sup> before Almighty God [and must needs do penance for/

0. M<sup>2</sup>. M<sup>1</sup>.  
 0. (supp. by M<sup>2</sup>. M<sup>1</sup>)  
 "for that, and [since] to my thinking it is unseemly that  
 "thou kill me], send me up into Scotland to some of our  
 "common friends [and kinsmen] and let me be there kept  
 "under watch and ward, and two men with me to bear me com-  
 "pany. See thou to it that I may not escape from my  
 "imprisonment [except by thy will]".

[They] at once [refused this, and gave many  
 reasons why it could not possibly be].

Magnus said: "But there is still one choice I  
 "must offer thee. And God knows that I am looking more  
 "to your souls than to my life; and it better befits thee  
 "than to take my life. Maim my body as thou likest, or  
 "pluck out my eyes, and put me in a darksome dungeon."

Then said Earl Hakon: "I accept this settlement  
 "and ask nothing further."

Then the chiefs started up and said to Earl Hakon:  
 "We will kill one of the two of you now; and never from  
 "this day forth shall both of you rule the land."

0. M<sup>2</sup>. M<sup>1</sup>.  
 Then answers Earl Hakon: "[If you are going to be  
 "so particular in this matter,] rather kill him, for I will  
 "rather rule realm and lands than die so suddenly." So  
 says Holdbothi, a trustworthy bondi from the Hebrides,  
 concerning their conversation. He was one of the two  
 men with Earl Magnus when they made him captive. (3)

## CHAPTER 50.

### THE BEHEADING OF EARL MAGNUS.

?1117.  
 April 16.  
 Fl.  
 The worthy Earl Magnus was as blithe as if he  
 had/

had been bidden to a feast. Not a word did he utter of hate or anger. And after this conversation, he fell to praying, and hid his face in his hands, letting fall many tears before [Almighty] God.

When the St. Magnus the Earl was doomed to death, Hakon bade Ofeigr his standard-bearer kill the Earl, but he refused very indignantly. Then he compelled Lifolfr his cook to kill Magnus, but he began to sob aloud.

[Earl Magnus said to him]:

"Thou shalt not weep for this, for there is fame in the doing of such deeds. Be steadfast of heart, for thou shalt have my clothes, as is the custom and law of men of old. And thou shalt have no fear, for thou dost this against thy will, and he who forces thy hand is a greater sinner than thou."

Now when the Earl had spoken this, he took off his kirtle and gave it to Lifolfr. After this he asked his leave to pray, and it was given him.

He fell upon the earth and commended himself to God, offering himself as a sacrifice. Not only did he pray for himself and his friends, but also for his enemies and murderers, and forgave from the bottom of his heart those who had done him evil; and confessed his own sins to God and prayed that they be washed from him by the shedding of his blood, and commended his soul into God's hands, and besought God's angels to meet his spirit and carry it to the rest of Paradise. (Some men say that he took the sacrament, and that then a Mass was sung for him). (1) Then when the friend of God was led to slaughter, he said to Lifolfr: "Stand thou/

"thou before me, and hew on my head a great wound, for it  
 "is not seemly to behead chiefs like thieves. Take good  
 "heart, poor wretch, for I have prayed to God for thee,  
 "that He be merciful unto thee."

O. M<sup>2</sup>.

After that he crossed himself, and bowed himself  
 to the stroke; [and he was struck in the middle of the  
 head with a single blow, and so passed from the world to  
 God]. (2)

## CHAPTER 51.

### THE SANCTITY OF EARL MAGNUS IS MADE MANIFEST.

F1.

The spot was before moss-grown and stony; but  
 shortly after, the worth of Earl Magnus shone so bright  
 before God that there grew green sward where he was  
 slain. And God showed that he had been slain for  
 righteousness' sake, and would inherit the beauty and  
 green pastures of Paradise, which is called the Land of  
 the Living. [Afterwards a church was built there].  
~~[There afterwards was built a church].~~

M<sup>2</sup>.

Earl Hakon would not allow the Earl to be borne to  
 church.

(Apr.14)

The day of Earl Magnus' death was two nights  
 after [St.] Tiburcius' Day. (1) He had been Earl over  
 the Orkneys for seven years, he and Hakon both together.  
 It was seventy four years after the death of King Olaf.  
 Sigurthr, Eysteinn and Olaf were then Kings over Norway.  
 It was 1091 years after the birth of Christ. (2)

## CHAPTER 52.

REMOVAL OF THE EARL'S BODY TO CHURCH.

[Wise men say that that spring when they were to have made their peace, Thora, Magnus' mother, had bid them both to a feast, and they were to come straight to her when they had made their settlement and came back from Egilsay]. (1) And now came Earl Hakon to the feast, after the slaying of Saint Magnus the Earl. Thora herself waited upon them, and served drink to the Earl and his men who had been at the slaying of her son. And when the drink took hold of the Earl, she fronted him and said:

"Alone art thou now come hither, my lord, but I expected both of you. Be it now thy will to gladden me in the sight of God and men. Be to me now instead of a son, and I may be to thee instead of a mother. Now I need thy pity greatly, and thy leave to have my son borne to Church. Be so to me with my prayer as thou wilt that God be to thee at the Day of Judgment."

The Earl falls silent and thinks over her words, and his evil-doings troubled him when she prayed with tears so meekly that she might bear her son to Church. He looked on her, and wept, and said to her:

"Bury thy son where it please thee."

Then was Earl Magnus borne to the Mainland and buried at Christ's ~~Kirk~~ which Earl Thorfinnr had built.

[In the following winter] (2) a heavenly light was often seen to shine over his grave. Then men began often to call on him if they stood in any danger, and immediately/

?1117.  
Spring.  
O. (supp. by M<sup>2</sup>)

Fl. | 325.

O.  
?1117-1118.  
Winter.

immediately the prayers were answered which they made. A heavenly fragrance also was always to be smelt at his grave, and sick men were cured thereby. After that, men who were sick made pilgrimages - both from the Orkneys and Shetland - and they kept vigil at the grave of St. Magnus the Earl, and were cured of [all] their diseases. But yet men did not dare spread this abroad while Earl Hakon was alive.

It is also said of the men who had been most deep in treachery against Saint Magnus the Earl that most of them died wretched and miserable deaths.

At that time William was Bishop of the Orkneys. He was the first Bishop there. The Episcopal seat was then at Christ's <sup>Kirk</sup> ~~Church~~ in Birsay. William was Bishop for sixty-six years. For a long time he disbelieved in the sanctity of Earl Magnus [until his worthiness was so far revealed that God gave his sanctity increase the more it was tried, as is told in his Book of Miracles] (Jarteinabók). (3)

?1117x

After the slaying of Earl Magnus, Earl Hakon [Paul's son] took under him the whole realm in the Orkneys. He made all men who had hitherto served Earl Magnus take an oath [of allegiance] to him. He became a mighty chief, and made heavy exactions from the friends of Earl Magnus who he thought had taken most part against him.

M<sup>2</sup>.

Now, some years later, Hakon made a journey abroad and ~~set out~~ <sup>went</sup> South to Rome [and got there absolution for his deed from the Pope] (4). In that voyage he went on to Jerusalem, visited the holy relics there, and bathed in/

in the river Jordan, as was the custom of pilgrims.

After that, he returned to his native land, (5) and took under him the realm in the Orkneys. He then became a good ruler, and kept his realm well at peace. He made new laws in the Orkneys, which the bondar thought much better than those that were before. They took to him so, that his popularity grew. And thus it came about that the Orkneymen had no other desire than to have Hakon for their chief, and his sons [after him].

## CHAPTER 53.

### GENEALOGIES.

At that time, when Earl Hakon ruled in the Orkneys, there lived a man in Dale in Caithness called Moddan, a man of rank, and very wealthy. His daughters were Helga, Frakokk and Thorleif. Helga Moddan's daughter was mistress to Earl Hakon, and their son was Haraldr, nicknamed Smooth-Tongue; and Ingibjorg was their daughter, who was married to Olafr Snippet, King of the Hebrides; and Margaret was a daughter of theirs. Frakokk Moddan's daughter was married to a man called Ljotr the Lily-livered, in Sutherland, and their daughter was Steinvor the Stout, who was married to Thorljotr in Rackwick; their sons were Oliver the Unruly, and Magnus, Ormr, and Moddan, Eindrithi, and Authhildr a daughter. Another daughter of Frakokk was Guthrun who was married to Thorsteinn Whistle-mouth the Freeman; their son was Thorbjorn Clerk. [Thorleif Moddan's daughter/

?1117x.  
325.

O.

O. daughter had also a daughter called Gunnhildr.] Earl  
 O.Fl. Hakon [Paul's son] had also another son called Paul,  
 nicknamed the Speechless; he was a reserved man, but  
 popular.

When they grew up these brothers were always  
 at loggerheads.

Hakon Paul's son died on sick-bed there in the  
 Isles. Men thought it a sad day; (1) for during the  
 latter part of his reign there had been peace and pros-  
 perity. (2) But the bondar were very doubtful as to  
 how the brothers Paul and Haraldr would pull together.

#### CHAPTER 54.

O. [THE BEGINNING OF THE REIGN OF THE  
 SONS OF EARL HAKON.]

c.1123.  
 325

After the death of Earl Hakon, his sons took  
 over his realm, and they very soon fell out and divided  
 the realm in halves between them. There immediately  
 arose much quarrelling among the chief men, and the  
 goethingarsplit very much into two parties. Earl Haraldr  
 held Caithness from the King of Scots, and lived there  
 for a long time and sometimes up in Scotland, where he  
 had many friends and kinsmen.

1128x1136.

While Earl Haraldr was living in Sutherland,  
 there came to him that man named Sigurthr, who was said  
 to be the son of Athalbrikt the Priest; he was nick-  
 named Sham-deacon. He had then come down from Scotland  
 and had been with David, King of Scots, and had got of  
 him/

him much honour. Earl Haraldr welcomed him very heartily. Sigurthr sailed out to the Orkneys with Earl Haraldr, and likewise Frakokk Moddan's daughter, for Ljotr the Lily-livered, her husband, was now dead. She and her sister Helga had then a large share in ruling the land with Earl Haraldr. Sigurthr Sham[-deacon] was in high favour with them all. At this time there consorted with him Authhildr, daughter of Thorleif Moddan's daughter, and their daughter was Ingigerthr, whom afterwards Hakon Claw married. Eirikr Struggle had been Authhild's husband; their son was Eirikr ~~Mein~~ Stay-trickster.

When Sigurthr and Frakokk arrived in the Isles, much dissension immediately broke out, and each Earl gathered about him as many friends as he could. Earl Paul's best friends were Sigurthr of Westness who married Ingibjorg the High-born, a kinswoman of the Earls', and Thorkell, Sumarlithi's son, who was always with the Earl, and [was] nicknamed Fosterer. (2) He was near of kin to Saint Magnus the Earl, and the most popular man [there in the Orkneys.]

The friends of Earl Haraldr reflected that Thorkell would have little sympathy with the brothers' quarrel, (3) by reason of the injuries he had suffered at the hands of Earl Hakon their father. The upshot was that Earl Haraldr and Sigurthr Sham fell on Thorkell Fosterer and killed him. (4)

Now when the Earl heard this, he took it very ill, and at once gathered a force about him. News of this instantly reached Earl Haraldr, and he also gathered to him a band of men. But when this took place, their/

their common friends mediated between them, and tried to  
 up their  
 patch/quarrel; and all now did their level best to set  
 them at one.

Earl Paul was so wroth that he would not make  
 peace unless all the men who had been at the slaying were  
 banished. But since the bondar felt that great trouble  
 would come of their bickerings every man now added his  
 word to make peace between them. The upshot was that  
 Sigurthr was banished from the Isles, and the other men  
 who Earl Paul thought had most hand in the deed. Earl  
 Haraldr paid compensation for the slaying of Thorkell.  
 It was also declared in this agreement, that the fellow-  
 ship of the brothers, Paul and Haraldr, should improve and  
 that they should both keep company together at Christmas  
 and all the great festivals.

O. Fl.

Sigurthr Sham-[deacon] sailed away from the  
 Orkneys, and went up into Scotland, and lived for a time  
 in high honour with Malcolm King of Scots, (5) and he was  
 thought to be the greatest of champions in all manly  
 sports. He stayed for a time in Scotland before he  
 made a pilgrimage out to Jerusalem.

O. Fl.

## CHAPTER 55.

### [THE DEATH OF EARL HARALDR].

It happened in the days of the brothers Haraldr  
 and Paul that they were to hold a Christmas feast in  
 Orphir at the house of Earl Haraldr and that he was to  
 bear the expense for both of them [that Christmas.] He  
 was [now] there in thick of his preparations and making  
 a/

?1128.  
 Christmas.  
 325.

O. Fl.

O. Fl.

a fuss.

Those sisters were there, Frakokk and Helga, the Earl's mother, and they sat in a little sitting-room sewing. Now Earl Haraldr went into the room, and the sisters were sitting on the cross-dais, and a newly sewn linen shirt lay between them, white as driven snow. The Earl took up the shirt and saw that it was embroidered in gold..

He said: "For whom is this precious thing?"

Frakokk answered: "It is meant for thy brother Paul."

O. [Haraldr said:] "Why take such pains over a  
"shirt for him? Thou dost not exert thyself so long in  
O. "making me a [fine] garment."

The Earl had just risen, and was in a night-shirt and linen trousers and had thrown a cloak over his shoulders. (1) He cast off the cloak and spread out the linen shirt. His mother caught at it and bade him not be envious because his brother had a fine garment. The Earl snatched it from her and prepared to put it on.

O. Fl. Then [Frakokk] pulled off [her] hood(2) and tore [her] hair, and said that his life was at stake if he put on the shirt; ( ) then they both wept passionately.

None the less the Earl put it on, and let it drop down over him. But even as the garment clung about him a shiver thrilled through his flesh, instantly followed by exquisite pain. And with that the Earl took to bed and it was not long ere he breathed his last. This was a great grief to his friends.

O. Fl. [Immediately after his death] his brother Earl Paul/

?1128-1136.

Paul took all the realm under him with the consent of all the bondar in the Orkneys. Earl Paul guessed that Frakokk and her sister had meant for him the rich garment which Earl Haraldr had put on; and for this reason he had no desire to have them staying there in the [Orkneys]. They then went away with all their household, first to Caithness, and thence up into Sutherland, to the estates that Frakokk owned there. (3) There was brought up with her Erlendr, son of Haraldr Smooth-tongue, while he was a child. There also was brought up Oliver the Unruly, son of Thorljotr of Rackwick, and Steinvor, a daughter of Frakokk. Oliver was the tallest of men, and strong of limb, exceedingly overbearing, and a great fighter. There was brought up Thorbjorn Clerk, son of Thorsteinn the Freeman and Guthrun Frakokk's daughter. There was also brought up Margaret, daughter of Earl Hakon and Helga Moddan's daughter, and Eirikr ~~Hein~~ Stay-trickster. These men were all of good family and strong character, and they all thought they had a claim to the realms in the Orkneys that Earl Haraldr their kinsman had had. The brothers of Frakokk were Angus the Open-handed, and Earl Ottarr in Thurso; he was a man of rank.

## CHAPTER 56.

[OF EARL PAUL AND THE MOST OUTSTANDING  
MEN IN THE ORKNEYS].

?1128-1136.  
325.

Earl Paul now ruled the Orkneys and was popular with/

with all. He was a man of few words, and no speaker at Things. He let other men have a large share in ruling the realm with him; he was affable and free with the common people, liberal with money, and spared nothing to his friends. He was no warrior and lived much at home.

There were now in the Orkneys a large number of men of rank who were of the Earls' stock. There lived at Westness in Rousay a man of rank named Sigurthr; he was married to Ingibjorg the High-born, whose mother [was] Herbjorg daughter of Earl Paul Thorfinn's son. Their sons were Brynjolfr and Hakon Pike. They were all goethingar of Earl Paul.

O. Fl.

The sons of Havarthr Gunni's son were also friends of Earl Paul, Magnus and Hakon Claw, Thorsteinn and Dufnjall; their mother was Bergljot, and her mother was Ragnhildr, daughter of Earl Paul.

There was a man called Erlingr who lived at Tankerness on the Mainland; he had four sons, all of them well brought up.

There was a man called Olafr; he was the son of Hrolfr, and lived in Gairsay; he had another estate at Duncansby in Caithness. Olafr was a very outstanding man, and in high favour with Earl Paul. Asleif was the name of his wife. She was a wise-woman of good family and strongest character. One of his sons was called Valthjolfr, another Sveinn, a third Gunni; they were all well brought up. Ingigerthr was the name of their sister.

Sigurthr Earl's kinsman married Thora, mother of Saint/

Saint Magnus the Earl. Their son was Hakon the Elder. Both father and son were great chiefs.

In North Ronaldsay lived a woman named Ragna, a great lady. Thorsteinn was the name of her son, a man of fine character.

Kugi was the name of a bondi at Rapness in Westray, a wise man and wealthy.

Helgi was the name of a rich and worthy bondi who lived in Westray, in the village that was then there; (i)

Thorkell Flayer was the name of a bondi in Westray, a quarrelsome and overbearing man. Thorsteinn and Haflithi were his sons; they were unpopular.

In Swona in the Pentland Firth, lived a poor man; his sons were Asbjorn and Margathr, the most stalwart of men.

In Fair Isle there lived a man called Dagfinnr.

Thorsteinn was the name of a man who lived on Flyðrunes (2) on the Mainland. His sons were Asbjorn Cross-eye and Blann; they were both cantankerous fellows.

Jaddvor Earl Erlend's [illegitimate thrall-born] daughter lived at Jaddvararstaðir ~~Knarsten~~, and her son Borgarr; they were rather unpopular.

John Wing lived at Upland in Hoy. Richard his brother lived at Brecks in Stronsay. They were men of good standing, and kinsmen of Olafr Hrolf's son.

Grimkell was the name of a man who lived at Glaitness.

0. [These men were all friends of Earl Paul and likewise of all the people]. They all come into the Saga later.

At/

(3) At that time William was Bishop of the Orkneys, and the Episcopal seat was at Christ's ~~Church~~<sup>Kirk</sup> in Birsay. There great miracles were done continually through the sanctity of Earl Magnus, when men kept vigil over his grave. But little was said about it because of the rule of Earl Paul.

Bishop William also took much of the edge off what men said about Earl Magnus' miracles and declared it heresy to go about with such tales.

Now first we shall leave the Saga for a time and rather tell something of the glorious miracles which God has granted for the sake of the worth of Saint Magnus the Earl.

## CHAPTER 57.

### THE MIRACLES OF EARL MAGNUS.

Bergfinnr Skati's son was the name of a bondi in Shetland, and he was blind. He brought South to the Orkneys two cripples, one called Sigurthr, the other Thorbjorn. They all kept vigil over Earl Magnus' tomb. To them all did Saint Magnus the Earl manifest himself, and by the grace of God gave them healing; and Bergfinnr [at first] was clear-sighted enough to see the shape of his hands; and the other two stood straight up.

Now a short time after, before the anniversary of Earl Magnus' death, there kept vigil over the grave twenty/

twenty four sick men, and they were all healed.

Then a number of men besought the Bishop that he have Earl Paul spoken to for leave for the tomb to be searched and the holy relics of Earl Magnus taken up. The Bishop was much troubled at this proposal.

It happened one summer that Bishop William sailed East to Norway; and when he returned, he was late in being ready for sea, and made land in Shetland in autumn, just before winter [set in]. There arose a contrary wind in strong gusts; but the Bishop would brook no delay and was eager to get home. Then the storm broke; and winter set in.

Then the steersman asked the Bishop, if for a fair wind he would make a vow that he would say nothing against the taking up of the relics of Earl Magnus.

The Bishop consented, if the storm abated so far that he could sing a Mass at home on the following (1) Sunday at his Episcopal seat.

And no sooner was the vow made, than the wind began to abate and veer round in their favour. And they got such a quick passage to the Orkneys, that the Bishop sang his Mass at home the next Sunday.

But when such favours were granted him, he would none the more believe in the sanctity of Earl Magnus. Earl Paul was also much displeased at all men who spread abroad such tales.

It chanced one day at Christ's <sup>Kirk</sup>~~Church~~ in Birsay, that the Bishop went to ~~the~~ Church and was at his prayers; he was the only man in the Church. But when he/

"believe that Almighty God shall grant us of his mercy

"that"

he stood up and made to leave, he was blind, and could not find the doors. He moved about for a long time trying to find his way out. Then great fear fell upon him, and upon that he went to Earl Magnus' grave, and prayed before it with tears, and promised that he would take up the holy relics of Earl Magnus, whether Earl Paul like it well or ill; and at this he got back his sight there over the grave.

After this the Bishop summoned to him all the men of highest rank in the Orkneys, and made it known to them that he was now going to search the grave of Earl Magnus. And when the grave was opened, the coffin was taken up from the earth. The Bishop then had the bones washed, and they were very clean and bright. Then he had a knuckle-bone taken and tries it thrice in hallowed fire, and it burned not, but rather did it shine like gold. Some men say that it then ran into the form of a cross. In this place there were many miracles through the holy relics of Earl Magnus. His body was then laid in a shrine, and set over the altar. That was on St. Lucia's Day; he had then lain in the earth twenty one years. Then the custom was established that each day should be hallowed - the day that he was taken up, and the day of his death. The holy relics of Earl Magnus were kept there for some time.

It must be told, that a man in Westray, Gunni by name, a good bondi, dreamed that Saint Magnus came to him and said to him:

"This shalt thou tell to Bishop William, that  
 "I wish to leave Birsay and go East to Kirkwall; and I  
 "believe that Almighty God shall grant me of his mercy  
 "that/

"that men may be healed of their diseases whenever they  
 before both of them, and passed his hands over them.  
 "seek healing in righteousness and faith. ( ) This  
 Halfdan became quite whole, and Bergfinnr got his sight,  
 "dream shalt thou boldly tell."

But when Gunni awoke, his first thought was ( )  
 that he must not tell his dream, for he feared that  
 Earl Paul would take offence at him.

But on the following night Earl Magnus appeared  
 to him in a dream, and he was now very wroth.

"Thou shalt go to Birsay and tell thy dream,  
 "when most men are about. But if thou goest not, thou  
 "shalt pay for it in this world, and more so in the  
 "next."

Then Gunni awoke badly scared and at once  
 journeyed until he came to Birsay to tell his dream before  
 all the worshippers at Mass; and Earl Paul was there,  
 and many other men of might.

Then many besought the Bishop to agree to take  
 the holy relics East to Kirkwall, as the Earl had  
 signified. Earl Paul kept silence as if he had water  
 in his mouth, and turned red as blood. (1)

After this Bishop William went East to Kirkwall  
 with a worthy retinue, and carried thither the holy  
 relics of Earl Magnus, and they set the shrine over the

0. <sup>high</sup> altar (3) in the church [that was there]. At that  
 time the market town in Kirkwall had few houses. ( )

Immediately, many miracles took place there.

A little later Bergfinnr, Skati's son, came South from  
 Shetland a second time to keep vigil over the holy  
 relics of Earl Magnus, and he had with him his son,  
 Halfdan by name, a leper. (4) Earl Magnus appeared  
 before/

before both of them, and passed his hands over them. Halfdan became quite whole, and Bergfinnr got his sight, so that he became a keen-sighted man.

M<sup>2.</sup>, M<sup>1.</sup>

There was a man named Amundi [Illugi's son] from the North of Shetland; he had leprosy in all his limbs; he came to Kirkwall, and kept vigil at the shrine of Saint Magnus the Earl, and prayed for health and strength. But the blessed servant of God, Earl Magnus, appeared to him in a dream and passed his hands over his whole body; and when he awoke, he was quite whole, and felt no pain in himself, and all praised God and Saint Magnus the Earl.

There was a man called Thorkell who lived in the Orkneys. He fell off his barley-rick on to the ground, and was badly ~~maimed~~<sup>hurt</sup> all down one side. He was carried to the shrine of Saint Magnus the Earl, and there he was healed.

Sigurthr was the name of a man from Fetlar<sup>(5)</sup> in the North, whose hand was cramped so that all the fingers lay in the palm. He came to Kirkwall, and was there made whole.

Thorbjorn was the name of a man, whose father's name was Gyrthr.<sup>(6)</sup> He was from Shetland, and was a lunatic; he was brought to Earl Magnus, and was instantly cured.

There was a man named Thorthr, who was nicknamed Dragon-snout. He was a servant of Bergfinn's in Shetland. He was thrashing oats from the straw in the barn, on the day before St. Magnus' and St. Lucia's Day. But/

But as darkness fell, Bergfinnr the bondi went out into the barn and bade him strike work.

Thorthr says: "'Tis very rarely thou thinkest "I work too long."

Bergfinnr says: "Tomorrow is St. Magnus' Day, "which we must hold with all such reverence as we know "best."

Then Bergfinnr went away, but Thorthr worked away harder than ever.

Now after a short interval, Bergfinnr came a second time, and in great anger said to Thorthr:

"It is spite, I think, that makes thee work now "on a holy day. Now stop at once."

Then Bergfinnr went off in a rage; but Thorthr worked on as before.

Now when men were set down to table and having eaten their fill had begun their drink, in came Thorthr in ragged(γ) clothes and at once began to drink [deeply].  
 M<sup>1</sup>.  
 M<sup>1</sup>.  
 But no sooner had he drunk one full [horn] than he went raving mad, so that men had to hold him and tie him up; and this lasted three nights and three days.

Then Bergfinnr vowed on his behalf that he would give half a silver mark(δ) for the shrine of Earl Magnus and get Thorthr to keep vigil for three nights, that he might be cured. But Thorthr was cured on the very night of the vow, which was made earlier in the evening.

Two men stole some gold from the shrine of Earl Magnus, the one an Orkneyman, the other from Caithness. Now the Caithness man, whose name was Gilli, was lost in the Pentland Firth. The Orkneyman went/

went raving mad, and in his frenzy let out what they had done. And a vow to make a pilgrimage South was made on his behalf, if he were cured at the shrine of Earl Magnus. He was now brought thither, and was cured on the spot.

There was a Shetlander named Ogmundr, on whose head there fell a cross-tree which severely bruised his skull. But Bergfinnr made a vow on his behalf, and cast lots as to whether he should vow to make a pilgrimage South, or set a thrall free, or make an offering of money for the shrine of St. Magnus, if he were made whole. But the lot turned up to offer money for the shrine of St. Magnus, and he [got back his speech and] was made whole on the spot; and Bergfinnr his uncle gave half a mark as he had vowed.

Sigrithr Sigurth's daughter was the name of a woman from [Sand in] the North of Shetland who was blind from childhood and until she was twenty. Her father then brought her to Earl Magnus, and made her keep vigil there, and gave much money for Magnus' shrine; and there she got her sight.

Sigrithr [Arnfrith's daughter] was the name of another woman from [the farm called Unustaðir in the North of] Shetland, whose leg was broken in two pieces, and she was brought to Magnus and was there made whole.

Sigrithr was the name of a third woman from Unst in the North of Shetland. She was [a servant] with Thorlacr who lived at [Baliasta.]<sup>(9)</sup> She was sewing when other men ceased work on St. Magnus' Eve. Now/

M<sup>2</sup>., M<sup>1</sup>.

M<sup>1</sup>.

M<sup>1</sup>.

M<sup>1</sup>.

M<sup>1</sup>.

Now Thorlacr asked why she worked so long; she said she would leave off there and then. He went away, but she sewed on as before. Then Thorlacr came a second time and asked why she did such evil; - "and be off "with thee", said he, "and do no work in my house." She said there was only a little bit to sew and went on as before until it grew dark, and she sat [still] in her place. But when the fires were made [up] and men sat down to supper, she went raving mad and was put in bonds; and she was mad until Thorlacr made a vow on her behalf. He cast lots as to whether the vow should be to make a pilgrimage South, or set free a thrall, or make an offering of money for the shrine of Saint Magnus the Earl; but the lot turned up for offering money for the shrine of Earl Magnus. Thorlacr brought her thither, and there she was made whole, and she went South afterwards [on a pilgrimage]. ( )

In England were two men who staked much money on the casting of dice and one had lost a large sum. He then staked a ship of burden and all that he had for all that he had already lost. But the other man cast first two sixes. It then seemed to be all up with him, but he called upon Saint Magnus the Earl that he might not lose all he had, and then made his throw. But one dice split in two and there turned up two sixes and an ace. And he lifted all the stakes, and afterwards made a large offering of money for the shrine of Earl Magnus.

Groa was the name of a woman on the Mainland. She was a lunatic, and was brought to Saint Magnus the Earl/

Earl and was there cured; and she stayed there the rest of her life and praised God.

M<sup>1</sup>. There was a man called Sigurthr, the son of Tandri who lived [at the farm called Dale] in the North of Shetland. He became possessed of a devil, and he was sewn up in a cow's hide and then brought South to Kirkwall to Saint Magnus the Earl, and was cured on the spot; and all who were by praised God and his dear friend and saint, Earl Magnus.

Now that is the end of the tale of the glorious miracles which God showed forth for the sake of Saint Magnus the Earl of the Isles.

Now also must be an end to this story<sup>(10)</sup> with the prayer that he who wrote this saga, and he who recited it, and whosoever heard it may have intercession and answer to his prayers from the holy knight of God, Earl Magnus, for absolution from sin and eternal bliss. And from our almighty Lord Jesus Christ [may he have] succour and mercy, peace and joy, both now and evermore, from Him who was and is and ever shall be one true and everlasting God, granting, and willing and powerful to give all good things for ever and ever. Amen.

## CHAPTER 58.

### [OF KALI, KOL'S SON]

O. 1099x.  
325. O. Kolr [Kali's son] lived [at home] on his estates in Agder, as was mentioned before,<sup>(1)</sup> and was the wisest of men. He did not go [back] to the Orkneys; [Kolr/

F1. [Kolr was a shrewd fellow] (2). Kali his son grew up there. He was a promising man of medium height, well-made, clean-limbed like the best of men, and with light chestnut hair. He was the most popular of men, and one of the most accomplished of his time. He made this verse:-

"At draughts I'm a warrior.  
 Nine kinds of sport I know.  
 Runes could I ne'er forget;  
 Of books I'm a scholar.  
 Stride I on ski;  
 Shoot and row well enough,  
 Play the harp and make verses,  
 Or toil in the smithy."

Kali was always with his kinsman Solmundr, son of Sigurthr Skewer. He was the royal steward (3) in Tønsberg, and had an estate in East Agder. He was a chief and had a large following. The kinsmen were of much the same age.

After that, Kali sailed from the West in the same ship, and touched at Agder and held on thence North to Bergen.

#### CHAPTER 59.

Then Kali spoke this verse:-

O. [OF KALI'S VOYAGE].

"Five weeks we've been wading

1115x1127.  
325.

When Kali was fifteen years old he sailed with [some] merchants West to England with a cargo of good merchandise. Where we were in Grimsby!

F1. They held on their course to the [market] town called Grimsby. (1) Thither came large numbers of men, both O. [from Norway and] from the Orkneys, from Scotland and also from the Hebrides.

There/ for Bergen."

Now/

There Kali met that man who was called Gilli-Kristr. Now he asked him many questions about Norway, and had many talks with Kali, and a marked friendship soon sprang up between them. He told Kali in confidence that his name was Haraldr, and that King Magnus Bare-legs was his father, but that his mother's family were in the Hebrides, and some in Ireland. He enquired of Kali what kind of welcome he would have if he came to Norway. Kali says that he thinks it likely that King Sigurthr would give him a good welcome, if other men did not set him against him. At their parting Gilli-Kristr and Kali exchanged gifts. Each of them promised the other his entire friendship wheresoever they might meet. And Gilli-Kristr told his secret to no other man there.

#### CHAPTER 60.

#### OF KALI.

After that, Kali sailed from the West in the same ship, and touched at Agder and held on thence North to Bergen. Then Kali spoke this verse:-

"Five weeks we've been wading  
 In that ghastly slime.  
 No lack of mud  
 Where we were in Grimsby!  
 But now right merrily  
 Send we the sea-elk  
 Skimming the billows  
 Over the sea-mews' moor  
 Bound for Bergen."

Now when they entered the town, there was there before them a great crowd of men, both from the North of the land and from the South, and many from foreign countries who had brought thither much merchandise. The sailors went into ale-houses to make merry. Kali was a great dandy, and was strikingly dressed, for he was but lately come from England. He was highly pleased with himself, and so were many others, for he was of good birth, and himself very well-bred.

Now in the ale-house where he drank, there sat ( ) before him a young man of rank called John. He was the son of Peter Serk's son of Sogn; he was <sup>then</sup> a "landed-proprietor." His mother was called Helga, the daughter of Harekr of Sætersdalen. John was a great dandy. Unnr was the name of the good dame who kept the house where they drank.

A warm friendship grew up between John and Kali, and they parted affectionately. John then sailed [home] ( / ) to Sogn to his estates, and Kali East to Agder to his father.

Kali lived also a long time with his kinsman Solmundr [~~who was at that time royal steward at Tønsberg~~]. So it went on for several years that Kali spent the summer in trading, but was at home or with Solmundr his kinsman during the winter.

## CHAPTER 61.

### [OF KALI].

It happened one summer, when Kali had sailed North to/

702. to Trondhjem, that he lay weather-bound under the island  
 called [Dollsbø]. In the island is a large cave, called  
 Dollsten<sup>3</sup>hulen. There were tales of there being great  
 treasure in the cave. The merchants made for it, and enter-  
 ed the cave, and had the greatest of difficulty in doing so.  
 0. Fl. They came to where there was a stretch of water  
 right across the cave, and no one trusted himself [to swim  
 across] (1) except Kali and another man named Havarthr, a  
 serving-man of Solmund's. They swam over the water, and had  
 a rope between them. Kali swam first, and carried a blaz-  
 ing (2) torch in his hand, and a tinder-box between his  
 shoulders. (3) They swam over the water, and came to land.  
 The place was rocky and there was a foul stench; and they  
 could scarcely get their torch alight. Then Kali decided  
 that they would go no farther, and said they would build a  
 cairn to mark the occasion.

Then Kali spoke a verse:-

"Here for the ghost  
 In the dark cave of Dollr  
 - Rings I was seeking there -  
 I have raised a high cairn  
 For bold men to see.  
 Yet what sailor on sea-skis  
 Will ever in days to come  
 Cross over the broad lake  
 So dreary and long."

After that they turned back, and came safe and sound to his  
 men. They then left the cave. It is not mentioned that  
 anything/

and they rowed South until they came to Grønningend. Then  
 said/

anything else worthy of note happened on their voyage that summer.

They came back to Bergen, and Kali went into the same ale-house to Dame Unnr. And there were [seated] before him John Peter's son and his serving-man who was called Brynjolfr. There were also many other men of his there, though they are not named.

It happened one evening, that John Peter's son and Kali had gone to bed, while a number [of them] sat up drinking. There was much talking as the men grew drunk. And it came about that the talk turned to the matching of men, (4) and as to who were thought to be in all things the most accomplished of the "landed proprietors" in Norway.

Brynjolfr declared that John Peter's son was the most accomplished and nobly born among the younger men South of Cape Stadt.

But Havarthr Kali's friend spoke up for Solmundr and said he was of no less fine breeding than John. He declared that the men of Viken would think much more of him than of John Peter's son.

Over this a fierce quarrel began. And as the ale <sup>works</sup> ~~is digested~~ within them, they had so little control over themselves that Havarthr leapt up, grasped a log and brought it down there and then on Brynjolfr's head so that he fell <sup>stunned</sup> ~~in a swoon~~; and men sprang to his side. But Havarthr was allowed to escape and came to Kali, and Kali sent him South to Alversund, (5) to the priest called Richard (Rikarðr); - "and take to him," says he, "this message from me, that he "take <sup>thee</sup> ~~you~~ in until such time as I take <sup>thee</sup> ~~you~~ home East."

Kali got him a man to bear him company, and a boat; and they rowed South until they came to Groenings<sup>s</sup>und. Then said/

Fl. said Havarthr to his companion: "Now we are beyond the bark  
"of hounds; and we may rest ourselves here." And they lay  
[down] to sleep. (6)

Fl. Now it must be told that Brynjolfr came to his  
senses, and he was brought to see John and tells him what  
had happened and also that the man had been allowed to escape.  
John guessed the truth about his objective; and he had a  
rowing-cutter launched, and ten men went aboard; Brynjolfr  
was in command. Then they rowed South, and [reached] Groen-  
ingsund at dawn. Then they saw a boat lying before them on  
the beach. (7)

"It may be," says Brynjolfr, "that these men can  
"tell us something of Havarthr."

They went ashore and found them. Havarthr and his  
companion had just awakened. Brynjolfr immediately drew his  
sword on Havarthr, and both the companions were killed in the  
encounter.

And now after this affair Brynjolfr and his men went  
back to Bergen and tell [their story] to John; and there-  
after all the townsfolk got to know about it. Kali was much  
put out by this fight. And when mediators went ~~went~~ between  
him and John, John says that he wishes Kali to fix the com-  
pensation for the offence he considers has been done to him-  
self, thereby avoiding an appeal to the King and the prose-  
cuting parties. (8) And Kali accepted this offer, but  
there was [now] an end to the friendship between him and John.

0. Fl. Kali then sailed home with all speed. And when  
father and son met, and Kali has told of these doings and the  
outcome thereof, then says Kolr: "This is strange behaviour  
"of thine, methinks, to make any settlement before thy  
"kinsman/

"kinsman Solmundr was consulted. It seems to me that thou  
 "hast picked a fine peck of troubles and can do little else  
 "than try to patch up peace. And Solmundr would not act  
 "thus if thy serving man and his shipmate were slain."

expected Kali says: "It would be quite true, father, to say  
 "that I must have been a little too hasty in the matter.  
 "And thou wert too far away to give me advice. It must  
 "often appear that I am not so wise as thou. But I thought  
 "that Solmundr would be none the nearer his compensation if  
 "I let slip [the chance] offered me. And I do not call it  
 "a disgrace to Solmundr and thee to fix your compensation  
 "from John for your share in the suit, if he were to offer  
 "it to you. But I doubt if there is any need to proceed  
 "in this affair. But I consider that I am under no obliga-  
 "tion to Brynjolfr as long as I have fixed no compensation  
 "nor taken any money from him."

now fair Father and son had a long talk upon the matter;  
 "and each of them stuck to his own way of thinking.

his advice They then sent men to tell Solmundr of the state  
 "of affairs; and after that father, son, and Solmundr met  
 "together. Kolr wished to send men to John to seek a  
 "settlement; but Solmundr and Hallvarthr (a brother of  
 "Havarth's) would have nothing but blood-revenge, and said  
 "it was ill-becoming to beg a settlement of a man from Sogn.

rather to But Kol's advice was taken, with this stipulation,  
 "that Kolr promised not to withdraw from this suit before  
 "Solmundr got compensation; then Kolr was also to have the  
 "whole management of the suit.

Now when the envoys returned, they say that their  
 "message/ evening, when men sat round the fire, the guest  
 "asked/

message was badly received and that John flatly refused to make compensation in money for a man who had already by his own act made himself an outlaw.

Solmundr said that this had turned out just as he expected - that they would get no settlement by asking John for it. He now besought Kolr to devise a plan to meet the situation.

Kolr says: "Is Hallvarthr willing to run any risks to avenge his brother? And yet the chances are that he would have small success."

Hallvarthr answers that he would not spare himself to avenge his brother, - "though there be some danger in it."

Kolr says: "Thou shalt go secretly North to Sogn to the man called Uni. He lives not far from John. He is a wise man and rather poor, for John has long been practising extortion upon him. He is a great friend of mine, and is now fairly advanced in years. To him thou shalt take six marks weight [of silver] <sup>(9)</sup> which I send him in return for his advice as to how thou might take revenge upon Brynjolfr or such another of John's serving-men as would seem to him no less a loss. Now if that is successful, Uni shall then direct thee to Støle to my kinsman Wrinkly-Ormr and his sons Ogmundr and Erlingr; and I think thou wilt be much at home there. Bid Uni sell his land and move bag and baggage hither to me."

Hallvarthr now got ready for this journey. And nothing is told of his wayfaring or his night-quarters until one day he came at nightfall to Uni; and he gave a false name. Uni and his household inquired the news of the day. And in the evening, when men sat round the fire, the guest asked/

0. asked many questions about the men of rank [in the land and especially those] in Sogn and Hordland. Uni said that no "landed proprietor" was thought a more outstanding man than John, both with respect to birth and arrogance. And he asked if they had no tokens of this in the South country.

When he said this the guest fell silent. And upon that men <sup>rose from</sup> ~~left~~ the fire so that the two were left.

Then Uni broke the silence and said: "Is thy name Hallvarth?" "No," says the guest, and he named himself as in the evening. Uni spoke: "My difficulty is gone, then," says he, "and [yet] I should have thought that if my name is Brynjolfr thine is Hallvarth. But now let us go to bed."

Then the guest took hold of him and said: "Let us not go [yet]."

He then handed over the bag of money, and says that Kolr himself sends it to him with his compliments, - "for this purpose, that thou give me thy advice that I may avenge my brother;" and he tells him all Kol's plan.

Uni said: "Kolr is due a good turn from me, but I cannot be sure what fate has decreed as regards vengeance upon Brynjolfr. But he is expected hither in the morning for his mistress' clothes."

And now Uni led him out to the stable which stood opposite the outer doors and concealed him there in the manger. (This was before men were up; but he had slept the night indoors).

Now when Hallvarth had been in the stable but a short/

short time, he noticed an active-looking man come into the yard and call to the woman to get ready. She took her clothes and carried them out. Hallvarthr guessed who he must be. He then stepped out. Brynjolftr had laid aside his weapon while he tied up the woman's clothes. And as soon as they are close together Hallvarthr dealt Brynjolftr his death-blow. Then he went back to the stable and hid himself there.

While the killing was being done, the woman had gone in to kiss the house-servants farewell; and when she came out, she saw the evidence of the deed, and fled indoors with a loud shriek and in great terror. She was almost in a swoon; yet she told what she had seen. Uni the bondi ran out and said that the guest must have been a hired murderer; and he at once sent a man to John to tell him the news and egged on [his men] vigorously to search for the man. And for that reason no one suspected his having a hand in the plot.

Hallvarthr stayed in the stable until most of the search party were out of the way. And after that, on Uni's directions, he journeyed until he came to Støle to Ormr and his father, and they got him guides [to take him] home East. Kolr and Solmundr welcomed him heartily and were well satisfied with their stratagem. [Hallvarthr stayed with Solmundr and likewise Kali.]

And now the news is freely talked about, and the whole truth comes out. John is now very ill-pleased, and so things remain for a year.

And next winter, as it drew near Christmas, John set off from home with thirty men, and gave out that he was going/

going to pay a family visit up in Sætersdalen, to Harekr<sup>(10)</sup> his mother's father; and so he did, and had a cordial welcome there.

And as the kinsmen were talking, John says that he means to go to Easter Agder to see Solmundr. Harekr persuaded him against it, and said that he had not been the loser in the suit although they had not yet come to terms.

John said he could not rest content with Brynjolfr unavenged.

Harekr said that, do as he might,<sup>(11)</sup> it was unlikely he would better his case.

But yet he took off with him thirty men, and with sixty<sup>(12)</sup> [all told] he journeyed overland, meaning to fall upon Solmundr and Kolr unawares.

Fl.

Now as soon as John left home [for the South], Uni made haste to go South to Støle to see Ormr; and father and son got him guides to take him South to Kolr. And he arrived there at Christmas, and said that he had an inkling that John was on his way to attack them.

1128.

Christmas.

Kolr at once sends spies out every road round about<sup>(13)</sup> by which he supposed John might come. And he went to join Solmundr, and the two kinsmen lay [ready] with a large band of men. Word came to them of John's advance, and they sallied out to meet him. They met together at the edge of a wood. They at once fell to blows. Kolr and his men were the larger force and won the day, while John lost many men and fled himself into the wood. He was wounded in the leg and it healed so badly that he was lame ever afterwards, and was nicknamed Limp-leg (Fótr). He came home North in Lent; and his expedition was thought a huge/

1129.

Lent.

huge joke. Thus this winter passed.

1129. Summer. But in the following summer, John had two of Kol's kinsmen killed, Gunnarr and Aslākr.

Not long after this King Sigurthr came to the town, and these disorders were then brought to his notice. The King thereupon sent word to both parties summoning them to him. They then came before the King with their kinsmen and friends. Negotiations were then opened, and the upshot was that the King's judgment was to be final on each suit, and each party bound himself to it by oaths. King Sigurthr, with the aid of his wisest counsellors, [then] laid down the terms of the settlement. In this settlement it was laid down that John Peter's son was to marry Kol's daughter Ingirithr, and friendship would spring from the family connection; while the manslaughters were to be set off against each other. The attack on Kolr and John's wound were set off against the loss of men there in the East; and the wounds were balanced up, and compensation paid for the difference. And each party was to provide fighting-forces for the other both for home and abroad.

1. Fl. 2. Fl. 3. Fl. 4. Fl. Immediately upon this settlement also, King Sigurthr gave Kali Kol's son one half of the Orkneys along with Earl Paul Hakon's son, and the title of "Earl". He gave to him also the name of Earl Rognvaldr Brusi's son, for Gunnhildr his mother had said that he had been the most accomplished of all the Orkney Earls, and he thought that would bring him good luck. This share of the Orkneys had belonged to Saint Magnus, Rognvald Kali's uncle.

him the After this settlement they, who had previously been enemies/

enemies, parted the best of friends. Sigurth could have half the land along with the other, but that Magnus should have King Sigurth's <sup>warship</sup> ~~hall~~, his table-service, and all the treasury; and yet he was not content with his share. He picked quarrels with all [King Harald's] friends. King Magnus also

## CHAPTER 62.

O. [THE STRIFE BETWEEN KING MAGNUS AND  
HARALDR GILLI].

King Sigurthr resided the next winter in Oslo.

But in spring during Lent he fell sick, and died on the night after Lady Day. His son Magnus was then in the town, and he at once held a Thing, and was chosen King over all the land according as men had sworn to King Sigurthr. He then took the Royal Treasury into his possession.

Haraldr Gilli was in Tønsberg when he heard of the death of King Sigurthr. He then had meetings with his friends; and he sent for Rognvaldr and his [father]<sup>(1)</sup> for [Rognvaldr] had always been his friend since they had met in England. Father and son had also most to do with carrying through Harald's trial by ordeal<sup>(2)</sup> before King Sigurthr, with the help of [many] other "landed proprietors" [among them] Ingimarr Sveinn's son and Thjostolfr Ali's son.

The plan of Haraldr and his followers was to hold a Haugar-Thing<sup>(3)</sup> there in Tønsberg. Haraldr was there chosen King over half the land. It was declared that the oaths had been extorted from him when he had sworn away his father's inheritance from his own hand, before he was granted trial by ordeal. Men gathered round him and gave him their allegiance, and he got a large following.

O. Letters passed between the two kinsmen, and after [seven] days/

1129x1130.  
 Winter.  
 325.  
 1130.  
 March 26.

1130-1133.

O. Fl.

O. Fl.

O. Fl.

O.

days<sup>(4)</sup> they settled it that each should have half the land along with the other, but that Magnus should have King Sigurth's ~~battle-ship~~<sup>warship</sup>, his table-service, and all the Treasury; and yet he was not content with his share. He picked quarrels with all [King] Harald's friends. King Magnus also would not hold as binding the gift of the Orkneys and the Earldom which King Sigurthr had made to Rognvaldr, because he clung very fast to Harald's cause in all their dealings, and did not refrain from backing up his suit until their differences were at an end.

O. Fl.

(1130-1133)

Magnus and Haraldr were Kings over Norway for three years, so that their settlement may be said to have held good. But in the fourth summer, they fought a battle at Ferlöv. King Magnus had then almost 6000 men, and Haraldr 1500 men.

1133.  
Summer.

The following chiefs were with Haraldr:- Christrøthr, his brother, Earl Rognvaldr, Ingimarr of Askr, Thjostolfr Ali's son, and Solmundr.

King Magnus won the day, and King Haraldr fled. There fell Christrøthr and Ingimarr. He spoke this verse:

"Trolls drove me to Ferlöv,  
I was ever unwilling  
To strive in the fight.  
Arrows from elm-bow  
Deeply have bitten me.  
Never to Askr  
Come I again."

King Haraldr fled East to Viken to his ship, and sailed South to Denmark to seek King Eirikr the Evermemorable/

memorable, who gave him the stewardship of Halland and presented him with eight unrigged ~~battle-ships~~ <sup>warships</sup>. Thjostolfr Ali's son sold his lands for ships and arms and sought out King Haraldr South in Denmark in the autumn.

1133.  
Christmas.  
O.

King Haraldr came at Christmas to Bergen and lay in Florevaag during Christmas. But [immediately] after Christmas they made an attack on the town and there was little resistance. King Magnus was made captive in his ship and maimed, (6) and King Haraldr took all the land under him. And in the following spring King Haraldr renewed the gift of the Orkneys to Rognvaldr, and likewise the title of "Earl".

1134.  
Spring.

#### CHAPTER 63.

#### [OF THE ENVOYS OF KOLR AND HIS SON ROGNVALDR].

1134.  
Spring.  
325.

Immediately after this Kolr conceived the plan of sending envoys to the Orkneys; and he asked Earl Paul to give him up that half of the Isles which King Haraldr had given [Rognvaldr]; and then they would become good friends and kinsmen.

O.F1.

But if Earl Paul refused this, then the same men should go to see Frakokk and Oliver the Unruly, and offer them one half of the lands along with Earl Rognvaldr, if they would wrest it from Earl Paul by force of arms.

Now when these envoys came to the Orkneys to Earl Paul, and made known to him their errand, then Earl Paul answers/

answers: "To my understanding this claim is the result of  
 "much cunning fore-thought. They have made advances to the  
 "Kings of Norway to extort the realm from me. Now I will  
 "not reward such underhand dealing by giving up my realm to  
 "one who is no nearer akin to me than Rognvaldr and yet re-  
 "fusing it to my brother's or my sister's son. There is no  
 "need to discuss the matter further, for I shall defend the  
 "Orkneys with the forces of my friends and kinsmen as long  
 "as God grants me life to do so."

Then the envoys saw what their next move must be. They at once departed South over the Pentland Firth to Caithness, and so into Sutherland to Frakokk and tell her their errand, that Earl Rognvaldr and Kolr offer Oliver and her half of the Orkneys, if they will win them from Earl Paul.

Frakokk speaks thus: "In truth, Kolr is a very far-  
 "seeing man, and this is a shrewd idea to look here for  
 "forces, for we kinsfolk have a large following and wide fam-  
 "ily connections. I have but now given Margaret Hakon's  
 "daughter in marriage to ~~Maddan~~ Earl of Athole, who is in  
 "rank the most noble of all the Scots chieftains. ~~Maelmuire~~  
 O. Fl. "(Melmari) his father [is] brother to Malcolm King of Scots,  
 "father of David who is now King of Scots. And we have  
 "many legal claims on the Orkneys," she said. "But we are  
 "ourselves something of schemers and are rumoured to be  
 "fairly deep-witted. We are not caught altogether unawares  
 "by this quarrel. But yet for many reasons I think it good  
 "to make an alliance with this father and son. You will  
 "bear my answer to father and son, that Oliver and I shall  
 "come to the Orkneys next summer on Midsummer's Day with an  
 "army/

"army against Earl Paul. Let Rognvaldr and his followers  
 "come there to join with us, and let us then fight it out  
 "with Earl Paul. But I shall spend the winter in mustering  
 "forces from Scotland and the Hebrides, from my kinsmen,  
 "friends and connections." (1)

The envoys now returned East to Norway, and told  
 father and son how they had fared.

#### CHAPTER 64.

#### OF ROGNVALDR.

1134-1135.  
 Winter.  
 325.

During the following winter Earl Rognvaldr got ready  
 for the expedition to the West, and these chiefs with him,  
 Solmundr and John. They set sail in the following summer,  
 with a good, if not numerous force, and five or six ships.  
 They reached Shetland at Midsummer ( ) and could get no news  
 of Frakokk. A strong head-wind then sprang up. They  
 beached their ships in Yell Sound, and they went to feasts  
 all over the land, ( ) and the bondar received them well.

1135.  
 Spring.

Now it must be told of Frakokk, that in spring  
 she went out to the Hebrides, and from there she and Oliver  
 mustered men and ships. They got twelve ships, all of them  
 small, and rather poorly equipped. And a little before Mid-  
 summer they set sail for the Orkneys, meaning, as was agreed,  
 to join Earl Rognvaldr. They were rather slow in getting a  
 favourable wind. (2) Oliver the Unruly was there as com-  
 mander of the forces. And an Earldom in the Orkneys was to  
 be his if they could get it. Frakokk was there in the ex-  
 pedition, and many of her household. ( )

## CHAPTER 65.

## [OF EARL PAUL].

0. 1135.  
? June 24.  
325.

Earl Paul was at Westness in Rousay at a feast at Sigurth's when he heard that Earl Rognvaldr had arrived in Shetland. (1) Then he also learned that a host had been raised against him from the Hebrides. The Earl then sent messages to Kugi in Westray and Thorkell Flayer, who were men of wisdom; and many other goethingar he summoned to him.

0.

By this summons the Earl wished to get the advice of his friends, but they did not all see eye to eye. Some wished [him] to share his realm with one of the two and not have both of them up against him. But some advised the Earl to go over to his friends in Caithness, and find out what forces he could raise there.

Earl Paul says: "I will not offer them my realm now, which I have flatly refused when they sought to get it by fair means. Besides, I think it is no lordly deed to desert my lands without any trial of strength. This shall be my plan, to send men by night round all the Isles to gather men. And, as soon as we can, let us get to grips with Rognvaldr and his men and have it out with him (2) before the Hebrideans arrive."

The Earl's plan was adopted.

Fl.

That man was then with Earl Paul who was called Sveinn [and was nicknamed] Breast-rope. He was one of the Earl's Bodyguard, and high in his favour. He always spent the summer on viking-cruises, but the winter with Earl Paul. Sveinn was a tall man and strong, swarthy and/

and rather unlucky-looking (3). He was deeply versed in the black art, and had often engaged in out-sittings. (4) He was one of the Earl's forecastle men.

Early in the evening the following men came to Earl Paul: Eyvindr Maelbrigte's son, with a warship fully manned, Olafr Hrolf's son from Gairsay with another, Thor-kell Flayer with a third, Bondi Sigurthr with a fourth, and the Earl himself had a fifth. With these five ships they sail for the Mainland, (5) and arrive there on the fifth day of the week (Thursday) at sunset. Men gathered to them during the night, but they got no more ships. They meant to set sail on the following day for Shetland against Rognvaldr and his men.

? June 25.

? June 26.

0.

But in the morning when it was light and the sun had just arisen, there came some men to the Earl who said they had seen ~~battleships~~ <sup>warships</sup> sailing from the South up the Pentland Firth; they could not tell for certain whether there were ten or twelve, [but said there were not more than fifteen at most]. The Earl and his men felt sure that this must be the arrival of Frakokk's host. The Earl then ordered his men to row against them as hard as they could. Olafr and Sigurthr bade them take their time, saying that forces would be joining them at every moment. And when they sailed East from Tankerness, [a fleet of] ~~battleships~~ <sup>warships</sup> was sailing towards them from the East from Mull Head, and there were twelve all told. The Earl and his men then lashed their ships together. At this moment Erlingr, a bondi from Tankerness, and his sons came to him and offered him their levies. They were then so crowded on his ships that they did not think they could take on any more men/

men. So the Earl bade Erlingr carry stones<sup>(6)</sup> aboard while they were yet in no danger.<sup>(7)</sup> And just when they were ready for battle, Oliver and his host came up and at once rowed forward to the attack; and they had much the larger force, and smaller ships.

Oliver had a large ship and he ran it up against the Earl's ship; and there was the hardest of the fighting.

Olaf Hrolf's son drove his ship among the smaller ships of Oliver's, and there was great difference in their height, and in a short time he had cleared three (ships) [of Oliver's and Frakokk's].<sup>0</sup> Oliver attacked the Earl's ship so vigorously that all the forecastle men fell back abaft the mast. Then Oliver egged his men to jump aboard, and is himself the first man up. Sveinn Breast-rope was foremost of all the Earl's men, and fought valiantly. Earl Paul now sees that Oliver has boarded his ship. He eggs on his men fast, and leaps himself from the poop-deck forward into the ship. And when Oliver saw that, he raised a spear and hurled it at the Earl, and it struck his shield and down he fell at once on the planks. Then there was a great shout. And in a trice Sveinn Breast-rope raised aloft a huge stone, and hurled it at Oliver, and it struck him full on the chest.<sup>Fl.</sup> The blow was so heavy that he immediately fell overboard and under water. His men got hold of him, and he was then pulled up into [his] ship and lay there unconscious, and one could not tell whether he was dead or alive. Then some leapt and cut the hawsers, wishing to take to flight; and at that moment, all Oliver's men were driven back off the Earl's ship. Then they took to flight. Just then Oliver came to himself, and ordered them not to flee; but not one gave any heed to what he said.

Earl/

Earl [Paul] drove the fleet East round the Mainland, and so round from the East of the Mainland and South Ronaldsay, and so into the Pentland Firth. There they outdistanced them. Then the Earl turned back. And where they had fought there lay five of Oliver's ships empty. The Earl took possession of them and manned them with his own men. The fight took place on Fast-day (Friday), but in the evening the Earl had the ships made ready for sea. Then a large number of men gathered to him and two warships. In the morning he had twelve warships, and all of them well manned.

? June 27.

On Saturday he sailed to Shetland and entered Yell Sound under cover of night, unnoticed by the men who were on guard on Earl Rognvald's ships. Earl Paul had the men slain on the spot, but he took the ships and gear to himself.

? June 28.

Now in the morning the news reached Rognvaldr and his men. They mustered hastily, and had a large following of the bondar. Then they marched down to the beach and challenged Earl Paul to come ashore and fight with them. But Earl Paul did not trust the Shetlanders, and for this reason would not come ashore, but bade them get themselves ships, and fight it out on shipboard. But Rognvaldr and his men said that they could not get such ships as would give them a fair chance. And with matters thus, they parted.

Earl Paul and his men sailed to the Orkneys; but Earl Rognvaldr and his followers stayed in Shetland that summer, and in autumn took ship to Norway with some merchants. And their expedition was thought [a huge joke].

Now when Rognvaldr came home, and father and son met/

1135.  
Autumn.

O. Fl.

O. Fl. met, Kolr [asked] if Rognvaldr was feeling badly hurt over  
 O. Fl. [the expedition].

He says, that his errand seems to have been rather  
 a wild goose chase. (8)

his men Kolr says: "I do not think so though. I think  
 "thine errand has been well worth while, and that much has  
 "been done if the Shetlanders are thy friends; and it is  
 O. Fl. "better to have gone than [to have stayed at home.]" (9)

on Fair Rognvaldr says, "If thou hast a word of praise for  
 "this expedition, then it must either be that thou art more  
 "indifferent to my fate than I thought, or else thou must  
 "see something in this expedition of ours that we have  
 "missed. I shall be very glad now if thou wilt devise  
 "a plan for us, and come on the voyage with us thyself."

Kolr says: "I shall not both call thy whole task  
 "an easy one and then keep clear of it myself. (10) I shall  
 "be very glad to let you have my advice, which I promise will  
 "not be detrimental to your honour."

had stow Rognvaldr says: "Gladly will we follow thy advice."

in Strom Kolr says, "This is my first plan, that thou send  
 "a message to King Haraldr and other friends of thine, ask-  
 "ing them to get thee men and ships for an expedition to the  
 "West early in spring. But we will muster all the forces  
 "we can get together during the winter, and make up our  
 "minds this second time either to take the Orkneys, or else  
 "die in the attempt."

prepara Rognvaldr says: "I have no mind to go on any more  
 "expeditions like this we have just made; and I think most  
 "of my fellows are of the same mind."

## CHAPTER 66.

(NO TITLE).

1135.  
Summer.  
325.

After he had taken the ships of Earl Rognvaldr and his men Earl Paul sailed to the Orkneys. He had now a great victory to boast of.

Then he held a great feast and invited his goethingar to it. At this it was resolved to set a beacon on Fair Isle. It was to be kindled if a host were seen coming from Shetland. Then there was another [beacon] on North Ronaldsay and likewise on other islands, so that it might be seen all over the Isles if foes were nigh. Then men were also appointed to call up the forces throughout the Isles.

Thorsteinn, son of Havarthr Guñni's son, was to have North Ronaldsay, and his brother Magnus Sanday, Kugi the coasts of Westray and Sigurthr of Westness Rousay. Olaf Hrolf's son went over to Caithness to Duncansby and had stewardship over that. His son Valthjofr lived then in Stronsay.

Earl Paul then gave gifts to his friends, and all of them promised him their whole friendship. He kept a large following that autumn, until he heard that Rognvaldr and his men had left Shetland. Thereafter nothing of note happened in the Isles, and so things remained till Christmas. Earl Paul held a great Christmas feast, and made preparations for it on that estate of his which ~~he is known~~ <sup>is called</sup> ~~to have had in~~ Orphir. (1) He invited to it many men of rank. To it was invited Valthjofr Olaf's son. With nine others/

1135.  
Christmas.

men went with him to Eyvindr Maelbrigta's son, Sveinn's others he set off in a ten-oared boat and they were all drowned in Stronsay Firth(4) on Christmas Eve. And that was thought terrible news, for Valthjofr was one of the most accomplished of men. ~~was much displeased at this and said it was large~~ Olafr his father had a large force in Caithness. There were with him his sons Sveinn and Gunni, and the sons of Grimr of Swona, Asbjorn and Margathr, [the most stalwart of men; they usually accompanied Sveinn].

O. Fl.

Decr. 22.

O.

It befell [in Duncansby] three nights before Christmas that Sveinn Olaf's son was rowing to the fishing, and Asbjorn and Margathr with him. But Dame Asleif and her son Gunni had gone to pay a visit to some friends a short distance away. Now during the night after they had gone Oliver the Unruly came to Duncansby with the company which had been with him on his viking cruise in the summer, and took the house over Olaf's head; and they at once set fire to it, and burned him inside it along with six others, but gave leave to the rest to quit. Then they took all the movable property and thus laden departed.

Sveinn, who was later called Asleif's son, came home before Christmas Eve, and immediately sailed North into the Pentland Firth. At midnight he reached Swona and saw Grimr, father of Asbjorn and his brother. Grimr came aboard ship with him, and they took Sveinn and him to Knarston at Scapa. There was a man called Arnkell who lived there, and his sons Hanefr and Sigurthr. Thence Grimr and his sons turned back, and Sveinn gave ~~to~~ Grimr a gold finger-ring. The brothers Hanefr and Sigurthr went with Sveinn to Orphir. There he was well received. The men/

men went with him to Eyvindr Maelbrigte's son, Sveinn's kinsman. Eyvindr took Sveinn before Earl Paul, who received Sveinn well and asked his news. Now Sveinn [told] him of the death of his father, with all that had happened.

The Earl was much displeased at this and said it was largely his (i.e. the Earl's) fault. He asked Sveinn to stay with him and said he would do him much honour.

Sveinn [thanked] the Earl heartily for his invitation and said he would gladly accept it.

After that men went to Evensong.

There was a large homestead, and it stood on a piece of rising ground, and there was a slope behind the buildings. ~~and~~ And when one reached the shoulder of the hill, [one could soon get down over the other side to the Bay of Firth], in which lies Damsay. (3) There was a castle (4) on the island and the keeper of it was a man called Blann (~~Blann~~), son of Thorsteinn of Flyðrunes.

There was at Orphir a large drinking hall, (6) and there was a door in the south side wall under the east gable, (7) and a magnificent church (8) stood facing the hall door; and one went down [steps] from the hall to the church. And when one entered the hall there was on one's left hand a large flagstone, and [between it and the hall] (9) were a number of large ale-casks; but opposite the outer door was a small room. (10)

When men came from Evensong, they were shown to their seats. The Earl made Sveinn Asleif's son sit next to him on the inner side, and next to the Earl on the outer side Sveinn Breast-rope, and then John, Sveinn Breast-rope's kinsman. And when the board was cleared, the men arrived with/

with the news that Valthjofr Olaf's son had been drowned; and the Earl thought it a sad ~~business~~ piece of news.

The Earl then gave orders that no one should annoy Sveinn Asleif's son during Christmas and said he had quite enough of trouble on his mind. And in the evening when men had finished their drinking, the Earl went to bed and most of the men; but Sveinn Breast-rope went out and sat out all night as his custom was.<sup>(11)</sup> And during the night the men rose up and went into the church and heard Divine Service; and after High Mass the men returned to the board. Eyvindr Maelbrigte's son had most of the management of the feast along with the Earl and did not sit down. Cup-bearers and torch-bearers stood before the Earl's table, but Eyvindr filled the cups of the two namesakes. Now it seemed to Sveinn Breast-rope, that Eyvindr filled his cup higher, but had taken back Sveinn Asleif's son's cup before he had drained it; and he called Sveinn an unfair drinker.<sup>(12)</sup> For long there had been no love lost between Sveinn Breast-rope and Olafr Hrolf's son, and hence between the namesakes, ever since Sveinn Asleif's son had come to manhood. And when they had been drinking for a time, they went to Nones. And when men came in, memorial healths were proposed,<sup>(13)</sup> and drunk from horns. Then Sveinn Breast-rope wished to exchange horns with his namesake, [for] [he said] [he thought his horn was a smaller one].<sup>(14)</sup> Eyvindr then thrust a big horn into Sveinn Asleif's son's hand, and he offered that to his namesake. Then Sveinn Breast-rope grew wroth and muttered to himself, so that some men heard him, including the Earl: "Sveinn must be Sveinn's death, and Sveinn shall be Sveinn's death"/

"death."

No attention was paid to this. ~~This was soon forgotten.~~

The drinking now went on until Evensong. And when the Earl went out, Sveinn Asleif's son went before him, but Sveinn Breast-rope sat still drinking. But when they came forward to the ale-store<sup>(15)</sup> Eyvindr followed them, and took Sveinn aside to speak to him.

He asked: "Heardest thou what thy namesake said, when thou hadst offered him the horn?"

"No," said he.

Then Eyvindr repeated the words, and said that the Fiend must have put the words into his mouth during the night, - "he must mean thy death; but thou shalt be first in the fray and kill him."

Eyvindr put an axe in his hand, and bade him stand behind the flagstone in the shadow, and told him to give Sveinn a blow in front if John came before him; but if John came second, he told Sveinn to strike his namesake behind.

The Earl went to the church; and no one paid any heed to Eyvindr and him.<sup>(16)</sup>

Now Sveinn Breast-rope and John came out a little after the Earl. Sveinn Breast-rope had a sword in his hand, for he always carried a sword although others were weaponless. And John went in front of him. It was light as far as the outer door, but there was a heavy mist.<sup>(17)</sup> And when Sveinn Breast-rope came to the outer door, Sveinn Asleif's son struck him in the front of the forehead, and he stumbled under the blow, but did not fall [immediately] /

[immediately]. And when he straightened himself he saw a man standing in the doorway, and thought that this was the man who had wounded him. Then he drew his sword and hewed at his head, and clove him down to the shoulders. It was on his kinsman John that the blow fell, and there they both fell. Eyvindr then came and led Sveinn Asleif's son to the room that stood opposite the outer door and there he was pulled out through a small window. (18) There Magnus Eyvind's son had a horse ready saddled and went with him away from behind the homestead, and so to the Bay of Firth. Then they took ship, and Magnus took Sveinn over to Damsay and there brought him to the castle, and in the morning Blann took him [by boat] North to Egilsay to see Bishop William. The Bishop was [in church] at Divine Service when they arrived. And after Mass, Sveinn was secretly brought to the Bishop, and Sveinn tells him the news, the death of his father and Valthjofr, the slaying of Sveinn and his fellow, and promised [thereafter to do his duty and make amends as he ought]. (19) The Bishop thanked him for the death of Sveinn Breast-rope, and said it was a good riddance. (20)

The Bishop got Sveinn to stay with him there over Christmas. But after that the Bishop sent him to Tیره in the Hebrides to a man called Holdbothi, who was the son of Hundi. He was a great chief, and welcomed Sveinn very cordially. He stayed there that winter, and was much esteemed by all the people.

Decr. 24.

O.

1136.  
January.

## CHAPTER 67.

OF EARL PAUL.

Soon after the manslaughters had been done in Orphir, men rushed up from the Church, and Sveinn was carried into the house, for he was not yet dead, although unconscious. He died during the night. Then the Earl made every man take his seat, for he wished to know for certain who had committed the manslaughters; and then Sveinn Asleif's son was missed. Then men felt sure that Sveinn had done the deed.

Then up came Eyvindr and said: "Any man can see "that Sveinn Breast-rope must have given John his death."

The Earl said that no man should harm a hair of Sveinn's head, and says that he did not do the deed without good reason; - "but if he avoids meeting me," says he, "then he shall be the worse for it." (1)

The general opinion was that Sveinn must have gone to Paplay to Hakon the Elder, brother (2) of St. Magnus the Earl. He was a great chief, a wise man and a gentle.

The Earl made no inquiries about Sveinn that winter, and had Sveinn declared an outlaw. When spring came, the Earl made a tour of the North Isles to collect his land taxes. He held much friendly converse with the chief men, and gave gifts lavishly. (3) The Earl came to Stronsay and gave to Thorkell Flayer the estate that had belonged to Valthjofr Olaf's son, on condition that he should know of a truth where Sveinn was hiding. (4)

Thorkell said: "This does not prove the proverb that/

1135.  
Decr. 23.

1135-1136.  
Winter.

1136.  
Spring.

"that 'Many are a King's ears'. And although thou be Earl,  
 "it seems to me strange that thou hast got no news of  
 "Sveinn; but I knew at once that Bishop William sent him  
 "to the Hebrides to Holdbothi Hundi's son. And there he  
 "has been all winter."

The Earl said, "What shall I do with the Bishop  
 "who has acted thus?"

Thorkell answers: "It will not do to blame the  
 "Bishop with things as they now are. Thou wilt need all  
 "thy friends, if Rognvaldr and his men come from the East  
 "[again]."

0.

The Earl said such was the truth.

The Earl then went thence to North Ronaldsay and  
 was entertained by Dame Ragna and her son Thorsteinn.  
 Ragna was a wise woman. They had another estate in Papa  
 Westray. The Earl stayed there three nights, for he  
 could not get a wind to take him to Kugi's in Westray.  
 The Earl and Ragna talked much together. She tells the  
 Earl that Sveinn Breast-rope was no great loss to him,  
 although he was a mighty brave fellow; - "Thou gotst a great  
 O. Lex. Run. "deal of unpopularity through him. In the face of [such]  
 "difficulties as are confronting thee, my advice would be  
 "to make as many friends as thou canst and avoid offence.  
 "I would that thou cast no blame on Bishop William or  
 "Sveinn Asleif's son's other kinsmen; rather I would  
 "that thou forget thine anger against Bishop William;  
 "and further than that, that thou have word sent to the  
 "Hebrides to Sveinn, and stifle thine ire against him,  
 "and give him back his lands on condition that he be to  
 "thee such a man as his father was. It has long been  
 "the/

"the custom of the most noble among men to do well by their friends, and in so doing secure strength and popularity."

0. The Earl answers: "Thou art a wise-woman, Ragna, "but thou hast not [yet] won the title of "Earl" in the "Orkneys. Thou shalt not rule the land here. A pretty "thing indeed<sup>(5)</sup> that I should pay Sveinn to make peace "with me, and think that this will put victory in my hands." At this point he flies into a rage and said: "God deal with "me and my kinsman Rognvaldr, and let it go with each ac- "cording as his deeds have been! If I have done him wrong, "then it is now my business to make amends. But if he "wishes to attack my realm [unlawfully], then methinks that "man is my best friend who comes forward to help me to hold "my realm. I have never seen Rognvaldr; so far from my "knowingly doing him wrong, men know that I have had no "hand in what my kinsmen have done."

Many said that it was very unseemly of him (i.e. Rognvaldr) to seek the realm of him by force, but no one spoke against him.

1136. Spring. When spring advanced Earl Paul had the beacons piled up on Fair Isle and North Ronaldsay, and on almost all the islands, in such a way that each could be seen from another.<sup>(6)</sup>

There was a man called Dagfinnr Hlothver's son, who had an estate in Fair Isle, a man of valour. He was to watch that beacon and set fire to it if a host were seen coming from Shetland.

1135-1136. Winter. Earl Rognvaldr spent the winter at home in Agder on the estates that belonged to himself and his father. And he sent messages to his kinsmen and friends, while some/

While they lay in the Hinnver, Earl Rognvaldr held a Council of War, and there he described the preparations/

some he visited personally; and he asked them to assist him with men and ships for an expedition to the West. And most of them lent a willing ear to his wants.

1136.  
Feb.

Now about the end of February<sup>(4)</sup> Kolr sends two merchant ships abroad, one West to England to buy provisions and arms, and the other Solmundr took South to Denmark to buy such things as Kolr told him, for he has now complete charge of the preparations. It was intended that these merchant ships should return at Easter, for they meant to make a start on their expedition after Easter Week.<sup>(8)</sup> Father and son had each his own warship, and Solmundr had the third. Kolr and his men had also a transport with provisions.

Now when they came to Bergen King Haraldr was there before them. He got Rognvaldr a warship fully manned. John Limp-leg had also a warship. Aslacr, son of Erlendr from the Hennøer, had the sixth; he was the son of a daughter of Thorir of Steig; he had a provision-ship also. They had six warships, five cutters and three cargo transports.

0.

While they lay in wait for a fair wind among the Hennøer there came a ship from the West, and they heard the news from the Orkneys [and Shetland], and what preparations Earl Paul was making to face Earl Rognvaldr if he came West thither [with his host that summer].

0.

## CHAPTER 68.

### KOL'S ADVICE.

1136.  
March  
Fl.

While they lay in the Hennøer, Earl Rognvaldr held a Council of War<sup>(1)</sup> and there he described the preparations/

preparations of Earl Paul, and how much hatred the Orkney men bore him in their trying to defend his ancestral lands against him, which the Norse kings had lawfully given him. And there he makes a long and eloquent speech and said that he meant to sail to the Orkneys and gain them, or else to die [in the attempt].

Men applauded his speech heartily, and promised him more faithful following.

Then up stood Kolr, and said: "We have heard from the Orkneys that all men there wish to rise against thee, and defend thy realm against thee along with Earl Paul; they will be slow to give over their enmity, when once they have taken up arms against thee, kinsman. Now my advice is to seek for help where it is abundant, [for I think] that he may grant thee thy realm who had it by right - I mean Saint Magnus the Earl, thy uncle. I desire that, to provide for his granting thee the ancestral lands that are thine and were his, (2) thou make a vow to have a church of stone built in Kirkwall in the Orkneys, when thou gainst that realm, so that there be not a more magnificent in the land; and let it be dedicated to Saint Magnus the Earl thy kinsman. And let it be endowed so that the foundation may increase and that to it may be brought his relics and with them the Episcopal seat."

They all thought this good advice, and the vow was made firm and sure.

After that they put to sea. (3) They got a fair wind and made land in Shetland; and there each party greeted the other cordially. The Shetlanders were able to have as little way as possible on the ships, although

March 29 x.

to tell them much news from the Orkneys; and there they remained some time [and laid their plans]. It then must seem from Fair Isle as if the ships were coming nearer and nearer as they hoisted the sails, although they scarcely moved forward at all. - "It may be that they shall set fire to the beacon [and CHAPTER 69. will be a rush to arms]."

[When Dagfinn in Fair Isle saw the ships sailing he set fire to the beacon and set off himself to the East.]

OF KOLR AND UNI.

And when One day Kolr fell to questioning Uni, who has been mentioned before. He was fairly advanced in years when he came to stay at [Kol's], after he had taken part in the plot against Brynjolfr. (/)

Kolr, then, asks: "What plan wouldst thou advise, Uni, either to render the beacon on Fair Isle ineffective or to prevent another one being lit? I put this question to thee, for I know thou art wiser than most other men who are here now, though there be here now men of higher rank [than thou.]"

Uni answers: "I am no counsellor, [and still less would I wish to go thither with the host; for I shall come on afterwards with my advice, if I can think out anything by myself.]"

And [one day] soon afterwards [when the weather was fair], Kolr had a number of small ships made ready and set his course for the Orkneys. There were no chiefs in the expedition but Kolr. And when they had gone so far that they thought their movements would be visible from Fair Isle, Kolr had the sails hoisted [to half-mast] in all the ships, but ordered the crews to back water, so as to have as little way as possible on the ships, although the/

0. the wind lay dead astern. [And the further he went the  
 higher he had the sails hoisted. Kolr said that it must  
 seem from Fair Isle as if the ships were coming nearer and  
 nearer as they hoisted the sails, although they scarcely  
 moved forward at all]. - "It may be that they shall set fire  
 0. "to the beacon [and then there will be a rush to arms]."

0. [When Dagfinnr in Fair Isle saw the ships sailing  
 he set fire to the beacon and set off himself to the Earl.]  
 And when Thorsteinn Ragna's son on North Ronaldsay saw that  
 0. the beacon was ablaze on Fair Isle then [at once he also]  
 had the beacon on North Ronaldsay set alight. And after  
 that they were lit one after another over all the Isles and  
 the bondar all flocked to the Earl; and there was a huge  
 muster of men.

Now when Kolr saw that the beacon was alight he  
 ordered his men to turn back; he said it might well be  
 that this would give them something to quarrel about.

0. Kolr sailed back to Shetland [with his men] after  
 this exploit, and says that now Uni shall have his turn.  
 Uni [then came forward and] calls for three [young] Shet-  
 0. landers to sail with him. They take one six-oared boat  
 and some stores and fishing tackle. They sailed to Fair  
 Isle. And Uni said that he was a Norwegian, but gave out  
 0. that he had married in Shetland and had [three] sons there.  
 He said he had been robbed [of all he had] by Earl Rogn-  
 vald's men, and speaks the hardest things of them. He  
 set up house there; and his sons rowed to the fishing,  
 but he stayed at home to keep an eye on their belongings.  
 He fell into conversation with the chief men there, and  
 got on familiar terms with them; and he was well liked  
 0. [by all].

## CHAPTER 70.

## [THE SLAYING OF DAGFINNR].

1136.  
April.  
Fl.

After Dagfinnr had lit the beacon, he set off to find Earl Paul, as was said before; and there came all the goethingar of the Earl's. Then questions were asked about the expedition of Earl Rognvaldr and his men, and it seemed to men strange that they had nowhere appeared. But still they kept their forces together for three days. Then the bondar began to grumble; and they said it was the height of folly to have lit the beacons just because fishermen were seen sailing in their boats. Then Thorsteinn Ragna's son was blamed for having made a mistake when he lit the beacon on North Ronaldsay. Thorsteinn answers and says he could do nothing else when he saw the blaze on Fair Isle, and said that the fault was Dagfinn's.

0. Dagfinnr answers: "Men get much [more] ill of thee than thou canst say of me."

Thorsteinn bade him hold his tongue and leapt up with his axe, and there and then gave him his death-blow.

0. Then men leapt to their weapons, and a [great] fight arose.

This happened on the Mainland, not far from Kirk-wall.

0. Sigurthr of Westness and his sons Hakon Pike and Brynjolfr, assisted Hlothver Dagfinn's father, while Thorsteinn had the support of his kinsmen. Then word of it was sent to the Earl and he came up. And it was long before he could get them parted.

Then Kugi of Westray makes a long speech, and says/

wait/

says as follows: "Do not shame the Earl thus by fighting  
 "among yourselves [for he will very soon be in need of all  
 "his men]. Let us take care then not to quarrel and get  
 "on bad terms. Now this must have come about by the  
 "desire and design of our foes, and must have been a trick  
 "of theirs to render our beacons thus useless. But now  
 "we may expect them to come any day; and let us make our  
 "plans accordingly. Dagfinnr can have had no ill will  
 "[against us] in this matter, but he was somewhat hastier  
 "than he should have been."

Herein Kugi guessed the whole truth, and he talked  
 on about it very shrewdly. The upshot was that both sides  
 desired the Earl to settle the matter. But yet it was  
 thought best to break up the gathering, and men went home.

Now a man was appointed to watch the beacon on  
 Fair Isle, called Eirikr. And when Uni had been a short  
 time in Fair Isle, he came to Eirikr and said: "Wilt thou  
 "allow me to watch the beacon [for thee], since I have  
 "nothing to do, and I may well sit beside it [by day] un-  
 "disturbed?"

Eirikr consented to that.

But as soon as there were no men near the spot,  
 Uni carried water to the beacon, and soaked it so thor-  
 oughly that it would not burn anywhere. [This he did  
 frequently].

#### CHAPTER 71.

#### SPOILED BEACONS IN THE ORKNEYS.

Earl Rognvaldr and his men agreed that they must

wait/

wait until the spring tide and the East wind set in together, for then it was hardly possible to sail from the Mainland to Westray, but with an East wind they could sail to Westray from Shetland. And for this Earl Rognvaldr and his men waited. And one Friday evening they arrived in Westray at Pierowall, just where Helgi lived. There was no beacon lit; for when their sails were seen from Fair Isle, Eirikr made ready to go to Earl Paul, and sent a man to Uni to light the beacon; but when he got there Uni was gone. And when he tried to light the beacon, it was so damp that it would not catch fire. And when Eirikr learns this, he guesses what has been going on.

0. Then he [made haste] to find Earl Paul and tells him [all he knew].

Now when Earl Rognvaldr came to Westray, the islanders<sup>(1)</sup> rose in a body and Kugi and Helgi take counsel for them. Their first plan was to seek peace with the Earl [on behalf of all the bondar]. And the affair ended by the men of Westray submitting to Earl Rognvaldr and taking oaths [of allegiance] [on the Saturday].

0. 702.  
Sat.

## CHAPTER 72.

### ROGNVALDR RULES THE ORKNEYS.

On Sunday Earl Rognvaldr [heard] Divine Service in the village, and they were standing outside by the church,<sup>(1)</sup> when they saw walking there sixteen men without weapons and with shaven heads; they thought them strangely dressed/

1136.  
April.  
0. Fl. 702.

Of a night-wandering fellow,

Friend Kugi, - and locked

To keep you from running.

And/

dressed. The Earl's men discussed among themselves who they must be. Then the Earl spoke a verse:

And promises broken.  
 "Sixteen young women  
 For oaths must be kept  
 I have seen walking  
 And treason forestalled."  
 With tufts on their foreheads.

Of this we bear witness - case on the spot;  
 then they On this isle 'mid the tempests allegiance.  
 Are bebies of maidens  
 With heads bald and bare."

After Sunday Earl Rognvald's men went round the neighbouring districts in the island<sup>(1)</sup> and all men submitted to the Earl.

It happened one night in Westray that the Earl's men got wind that the islanders were holding a secret meeting to betray Earl Rognvaldr. Now when the Earl heard of it, he started up and went [straight] to the meeting. But there he learned that the Earl's men had beaten many of the islanders, but had taken Bondi Kugi and put him in fetters. And they said that he had been the ringleader in the plot. [But when Earl Rognvaldr came to the meeting, Kugi fell at his feet and laid his whole cause in God's hand and the Earl's]. [He said that he had been brought to the meeting against his will, for all the bondar desired him to be their ringleader in the plot]. Kugi pled his cause eloquently, and many others urged it and gave witness to his innocence. Then the Earl said this:

Honour I heard.  
 "I see crooked irons  
 Mighty Prince, at the looms  
 Girding the legs  
 Of a night-wandering fellow,  
 That mighty men will  
 Friend Kugi, - and locked  
 To keep you from running.

And/

And Kugi, no more  
 Of those meetings at midnight  
 And promises broken.  
 For oaths must be kept  
 And treason forestalled."

The Earl gave all the men peace on the spot;  
 then they bound themselves to renew their allegiance.

CHAPTER 73.

[OF EARL PAUL'S THING].

1136.

April

Fl.

702 .

702. O.

When Earl Rognvaldr arrived in the Orkneys and many men had submitted to him, [Earl] Paul was on the Mainland; and [he held] a Thing there and took counsel with his men. The Earl asked advice as to what should be done in the quandary [they were in], but opinions were much divided on the matter. And some advised that the land should be divided with Earl Rognvaldr; but most of the chief men and likewise the bondar wished to buy off Rognvaldr with money, and offered their means for it on the spot. Some urged fighting for it, and said that that way had turned out all right before.

702

Earl Rognvaldr had had spies at the Thing. And when they came to him the Earl asked [what had happened]. A skald who had been there [answered the Earl]:

"Rumour I heard,  
 at once by Mighty Prince, at the Thing  
 father of (Though our enemies speak not)  
 That mighty men wish thee  
 - The/

father's - The feeder of wolves - ved him well. After  
 that, John To make ready thy beaked steeds to Earl Rogn-  
 valdr. To sail on the seas, following in the Isles and  
 became a While Paul rules the land."

Earl Rognvaldr gave leave to John, Solmundr, Asleif  
 and many others of his company to return home  
 0. and asked him to mediate between them; and [the Bishop] (1)  
 sent for Thorsteinn Ragna's son and Thorsteinn Havarth's  
 0. son from Sanday, and bade them [go with him and seek terms  
 of settlement, and avoid strife by leaning neither to one  
 side nor to the other. And when the twain came to the  
 Bishop, they went all together to the Mainland to Earl Paul  
 and] sought terms of settlement between the two kinsmen.  
 The Bishop so arranged matters that there was to be a fort-  
 night's truce for the settling of a more permanent peace.

The Isles were then so divided that each might  
 maintain himself for the time being; then Earl Rognvaldr  
 went to the Mainland and Earl Paul went to Rousay.

And at this moment that incident took place there  
 in the Isles wherein the kinsmen of Sveinn Asleif's son,  
 John Wing from Upland in Hoy, and Richard from Brecks in  
 Stronsay, come to Thorkell Flayer on the farm that had be-  
 longed to Valthjofr, and burned him inside it and nine men  
 with him. After that they went to find Earl Rognvaldr,  
 and put it to him that they meant to go [over] to Earl  
 Paul with the whole of their families, unless Earl Rogn-  
 valdr would receive them [well]. The Earl did not send  
 them away.

And when Haflithi Thorkell's son learned this, he  
 at once went to find Earl Paul, when he heard of his  
 father's/  
 brother/

father's burning, and the Earl received him well. (2) After that, John and his kinsman swore allegiance to Earl Rognvaldr. Then he soon got a large following in the Isles and became a popular man.

Earl Rognvaldr gave leave to John, Solmundr, Aslacr and many others of his company to return home.

But they wished to await the turn [of events].

Then said Earl Rognvaldr: "If God will that I gain the realm in the Orkneys, methinks He must surely give me strength for the task, and [so also will] Saint Magnus the Earl, my kinsman, to hold it [and defend it], although you sail home to your own lands."

After that they sailed home to Norway. (3)

#### CHAPTER 74.

##### [EARL PAUL IS KIDNAPPED].

Early in spring, Sveinn Asleif's son had left the Hebrides and come up into Scotland to see his friends [and kinsmen]. He stayed for some time at Athole with Earl Maddadh (Maddaðr) and Margaret Hakon's daughter, and they had many secret consultations. There Sveinn learned of the strife in the Orkneys, and he then got ready to go thence and see his kinsmen.

He went first to Thurso in Caithness, and with him a man of rank called Ljotolfr. Sveinn had been with him for some time that spring.

In Thurso they visited Earl Ottar Frakokk's brother/

brother, and Ljotolfr set about making a settlement between Ottar and Sveinn for what Frakokk had had done, and Earl Ottar there and then paid the compensation out of his own treasury. The Earl also [promised] his friendship to Sveinn, while Sveinn promised Earl Ottar that he would help Erléndr, son of Haraldr ~~the~~ Smooth-tongue, to gain his hereditary lands in the Orkneys whenever he wished to lay claim to them.

? May. O. Sveinn there changed ships and took [thence] a merchant ship and in it thirty men. From there he got a North West wind over the Pentland Firth, (1) and so round the West of the Mainland, and so to Evie Sound, and along the Sound to Rousay. At the end of the island was a high headland, and a large heap of stones at the foot of it. There otters often lay among the rocks. And when Sveinn rowed along the Sound, he remarked: "There are men on the headland, and we must lie in there and get the news from them. I wish the crew to make something of a change in their positions. We shall stretch out our sleeping-bags and twenty men shall lie down in them, (2) while ten shall row. We shall [take in our sail and] move on leisurely."

But when they drew in to the island, men called from the headland that they should row to Westness, and bring to Earl Paul what they had in their ship. They thought they were speaking to merchantmen.

O. Now Earl Paul had been that night at Westness at a feast at Sigurth's. The Earl had risen early, and he and nineteen men had gone to the South of the island to hunt [for sport] the otters that lay on the rocks under the headland. They meant to return home for their/

their morning ale<sup>(3)</sup>. The merchantmen rowed ashore, and each party<sup>( )</sup> asked the other for all the news of the day. The merchantmen [told them] why they had come; and they ask where the Earl was. They reply that he was there on the rocks. This was heard by Sveinn and his fellows lying in the sleeping-bags. Sveinn bade them lie close inshore that they might not be seen from the headland. Then Sveinn said that they must arm themselves, and suddenly fall on the Earl's men when they came together. And so they do. There they killed nineteen men, while six of Sveinn's men fell. They took Earl Paul by force, and carried him aboard their ship. And they stood out to sea and sailed back the same way round the West of [the Main-land], and turned in between Hoy and Graemsay, and so round the East of the Swelchie, thence into the Moray Firth, and along the coast of it to the Dornoch Firth.

There he left his ship behind, and twenty men, while he and the rest went on till they came to Athole to Earl Maddadh and Margaret, Earl Paul's sister. There they were well received, and Earl Maddadh set Earl Paul in his high seat [beside him]. And when they were seated, in came Margaret attended by a large bevy of ladies, and advanced<sup>(4)</sup> to her brother. After that, men were brought in to entertain them. Earl Paul was rather silent, as was not strange, for he must have had great misgivings.

Nothing is told of the conversation of Earl Paul and Sveinn while they were both together. Earl Maddadh and Margaret and Sveinn Asleif's son went [into a small room] to discuss affairs. And in the evening, after drinking/

No more than this is told of the Earl's words.

After/

After that, Sveinn Asleif's son went to the Orkneys, he was accompanied by Sveinn to a bedroom by themselves, and there they were locked in. And so it went on every night while they were there.

CHAPTER 75.

OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON, WHEN HE  
WENT TO THE ORKNEYS.

One day Margaret mentioned that Sveinn Asleif's son was about to sail to the Orkneys to see Earl Rognvaldr, and ask him whether he would rather share the realm in the Orkneys with Earl Paul [again], or with Haraldr, son of Maddadh and herself, [a boy] of three years. And when Earl Paul heard this, he answers: "I frankly admit that I left my realm in a most unheard-of manner. And [for that reason] I will never again go back to the Orkneys. I see that this vengeance must be the act of God, for the robbery committed by me and my kinsmen. But if God thinks the realm is mine then will I give it to Haraldr, if he live to enjoy it. But I wish that money be got for me to settle me in some monastery, and that thou keep watch that I may never escape. But I wish thee, Sveinn, to go to the Orkneys, and say that I am blinded, and still more maimed, for my friends will seek me if [they know that] I am a whole man. Then it is possible that I may not be able to refuse to go with them to my realm, for I suspect our parting will seem a bigger disaster to them than it really is."

No more than this is told of the Earl's words.

After/

1136.  
May x.  
Fl.

0.

0.

After that, Sveinn Aslief's son went to the Orkneys, but Earl Paul remained behind in Scotland. And that is Sveinn's account of this incident. (1)

But a less seemly story is told by some men, that Margaret had induced Sveinn Asleif's son to blind Earl Paul her brother, and put him in a dungeon; and then she got another man to do him to death there. But we do not know which is the truer tale. But all men know that he never came back again to the Orkneys, and he had no realm in Scotland.

#### CHAPTER 76.

#### OF EARL ROGNVALDR AND SVEINN

#### ASLEIF'S SON.

It happened at Westness when the Earl was late in coming home, that Bondi Sigurthr sent men to seek them. Now when they came to where the heap of stones was, they saw the dead men. They assumed that the Earl must have fallen with them. They immediately went home and told the news. Sigurthr at once went to identify the slain, and found there nineteen of the Earl's men; but there were six men there whom they did not know.

After that Sigurthr sent men to Egilsay to see the Bishop, to tell him the news; and the Bishop came at once to see Sigurthr, and they discussed the affair. And Sigurthr suggested that it must have been done at the instigation of Earl Rognvaldr. But the Bishop answers that/

that more proof must be brought forward that Earl Rognvaldr really played false with his kinsman Earl Paul;- "It is my opinion," says the Bishop, "that some others must have done this vile deed."

Borgarr, son of Jadvor Erlénd's daughter, who lived at Gaitnip, (1) had seen the merchant ship when it sailed from the South and back. And when that became known, men came to the conclusion that [the deed] must have been plotted by Frakokk and Oliver the Unruly.

Now when the news spread over the Isles that Earl Paul was gone, and no one knew what had become of him, they sought counsel one with another. And there were many who went to see Earl Rognvaldr, and swore allegiance to him. But Sigurthr of Westness and his sons Brynjolfr and Hakon [Pike] declared that they would swear oaths to no man so long as they did not know whether Earl Paul would come back or not. There were more men who refused to swear allegiance to Earl Rognvaldr. But there were some who named a time or a day when they would give their submission, if by that time nothing was heard of Earl Paul,

But when Earl Rognvaldr saw that he had to deal with many of the chief men, he leant an open ear to all that the bondar asked. And as time went on he held an occasional Thing with the bondar, and a few bondar submitted to him at each Thing.

It must be told that one day Earl Rognvaldr held a Thing in Kirkwall with the bondar; and while men were at the Thing nine armed men were seen coming from Scapa to the Thing. And when they came to the Thing, they recognised among them Sveinn Asleif's son, and men were very curious/

Em. V., S.N.

May x.

curious to hear what news he had [to tell]. Sveinn had sailed in a ship from the South to Scapa, and left the ship behind him there, and they (i.e. nine men) then walked to Kirkwall. And when [he] came to the Thing, his kinsmen and friends crowded round him and asked him the news. But he answered little, and bade them call the Bishop to him. [And when the Bishop came to him he welcomed Sveinn heartily], for they had long been friends. The two went aside to talk, and Sveinn then [told] the Bishop the whole truth about what he had done, and bade him now discuss with him a way out from his awkward situation.

The Bishop said: "That is serious news thou tellest, Sveinn; and it is more [than] likely that we shall not be able to carry through this suit by our own efforts. I wish thee to wait for me here and I shall plead thy suit [as best I can] before Earl Rognvaldr and all the <sup>assembly</sup> ~~people~~."

Then the Bishop goes to the Thing and asks for a hearing. And when that is granted, the Bishop brings forward Sveinn's suit, and explained why he had left the Orkneys and what penalties Earl Paul had laid upon him for the manslaughter of Sveinn Breast-rope, that vilest of men. The Bishop then asked Earl Rognvaldr and all the <sup>assembly</sup> ~~people~~ to make peace with Sveinn.

Then answers Earl Rognvaldr: "For my part I promise Sveinn three nights' peace. But from the look in thine eyes, Bishop, I think that Sveinn and thou could tell some strange news that has not come our way. I desire thee to take Sveinn into thy keeping and be answerable for him, and I shall speak with him in the morning."

"Yes, yes," said the Bishop, "He will be very glad to have a talk with thee, and as soon as possible. And he/

"he will become thy man if thou wilt have him." The Earl answers: "Methinks I have not over many friends in this land; but yet we must talk it over further before I agree to that."

Then those four - Earl Rognvaldr, his father Kolr, the Bishop and Sveinn Asleif's son - went aside to talk. Sveinn then makes a clean breast of all that had happened between him and Earl Paul; and they decided [first] to send the bulk of the people away from the Thing.

Next morning the Earl stands up and gave the men leave there and then to go home. But when the bulk of them had dispersed from the Thing, [the Bishop]<sup>(3)</sup> summoned individually each man who was left to a conference with them, and made all men promise Sveinn peace [before]<sup>(4)</sup> he told his story.

And on the following morning, [Hakon] the Elder, brother of Saint Magnus the Earl, was sent to tell Sigurthr of Westness and his sons of the Earl's fate, and, in particular,<sup>(5)</sup> that he was not to be expected back in his realm, [for] he had been [blinded and even further] maimed.

Sigurthr says: "A sad piece of news [and a very "shameful], methinks, is the kidnapping of the Earl; but "to my mind the saddest thing is that he has been maimed. "For there is nowhere he might have gone but I would have "found him out [had he been a whole man]."

And afterwards he said as much to his friends that Hakon would not have got off unmaimed if he had had a force of men about him, when he told this story, so much did he take it to heart.

Now/

When Earl Rognvaldr had ruled the Orkneys for

two/

0. Now after news of this got about, all the men in the Orkneys went and submitted to Earl Rognvaldr, and he now became sole chief over the [whole] realm which had belonged to Earl Paul.

0. And not long after the foundations of St. Magnus Cathedral were marked out and builders procured. And the work on it went forward faster for the [first] [three] years than during the four or five years following. (6)

Kolr it was who took most to do in the building of it, and had principal charge over it. (7)

1139x1144.

0. But as the building proceeded, the expense to the Earl was heavy, and he was much in need of money. Then the Earl sought advice from his father; and Kolr proposed that the Earl should bring in a law to the effect that Earls had in the past inherited all the odal lands from their owners, but the heirs might redeem them; and that was thought rather hard. Then Earl Rognvaldr had a Thing called, and bade the bondar to buy the odal lands outright, so that there would be no need [for heirs] to redeem them. And that was agreed among them, so that all were well pleased. But one mark (8) was to be paid to the Earl for each plough land (i.e. uris land) (9) throughout the isles. And thenceforward there was no lack of money for the building of the church; and it [grew into] (10) a fine piece of architecture.

## CHAPTER 77.

[OF BISHOP JOHN'S VISIT TO THE  
ORKNEYS].

1138.

Fl. When Earl Rognvaldr had ruled the Orkneys for  
two/

two years, he held a Christmas feast on his estate which is called Knarston. It befell on the seventh day of Christmas-tide that a ship was seen coming from the South, from the Pentland Firth.

It was a fine day, and the Earl stood outside and many men with him, and they took to guessing what ship it was. There was a man [with the Earl] called Hrolfr, who was the Earl's chaplain. And when these men reached land they came ashore; and the Earl's men reckoned that there must be fifteen or sixteen of them. And first of the band walked a man in a blue cloak and cowl, and he had his hair tucked up under his cowl; he had his beard shaved round the front of the chin, but unshaven round the mouth [and cheeks], and that hung down in front of him. This man seemed to them rather a strange fellow; but Hrolfr says that he was Bishop John [come] down from Athole in Scotland. (1)

Then the Earl went to meet them, and welcomed the Bishop cordially. The Earl set the Bishop on his own high seat, and himself served before the table like a cup-bearer. Next morning the Bishop held Divine Service early, and then sailed North to Egilsay to see Bishop William, and was there till the tenth day of Christmas-tide.

Then both the Bishops came to see Earl Rognvaldr with a fine following and made known their errand. They relate the agreement of Sveinn Asleif's son and Earl Maddadh, that Haraldr their son [shall come out to the Orkneys and be fostered by Rognvaldr on the understanding that Haraldr] have the title of "Earl" and hold half of the Orkneys along with Earl Rognvaldr; but that [both would have the same/

Decr. 30.

0.

1139.  
Jan. 3.

0.

0.

same Bodyguard, and] Earl Rognvaldr would carry on the government on his behalf, even after Haraldr came of age; and if a difference of opinion occurred, then the Earl should have his way of it.

Sveinn was also there with them, and supported the Bishop in this plan.

Then the Earl and his men proposed that a meeting be held in the spring, during Lent, in Caithness. And at this, a settlement was made on the foregoing terms, and was sealed by oaths of the best men from the Orkneys and from Scotland.

Then Haraldr Maddadh's son sailed out to the Orkneys with Earl Rognvaldr, and was then given the title of "Earl"

And there went also with Earl Haraldr into the Isles Thorbjorn Clerk, his kinsman. He was the son of Thorsteinn the Freeman and Guthrun, the daughter of Frak-okk. He was a wise man, and a man of mark. He then fostered Earl Haraldr, and had much influence over him. Thorbjorn married in the Orkneys, his wife being [Ingi-gerth] Olaf's daughter, the sister of Sveinn Asleif's son. Thorbjorn was then by turns out in the Orkneys and up in Scotland. He was the most valiant of men, and most overbearing in most things.

Sveinn Asleif's son took under him all the lands and that his father Olafr/his brother Valthjofr had had. He He then became a great chief, and had always a large following of men about him. He was a wise man, and had the "second sight" in many things; an overbearing man and a/

a reckless. There were not at that time two men out in the West not of higher birth who were thought more powerful than Sveinn and his brother-in-law Thorbjorn. At that time they were on the most friendly terms.

CHAPTER 78.

[OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON].

It befell one day that Sveinn Asleif's son came to speak with Earl Rognvaldr, [and asked him] to get him a force of men and ships to avenge upon Oliver and Frakokk the burning of his father Olafr.

The Earl said: "Dost thou not think, Sveinn, "that neither of us will come to any harm now from Oliver "and that good-for-nothing hag Frakokk?"

Sveinn answers: "They will always be a thorn in "[my] flesh while they are alive. But I expected "another reply, when I have done my utmost for thy sake, "[than] that thou wouldst refuse me such [a request].

The Earl answers: "What then can I give thee "that will please thee?"

Sveinn answers: "Two ships well equipped and "manned."

The Earl said that so it should be as he asked.

And after that, Sveinn gets ready his expedition.

And when he was ready for sea he sailed South to the [Moray Firth], and caught a North-West wind to Banff, (Dufeyri), which is a market town in Scotland. And

thence he sailed along the coast of Moray and [next] to the/

1139x.  
? Spring.  
Fl.  
O.

O.

O.

O.

O. the Dornoch Firth, [and lay at a place called Elgin]. (1)  
 Thence he travelled to Athole to Earl Maddadh; and there  
 O. he got for Sveinn [a large force and] guides who knew the  
 paths over the hills and forests wheresoever he wished to  
 go.

Thence he marched inland by hills and woodland,  
 keeping well above all habitations, and came out into  
 Helmsdale near the middle of Sutherland. (2)

Now Oliver and his men had posted spies in all  
 places where an attack from the Orkneys was likely, but  
 on this path they had no expectation of an armed host.  
 They were unaware of the army until Sveinn and his men  
 arrived in a body on a slope at the back of Frakokk's  
 homestead. (3) There Oliver the Unruly came against them  
 with sixty men. They at once took to battle, and there  
 was but a short struggle. Oliver and his men gave ground  
 back to the house, for they could not reach the wood.  
 There was a great slaughter of men. But Oliver fled up  
 O. Helmsdale Water, [and swam the river, and fled] up into  
 the mountains, and thence went to the West Coast of Scot-  
 land, and so out to the Hebrides; and he is out of the  
 Saga.

Now when Oliver fled, Sveinn and his men went  
 straight to the house, and ~~plundered it wholesale.~~ <sup>ransacked it from end to end.</sup> And  
 after that they burned the house and all the inmates; and  
 Frakokk lost her life there. Sveinn and his men did an  
 immense amount of plundering in Sutherland, before they  
 went to their ships.

After that, they were at sea the whole summer,  
 and/

and harried [far and wide] round the coasts of Scotland.

1139x.  
Autumn.

At the beginning of Autumn, Sveinn came to the Orkneys to see Earl Rognvaldr. He gave Sveinn a hearty welcome. Then Sveinn went over to Duncansby in Caithness, and stayed there for the winter.

1139x.  
Winter.

1140x.  
? Spring.

0. At that time there came to Sveinn a message from Holdbothi from the Hebrides, that Sveinn should come to him with an armed force, for [to Tiree] had come a Freeman<sup>(4)</sup> from Wales, and had burnt Holdbothi out of house and home, and had made off with much booty. The messenger was called Robert (Hróðbjartir) an Englishman by birth. Sveinn rose up instantly he got the message, and came out to the Orkneys to see Earl Rognvaldr, and asked Earl Rognvaldr to get him men and ships.

The Earl asked what Sveinn was going to do then.

0. He said that that man had sent him a message [for help] whom he ought least of all to refuse and who had stood by him best when he needed it most - when [all other] men went against him.

0. The Earl answers: "It were well, then, if you part friends, [for] most Hebrideans are faithless. But thou must prove thy valour; and I shall get thee two ships fully manned."

That pleases Sveinn well, and he then sailed to the Hebrides; and he did not find Holdbothi till he came West<sup>(5)</sup> to the Isle of Man, for he had fled thither. But when Sveinn came to the Isle of Man, Holdbothi welcomed him gladly. And there in Man the Welsh Freeman had/

had been plundering widely with robbery and manslaughter, and far and wide through the Hebrides. (6) Before him had fallen [the chief man in Man] (7) called Andrew (Andréás). He left behind him his wife, called Ingirithr, and a son called Sigmundr [Fish-hook]; Dame Ingirithr had much wealth and [many large estates]. (8) Holdbothi proposed that Sveinn should ask her to marry him. But when the question was put to her, she said that in order to gain her hand Sveinn must avenge to the full her husband Andrew.

Sveinn answers that he might do the Welshmen some harm;- "but I cannot tell what luck we shall have in "man-slaying."

And after that Sveinn and Holdbothi went a-harrying, and had five ships. They harried round the coast of Wales, and they landed at the place called Jarlsnes, (9) and did much plundering there.

It befell one morning that they went up to a certain village, and there was little resistance. The bondar fled from the village, and Sveinn and his men plundered it wholesale and burned six houses before their breakfast. (10)

There was with Sveinn an Icelander called Eirikr, and he spoke this [verse]:-

"Homesteads are burned,  
Six in a morning.  
The bondar are plundered;  
Fire enough made for them.  
Thus has Sveinn done;  
There he lends coals  
To whoever will borrow."

After/

1140x.  
Summer.

After that they went to their ship, and were at sea the whole summer, and took much plunder. But the Freeman took refuge on the island called Lundy, where there was a good natural stronghold. (1) Sveinn and his men besieged it for some time, but to no purpose. And they sailed home to the Isle of Man in autumn.

1140x.  
Autumn.

CHAPTER 79.

OF THE WAR-CRUISE OF SVEINN AND

HOLDBOTHI. (1)

1140x  
Winter.  
Fl.

That winter, Sveinn married Ingirithr, and then settled down in great honour. In spring he gathered a band of men about him, and went to see Holdbothi, and asked him for a force of men; but he excused himself on the pretext that many of his men were at work, and some were abroad trading, so Sveinn got no [forces] there.

1141x  
Spring.

But the truth was that the Freeman and he had made a secret alliance, and had sealed their pact with [large] gifts of money. But Sveinn none the less set sail, and he had at this time three ships; and they got little booty in the earlier part of summer. But after a time they sailed South round the coasts of Ireland, and there they seized a merchant ship (2) belonging to monks from the Scilly Isles, and plundered it. And he harried far and wide in Ireland, and took there much booty. And in the autumn they sailed East to the Isle of Man, [and he had a large force of men].

1141x.

1141x.  
Autumn.  
O.

When/

When Sveinn Asleif's son had been home for a short time, he heard the rumour that Holdbothi was about to play him false; but Sveinn shrank from believing it. And one night that [winter] (3) it befell that Sveinn's sentries came [in] and told him that a hostile force was coming against them. Sveinn and his men leapt to their weapons and out of doors. They saw men advancing with fire [brands] towards the house, and there was a large band of them.

Then Sveinn and his men leapt on to a hillock and defended themselves from there [as best they could]. They had a trumpet-horn and blew it. Now the district was well-populated, and men flocked to join Sveinn and his men, so that the upshot was that the attacking party took to flight. Sveinn and his followers went after them and pursued them. Many men fell while fleeing, but many on both sides were wounded before they parted.

Now Holdbothi had been the leader of this army, and he had escaped in the flight. He sailed until he came to Lundy. The Freeman received him well, and they kept company together.

Sveinn went home [again], and he kept a large following and strict watch, for he distrusted the Hebrideans.

[Unluckily a day came when Sveinn's stores began to run out, and his followers began to grumble] (4) Towards the end of winter, therefore, he sold his lands for movable property, and early in spring sailed North to Lewis. He had got much plunder on this cruise, [and he stayed there a long time].

## CHAPTER 80.

[<sup>OF</sup> ~~CONCERNING~~ EARL ROGNVALDR].

1142x  
Spring.  
Fl.

While Sveinn was in the Hebrides Earl Rognvaldr had gone to Caithness to pay a formal visit<sup>(1)</sup> to that man in Wick called Hroaldr [and his wife Arnljot]; Sveinn was the name of his son, and he was the most valiant of men.

0.

Now when the Earl was on the visit, there came down from Scotland with his men Thorbjorn Clerk with the news that Thorsteinn Freeman his father had been killed, [and that a Scottish Earl had attacked him and slain him and that that Earl was called Valthjofr].

0.

It was now on every man's tongue how much Earl Rognvaldr and Thorbjorn had to say to each other, for the Earl could scarcely carry out his own business for conversing with him.

Thorbjorn sailed thence with the Earl out to the Isles, and Sveinn Hroald's son was at this time made the Earl's cup-bearer. Thorbjorn had then been for some time in Scotland; he had had two men put to death, who had been at the burning of Frakokk along with Sveinn Asleif's son.

0.[supp. by Fl.)

Now when Sveinn came from the Hebrides [in summer]<sup>(2)</sup> he sailed home to Gairsay to his estate, and not to see Earl Rognvaldr, as he was wont when he returned from harrying. [But when Earl Rognvaldr heard]<sup>(3)</sup> that he had come home, he asked Thorbjorn why he supposed Sveinn would not come to see him.

1142x.  
Summer.

Thorbjorn answers: "This I guess is the reason, "that/

O. "that Sveinn has a grudge against me because I had [some  
"of] those men put to death who were with him at the burn-  
"ing of Frakokk."

The Earl said: "I do not wish you two to be  
O. "enemies, [for I never know what might come thereof.]"

O. And [immediately] after that, the Earl sailed to  
Gairsay and sought to bring them to terms; and that was  
easy, for they were both willing that the Earl should  
settle the matter. At length he brought them to terms<sup>(4)</sup>  
O. and this settlement held for long afterwards. [And after  
that the Earl settled down in peace and quiet.]

## CHAPTER 81.

### OF THE JESTS OF EARL ROGNVALDR.

1140x1148.

Fl.

At that time there came to the Orkneys an Ice-  
landic merchant ship. In it was that man called Hallr,  
the son of Thorarinn Broad-belly. He went to stay in  
North Ronaldsay with Thorsteinn and Ragna. He found it  
irksome staying there, and asked Thorsteinn to go with him  
702. O. to Earl Rognvaldr. They [then] went to see him, and the  
702. O. Earl would not take [Hallr] into his service.

702. O. Now when they came home, Ragna [asked] how they  
had fared.

Hallr spoke this verse:-

"I bade thy son, Ragna,  
Ask for a place for me  
In the Earl's Bodyguard,  
And featly he did it.

But the generous Gold-Giver,  
Seat/

Seat of high honour,  
 Declares that of mighty men  
 He has enough;  
 And - the chiefs know the true tale -  
 Rejects his stout neighbour."

A little later, Ragna went to see Earl Rognvaldr on business of her own. She was so dressed, that she had a red head-dress<sup>(1)</sup> on her head, made from horse hair. And when the Earl saw it, he said:

"Ne'er have I heard  
 That women were winding  
 Their heads round with kerchiefs.  
 (No user of soft words  
 Is the Giver of Rings!)  
 Now the braceleted lady  
 Round her neck ties a mare's tail.  
 For the bold Arrow-Feeder  
 The bride is adorned!"

Ragna said: "Now the proverb comes true that 'few are so wise as to be able to see everything as 'it is'; for this is from a horse and not from a mare.'" Then she took a silken kerchief and wrapped it round her head, and went on with her business unabashed.<sup>(2)</sup>

The Earl listened to her rather coldly at first, but softened as she went on. And she carried her point as she wished in that she got Hallr a place in his Bodyguard. And he was with Earl Rognvaldr for a long time. They collaborated in making the old Hattalykill,<sup>(3)</sup> and made five verses for each metre. But/

But afterwards the poem was thought too long, and now there are two (4) verses for each metre.

CHAPTER 82.

[OF SVEINN'S EXPEDITION TO THE  
HEBRIDES].

It is told that Sveinn Asleif's son heard that Holdbothi had come [back] to the Hebrides. Thereupon he asked Earl Rognvaldr to get him a force to avenge himself [upon Holdbothi]. The Earl got him five ships, [all in good trim]; and Thorbjorn Clerk commanded one of them, and Hafliithi son of Thorkell Flayer another, Dufnjall son of Havarthr Gunni's son the third, Richard Thorleif's son the fourth, [and] Sveinn [himself] the fifth.

But as soon as Holdbothi heard of Sveinn's approach, he fled [again to Lundy, and his comrades took him in. But] Sveinn and his men killed many men in the Hebrides and harried and burned far and wide. They got much booty; but they did not catch Holdbothi, and he never came back to the Hebrides.

Sveinn wished to spend the winter in the Hebrides, but Thorbjorn and his men wished [to go] home. And they sailed North in autumn to Caithness and [there they] put in at Duncansby. And when they came to dividing their plunder, Sveinn said that all should have an equal share, except that he should have a chief's share, for/

1143x1148.

F1.

0.

0.

0.

0.

0.

1143x.

Autumn.

0.

for he declared that he had been sole commander, and said that the Earl had given him the others for his assistance; he added that he alone had any quarrel with the men of the Hebrides, while they had none.

Thorbjorn, however, thought that he had been no less a commander than Sveinn. They desired that all the captains have equal shares.

But it turned out exactly as Sveinn wished, for he had a much larger following there in Caithness. But Thorbjorn sailed out to the Orkneys to find Earl Rognvaldr and tell him how it had gone with Sveinn and himself; and how ill-pleased they were that he had robbed them of their share.

The Earl said that it would not be the first time that Sveinn would be found unfair in his dealings;—"but still the day will come when he must pay the price for his wrong-doing. But you shall not quarrel with him about this. I shall get you from my own treasury a share equal to that which you are losing through him. I desire you also to make no claims upon him for this. And it will be well if there is no further trouble from him over this, [although I fear we shall not have long to wait for it.]"

Thorbjorn answered: "God thank thee, my lord, for this honour that thou dost us; and we shall not quarrel with Sveinn on this matter. But never again shall I be his friend. And here [and now] I shall do something to spite him in return."

And after that Thorbjorn declares himself legally/

legally separated<sup>(1)</sup> from Ingigerthr, Sveinn's sister, and sends her over to Caithness to Sveinn. He welcomed her cordially, but felt that a great insult had been done to himself. There was then no love lost between them.

It turned out as the proverb says, that "Monsters are a match for each other."<sup>(2)</sup> [But neither attacked the other openly].

While Sveinn was in the Hebrides, he had set Margathr Grim's son in charge of his affairs in Duncansby, and put in his hands the stewardship<sup>(3)</sup> which he held from Earl Rognvaldr. But Margathr was cantankerous and overbearing and he became unpopular through his tyranny. But those who suffered most under his tyranny fled to [Bondi] Hroaldr, and gathered round him; whence a quarrel arose between Hroaldr and Margathr. Not long after [Sveinn came home] Margathr went South to Wick with nineteen men on business of his own. And before he came [back] North, he paid a visit to Bondi Hroaldr, and killed him, and several more men. Then they went to Duncansby to see Sveinn. Then Sveinn gathers men, and marches to Lambaborg, and fortified himself there. This was a fine natural stronghold.<sup>(4)</sup> And he took up his quarters in it with sixty men, and got in provisions and other necessary stores. The fortress stood on some sea-girt crags, and there was a stoutly built wall before it on the landward side. The crags stretched well out to sea on the other side.<sup>(5)</sup> [Sveinn and Margathr] did great mischief in Caithness by pillaging, and they carried their plunder thither to the fortress. And they became very unpopular.

## CHAPTER 83.

OF THE EXPEDITION OF SVEINN ASLEIF'SSON.

1143x1148.  
Fl.

News of this came to the ears of Earl Rognvaldr and Sveinn Hroald's son. Sveinn asked the Earl for help, that he might settle the quarrel. Many men supported Sveinn in the matter. So it came about, that Earl Rognvaldr made ready and sailed over to Caithness, and the following chiefs with him: Thorbjorn, Hafliithi Thorkell's son, Dufnjall Havarth's son, [and Richard;] and these were the men who raised the biggest outcry against Sveinn.

O.

They sailed to Duncansby, and by then Sveinn was gone. They heard that Sveinn was in Lambaborg. The Earl and his men then marched thither. And when they came to the fortress Sveinn asks who was the leader of the army. He was told that Earl Rognvaldr was the leader.

O.

Sveinn [spoke] the Earl [fair and asked him] his errand.

The Earl answers that he wishes him to give Margathr over into their power.

Sveinn asks whether he will be given quarter.

The Earl said he would not promise.

Then said Sveinn: "I do not feel inclined to hand over Margathr into the power of Sveinn Hroald's son and his fellows or my other enemies who are with you. But gladly would I be at peace with you, my lord."

Then answers Thorbjorn Clerk: "Hear what the traitor says, that he would gladly be at peace [with the Earl], and he has just been pillaging the land and going about/

"about like a thief. Thou repayest ill the great honour  
 "which the Earl has done thee, as thou wilt with all who  
 "have dealings with thee."

Sveinn answers: "Thou hast no need to make such  
 "a song about it, Thorbjorn, for thy advice will not be  
 "taken. And I reckon thou wilt repay the honour he has  
 O. "done thee [much worse] before you part; for no one  
 "will be a lucky man who has dealings with thee."

Then Earl Rognvaldr said that there should be  
 no bandying of words.

After that they settled down round the fortress,  
 and prevented the entrance of all supplies, and this  
 went on so long that no attack could be made against them.  
 O. And when the provisions [of Sveinn and his men] ran low,  
 O. [he] called his men [to him] and asked their advice.  
 But they all declared with one voice that they would have  
 his guidance while they had the choice of it.

Then Sveinn made a speech, and said: "It seems  
 "to me a disgraceful thing [first] to starve here and  
 "then in the end fall into the power of one's enemies.  
 "And it has turned out as was likely, that we have fallen  
 "short of Earl Rognvaldr in both wit and good luck. Now  
 "here there has been an attempt at a settlement by compen-  
 "sation and a pardon, (1) but neither is to be got for my  
 "comrade Margathr. (2) Although I know that other men  
 "here will have the choice of a pardon, I do not have the  
 "heart to hand him over to the axe [or the sword]. Now  
 "it is not right that so many men here should suffer  
 "through his embarrassments, although I do not wish to  
 "part with him just yet."

And/

And after that, Sveinn adopted the plan of twisting together the ropes that they had. And during the night, they let Sveinn and Margathr [down over the crags on to the beach.]<sup>(3)</sup> And thereupon they took to swimming, and struck out along by the crags until the cliffs came to an end. Then they waded ashore, and went up into Sutherland, and so to Moray and thence to Banff. There they found men from Orkney in a merchant ship. The captain was called Hallvarthr, and another man Thorkell; there were ten of them altogether. Sveinn and his companion went aboard ship with them, and the twelve sailed together in the merchant ship South round the coast of Scotland till they came to the Isle of May. There was a monastery there; Baldwin (Baldvini) was the name of the abbot who was head of it.<sup>(4)</sup> There Sveinn, his companion and his men were weatherbound for seven nights, and they gave out that they had been sent [with a letter] from Earl Rognvaldr to the King of Scots. The monks suspected their story, and thought they must be pirates, and sent to the [main]land for men. But when Sveinn and his men got wind of it, they leapt aboard ship, and went off with much booty from the monastery. They sailed away, and in up the Firth of Forth. They came to Edinburgh and went to see David King of Scots. He welcomed Sveinn cordially and asked him to remain with him.

Sveinn told him the [whole] story of his coming thither, and what had passed between Earl Rognvaldr and himself before they parted; and likewise, that they had been pillaging in the Isle of May.

Sveinn and his men remained for some time with the/

the King of Scots on the most friendly terms. King David sent men to those who had lost property at the hands of Sveinn on his cruise, and told them to estimate their losses themselves, and out of his own treasury he made good the losses of each.

King David offered Sveinn to have his wife brought from the Orkneys, and to bestow on him such honour in Scotland as would please him to the full.

Sveinn laid bare his desires before the King, explaining that he would like Margathr to stay behind there with the King, while he would send a message to Earl Rognvaldr that he would accept a legal settlement from him. And Sveinn gave out that he wished to put his whole case in the hands of Earl Rognvaldr, and remarked that he would be very happy so long as they were at peace, but unhappy when they were at strife.

King David answers: "Two things are now clear. "This Earl must be a good man; and to thy mind, only his "advice is sound. Now thou art committing thyself to his "good faith, and laying aside my offers."

Sveinn declared that he wished never to give up his friendship, but still says that he would ask the King to grant him this.

0. The King said that so it should be; [and he] sent  
0. men North to the Orkneys [to Earl Rognvaldr] with gifts, and with this message, that the Earl should come to terms with Sveinn. And then Sveinn sailed North to the Isles, but Margathr stayed behind with the King.

King David's envoys went to see Earl Rognvaldr; he received them well and likewise the gifts that the King sent/

sent him, and promised peace. Thereafter he gave Sveinn peace and his unreserved friendship; and then he went to his estates.

CHAPTER 84.

[OF SVEINN AND MARGATHR].

1143x1148.  
Fl. After Sveinn and Margathr had escaped from Lambaborg, those who were in the fortress decided to give the place up to Earl Rognvaldr. He asked [them] what was the last they knew of Sveinn and of Margathr and his men, and they told him the whole story. And when the Earl heard that, he said: "Truth to tell, there is not a man among us who is Sveinn's match. Such tricks are both  
O. "courageous and [clever]. (1) But I shall not take advantage of my hold over you, although you are involved in  
O. "these troubles with Sveinn. Each of you shall go [when he pleases] in peace so far as I am concerned."

then peace From there the Earl sailed home to the Orkneys; but he sent Thorbjorn Clerk South with a ship and forty men to the Moray Firth to seek for Sveinn and his companion; and they got no news of him.

O. Then Thorbjorn remarks to his men that they were having a strange cruise. - "We are busy tracking Sveinn  
O. "[and cannot get news of him.] But [I have] got word  
"that Earl Valthjofr, the slayer of my father, is not far  
"off with a handful of men. And if you will join with me  
"in attacking him, then I shall promise you not to behave  
"like Sveinn and rob you of your share of plunder if we  
"lay/

"lay our hands on any. For whatsoever booty we get, you shall have it; and allot me a share just such as you please, for I prize fame more than money."

0. After that they marched to [the place] where Earl Valthjofr was on an official visit, and took the house over their heads and set fire to it at once. Valthjofr and his men [seized their weapons and] leapt to the door, and asked who was raising the fire. Thorbjorn named his name. Valthjofr offered to give compensation for the death of Thorsteinn, but Thorbjorn said there was no need to be seeking for a settlement [now].

Valthjofr and his men defended themselves well for a time. But when the fire pressed them hard, they leapt out; and they defended themselves [but] a short time, for they were much worn out by [fighting] the fire.

There fell Earl Valthjofr and thirty men with him. Thorbjorn and his men got much booty there, and he generously kept his whole promise toward his men. After that they sailed out to the Orkneys to see Earl Rognvaldr, and he expressed his approval of their exploit. There was then peace and quiet in the Isles.

0. At that time there lived [in Wyre in the Orkneys a Norwegian] called Kolbeinn Lump, and he was the most outstanding of men. He had a fine stone castle<sup>(2)</sup> built there; it was a safe stronghold.<sup>(3)</sup> Kolbeinn married Herbjorg, sister to Hakon [the Younger], while her mother was [Sigrithr] daughter of Herbjorg daughter of [Earl] Paul [Thorfinn's son]. The following were their children: Kolbeinn the Elder, Bjarni Skald, Sumarlithi, Aslacr, Fritha; they were all well brought up.<sup>(4)</sup>

## CHAPTER 85.

O. [OF EARL ROGNVALD'S EXPEDITION].

1148.

Fl.

Lex.Run.

At that time the sons of Haraldr Gilli ruled in Norway. [Ingi and Sigurthr were children in years. Councillors from among the landed proprietors were appointed for the brothers.] Eysteinn was the eldest of them; but Ingi was a legitimate son and the <sup>landed-proprietors</sup> ~~barons~~ paid most deference to him. He let them have their own way in all things as they liked.

At this time the following landed proprietors had most influence with him: Ogmundr and Erlingr, sons of Wrinkly-Ormr. They persuaded King Ingi to send a message to Earl Rognvaldr, and invite him politely to come and see him. They said - and said truly - that the Earl had been a great friend of his father, and asked him to be as <sup>gracious</sup> ~~friend~~ ~~ly~~ to the Earl as possible, so that [he] might be a friend to him more than to his brothers, in the event of any quarrel between them. (1) The Earl was a kinsman of these brothers (2) and their greatest friend.

Now when this message came to Earl Rognvaldr, he speedily bestirred himself, and got ready for his voyage, for he was eager to sail to Norway to see his kinsmen and friends. Earl Haraldr asked leave to go on this voyage out of curiosity and for his own amusement. He was then

O.

[14 or 15] (3) years old [and very <sup>stalwart</sup> ~~stout~~.] And when the Earls were ready for sea, they sailed from the West with merchantmen, with a fine retinue, and reached Norway early in Spring. They found King Ingi in Bergen. King Ingi welcomed them most cordially. Earl Rognvaldr came across many/

1148.  
Spring.

1148.  
Summer.

many of his friends and kinsmen there. He remained there well through the summer.

During that summer Eindriithi the Younger returned from Istanbul. He had been a long time in service there. He had much news to tell of that [city], and men thought it good entertainment to ask him questions about foreign parts. The Earl often talked with him; and on one occasion when they were talking, Eindriithi said: "It seems strange to me, Earl, that thou hast no desire to go out to Jerusalem and have more than mere stories of what is told of these places. 'Tis the finest place for such men [as thou]. [Thou art a shrewd and sensible man, well able to use all kinds of artifices, and ] Thou wilt be honoured above all others wherever thou comest among men of rank."

And when Eindriithi had said that, many others supported his suggestion, and urged [the Earl] to act as leader in this expedition. Erlingr at this point spoke strongly in favour of it, and said that he would agree to join the expedition, if the Earl would become leader. And when such men of rank urged it, the Earl promised to go. And when [others heard that] the Earl and Erlingr had decided on this voyage together, many men of rank made ready to go, [among them] the following landed proprietors: Eindriithi the Younger ([for he was to] act as guide), John Peter's son, Aslacr Erlénd's son, Guthormr, Meló-Pate from Helgeland. It was agreed that none of them should have a ship of more than thirty seats for rowers, except the Earl, and none should have an ornamented ship but he. Thus it would turn out that no man would envy another because/

because one had equipped his ship or his crew better than his neighbour. John Limp-leg was to have a crusading ship built for the Earl and bestow the utmost pains on it.

1148.  
Autumn.

Earl Rognvaldr sailed home West in the autumn and meant to remain two winters<sup>(5)</sup> in his realm. King Ingi gave Earl [Rognvaldr] two warships, rather small, of slim lines, and specially built for rowing; and they were the fastest of ships. Earl Rognvaldr gave Earl Haraldr one ship; it was named "Arrow" (Fífa) and the other was named "Help" (Hjólþ).<sup>(6)</sup> In these ships the Earl sailed out West. Earl Rognvaldr had also received [many other] fine gifts from his [kinsmen and] friends.

Tues. It was on a Tuesday evening that the Earls put to sea, and they sailed that night before a fair breeze; Wed. [and the wind began to rise]. Wednesday was very stormy Thurs. but during Thursday night they sighted land. It was then very dark. They [could see] breakers all round them. Up to this time they had held together. Now there was no choice but to run the two ships ashore; and so they did. There was a rocky beach in front of them, and only 702. a narrow foreshore, and cliffs beyond. There all [the] men were saved, but they lost much of their belongings; some were thrown up on shore during the night.

Earl Rognvaldr as usual bore himself the best of all men. He was so merry that he played with his fingers, and made verses at nearly every word [he spoke]. He drew his ring from his finger [with his lips], and spoke a verse:

"The hammer-wrought snake

I hang from my arm.

(Smooth verses I make -

The draught of Grimmir).

The/

The Maid of the Waves  
 With shining voice cheers me,  
 And I play with my fingers."

And when they had carried all their belongings up [to dry land], they went inland to look for habitations, for they felt sure they had landed in Shetland. They soon found farms, and the company spread out over the district. Men made the Earl welcome [at the farm] to which he came, and [the lady of the house] asked about his voyage.

The Earl spoke a verse:

"Crash we went  
 With Hjqlp and Fífa.  
 The sea-spray brought sorrow  
 To women; the billow  
 Gave grief to men.  
 I see that this voyage  
 Of the valiant Earls  
 Will long be remembered.  
 Truly we learn  
 To endure hardship."

The lady of the house brought a skin cloak to the Earl [as a kirtle]. [He stretched out his hands towards it, and took it laughing,] and said:

"Here I ~~shake~~ wear  
 A shrunken skin-cloak;-  
 Meagre my finery!  
 The ocean lies deep  
 Over the cloaks  
 We wore as we swam  
 From the water-logged sea-horse.  
 The/

The tall-masted sea-steed  
Was driven on the rocks."

Then big fires were made for them, and they roasted themselves beside them.

702.

[There was a maid-servant called Asa. She went out for water, and another woman with her. But [when] she came to the water, she stumbled into the well in the fog, and ran home chilled to the bone] (7) and shivering all over. And she spoke between her shiverings, and men could not make out what she was saying. The Earl declares he knows what she is saying:

"Warm by the fire

You sit, but Asa

- Atatata -

Lies in water.

Hutututu!

Where shall I sit?

I am frozen

To the marrow."

0.

The Earl sent twelve of his men to [Bondi] Einarr in Gulberwick. But he said he would not receive them unless the Earl came himself. And when [the Earl heard] that, then said he:

"To none of the Earl's men

Would Einarr give lodging -

Excepting the Earl himself.

(Now I am making

Verses in plenty.)

And he kept to his word

- Yet men liked him little -

For/

702, 0.

For late in the evening

I sat by his hearth." (8)

Fl. | 702.

(9) It happened one day south in ~~Sunness~~<sup>Sumburgh</sup> Voe that a poor [old] bondi was waiting a long time for his mate, while all the other boats rowed out as each was ready. Then there came up to the old bondi a man in a white cowl and cloak and asked him why he did not row out a-fishing like other men.

The bondi says that his mate has not arrived.

"Bondi," says the Man with the Cowl, "Wilt thou let me row with thee?"

"That will I," says the bondi. "But still I must have my share of my boat's catch, for I have many children at home, and I work for them as hard as I can."

After that they rowed out round ~~Sumburgh Head~~<sup>the Ness of Burgi</sup> and between it and Hundholm. There was a strong current where they lay and broad eddies; and they had to lie in the eddy and fish in the tide-race. The Man with the Cowl sat in the bow and rowed against the tide, and the bondi was to fish.

The bondi bade him take care [not] to be carried into the tide-race; that, he said, would be running big risks.

The Man with the Cowl did not behave as he told him, and cared nothing as to whether the bondi came in any danger or not. Soon after, they did drift into the tide-race, and the bondi was very scared and said: "Unlucky wretch was I when I took thee to row today; for here I must die, and my folk at home have no one to fend for/

"for them and will all come to beggary if I am lost."

And the bondi grew so afraid that he wept for fear of death.

The Man with the Cowl answers: "Cheer up, bondi, "and weep not; for he who let us into the race shall pull "us out of it."

Then the Man with the Cowl rowed out of the tide-race and the bondi was now beside himself with joy. Then they rowed ashore and beached the boat; and the bondi bade the Man with the Cowl set to and take his share of the fish.

But the Man with the Cowl told the bondi to divide them as he liked, saying that he himself would not take more than his third. A large crowd had come down to the beach, both men and women, and many poor folk. The Man with the Cowl gave all the fish that were his share that day to the poor folk, and then made ready to depart.

There was a steep sea-bank to walk up, and a number of women sat on the bank. And as he went up the bank, his foot slipped, for it was slippery after rain, and he slid back down to the bottom of the bank. One of the women was the first to see it, and burst into laughter at him, and the rest of the crowd after her.

And when the Man with the Cowl heard that, he said:

"The Silken Dame  
 Mocks my attire.  
 Too loudly she laughs!  
 'Tis ill knowing an Earl  
 In fisherman's garb.  
 But early in spring  
 Valiantly I  
 Over/

Over the billow

Rowed the oak ship."

Then the Man with the Cowl went away; and there-  
after it was learned for certain that the man had been  
Earl Rognvaldr. And after that many men learned of many  
of his feats that were helpful in the sight of God and  
pleasant in the eyes of men. ( ) Men also credited him  
with the proverb in the verse, that "'Tis ill knowing an  
Earl in fisherman's garb."

702 | Fl.

The Earl stayed for a long time in Shetland, and  
in the autumn sailed South to the Orkneys, and took up  
residence in his realm. That autumn there came to him two  
[Icelanders]. One was called Armothr, and he was a skald;  
the other Oddi the Little, son of Glum, [a man from Breiði-  
fjord], and he too made fine verses. The Earl took them  
both into his Bodyguard. The Earl held a great Christmas  
feast, and invited men to it, and distributed gifts. He  
held out a gold-wrought sword to Armothr the Skald, and  
brandished it at him, and bade him make a verse in return  
for it. [Armothr said]:

702, O.

702, O.

1148.

Christmas.

702.

Fl. | 325.

"The noble Prince,

Rouser of Odin's storm,

Leaves not to others

To honour his skald.

The Lord of the Land,

Its valiant defender,

With his own hand gives Armothr

The best of blood-torches -

A sword gold-inlaid."

It/

Earl spoke  
It happened one day during Christmastide that men were looking at the tapestries.

The Earl said to Oddi the Little: "Make a verse  
"about the behaviour of this man on the tapestry there;  
"and have thy verse ready when I have finished my verse;  
"and have no words in thy verse that I have in my verse."  
702. [Then the] Earl said:

"There the old warrior  
In the tapestry standing  
Swings back Odin's wand  
Over his shoulder.  
The crook-backed warrior  
- In gold he is wrought -  
Moves not forward  
Though wrathful with him  
Who claims the cold sword."

Oddi said:

"On the door curtain  
Stands the sword-wizard  
With bowed <sup>body</sup> ~~shoulders~~, - thinking  
To hew at the other.)  
Mischief for men  
He will make with his blade!  
'Tis high time for peace  
'Twixt these sea-faring men."

Fl. | 325.

325 | 702.

[It befell one day [that] a madman broke loose from his bonds and rushed at Earl Rognvaldr, and gripped him so fast that he reeled and almost fell. Then the Earl/  
landed/

Earl spoke a verse:

"A churl clutched firm  
 At the Prince's cloak.  
 Stoutly he pulled  
 At his generous Lord.  
 Sturdy this fellow!  
 Bjarki's warrior-son!  
 He nearly pushed over  
 - So runs the story -  
 The sword-edge wielder.  
 Truly this rascal hath  
 More brawn than brains."

702 | 325.

The Earl had also Bishop William among his Christmas guests, and many of his goethingar. He now laid bare his plans of how he meant to go abroad and out to Jerusalem. He asked the Bishop to come with him; [for] the Bishop was a Clerk of Paris, and the Earl was especially desirous that he should be their interpreter. The Bishop promised to go. The following men resolved to go with Earl Rognvaldr; Magnus son of Havarthr Gunni's son, and Sveinn Hroald's son; they were both ship-captains. The following of lesser note, so far as they are named ( ) went with him: Thorgeirr Scots-Pate, Oddi the Little, Thorbjorn the Black, and Armothr; these were the Earl's skalds. There were the following men: Thorkell Cock-eye, and Grimkell from Glaitness, and Bjarni (//) the son of Thorsteinn from Flyðrunes. ( ) And when the two winters had passed during which they were to get everything ready Earl Rognvaldr sailed out from the Orkneys early in spring and East to Norway wishing to know how far the landed/

1150.  
Spring.

landed proprietors had gone in their preparations.<sup>(12)</sup> And when the Earl came to Bergen, there had arrived before him Erlingr Crick-neck and John Limp-leg, the Earl's brother-in-law. There also had arrived Aslacr, but Guthormr came a little later. There also lay off the wharf the ship that John had had made for the Earl. It had seventy rowers' places,<sup>(13)</sup> and was a fine piece of workmanship, ornamented all over, and the figure-head and poop and weather-cocks inlaid with gold, and the rest of the ship carved from stem to stern. The ship was the most magnificent of its kind.

1150.  
Summer.

0. Fl.

0.

Eindrithi came often to the town that summer, and always [said] that he would be ready for sea the week after. But [as this went on the Earl's] men grumbled at having to wait for him so long. Some wished not to wait for him, and said that such voyages [as this] had been made without Eindrithi.

1150.  
Autumn.

1150.  
Winter.

0.

Fl.

And a little later Eindrithi came to the town, and said he was now ready. Then the Earl gave sailing orders as soon as he thought it likely to get a fair breeze. And when a day came that looked promising they pulled out of the town and hoisted sail. There was a light breeze. The Earl's ship moved slowly, for it [was a large ship and] required a strong wind. The other chiefs shortened sail, not wishing to sail past the Earl. And when they drew out from the Isles, the wind began to freshen. Then it blew so strong that they [had to] take in sail on the smaller ships; but the Earl's ship now began to take on speed.

At/

At this point they saw sailing behind them two large ships which held on abreast of them, and then straight past them. One of the ships - a dragon-warship - was richly ornamented. Both prow and poop were thickly inlaid with gold. The bows were painted, and it was painted all over from gunwale to waterline wherever it seemed to look well.

The Earl's men said that there sailed Eindriithi - "And he has held of little account the agreement that no one should have an ornamented ship but thou, lord."

The Earl says: "Great is the pride of Eindriithi. "He is to be excused, I suppose, for refusing to be equal "with us, because we are so much beneath him. (14) But it "remains (15) to be seen whether good fortune runs before him "or after him. We shall not shape our voyage according to "his rashness." Eindriithi then immediately bore on past him in the larger ship. But the Earl kept in company with his own ships and they had a good passage. They arrived in the Orkneys safe and sound in the autumn. It was then decided that they stay there for the winter. Some lived at their own expense, while some lived with the bondar, and many with the Earl. There was great stir in the Isles that winter and the Easterlings and the Orkney-men fell out over business and women, and there was much squabbling over them. The Earl was hard put to it to keep an eye on both sides when each thought that he deserved well of them, and they of him. (16)

Of Eindriithi and his men it must be told that they made land in Shetland, and that there he had his good/

1150.  
Autumn.

1150-1151.  
Winter.

good ship totally wrecked and lost much gear; but the smaller ship was saved. Eindrithi spent the winter in Shetland and sent men East to Norway to have another ship made for the crusade.

There was a man called Arni Spindle-shanks, one of the crew of Eindrithi. He sailed South into the Orkneys during the winter along with nine of his fellows.

Fl. Arni was an overbearing man, a bold man [and strong].

The company lived at their own expense on an island<sup>(17)</sup>

O, Fl. that winter. Arni [bought] malt and fat cattle from a tenant of Sveinn Asleif's son. But when he asked payment, Arni put him off. And when he asked it a second time he was paid with abuse; and before they parted, Arni dealt him a blow with the back of his axe, and said this: "Go Fl. "now and tell that [champion Sveinn] thou art always "calling upon, and get him to settle thy account. Thou "couldst not do better."

O. Fl. The bondi went and [told] Sveinn, and asks him to settle his account. Sveinn answers little, and says that he can make no promises in the matter.

1151. It happened one day in spring that Sveinn went Spring. to collect his rents. ( ) He went with three others in an eight-oared boat. Their course lay past the island where Arni had taken up house. Sveinn gave orders to lie inshore. Now the tide was strongly on the ebb.

O. Fl. Sveinn came ashore alone [with a hand-axe in his hand and no other weapon]. He bade them watch the boat lest she be stranded.

O. Arni and his men were sitting [drinking] in a bothy/

bothy not far from the sea. Sveinn went up to the bothy and entered. Arni and five of his men were within, and they greeted Sveinn.

Sveinn acknowledged their greeting, and told Arni he must settle his bondi's account.

Arni said that there was plenty of time for that.

Sveinn asked him to settle the affair as a favour to himself.

Arni said he would do nothing of the kind.

Sveinn said that he had little time to spare, and thereupon drove the axe into Arni's head, so that it sank over the blade [up to the haft], and he lost hold of the axe. Sveinn ran out, and Arni's retainers bent over their leader, ~~him,~~ while some ran after Sveinn down on to the damp beach. So they ran along the wet sand, and one was faster than the rest. He was now close at Sveinn's heels. Huge stems of sea-tangle lay in the ooze under the ebbing tide. Sveinn pulled up a stem, and thrust it in the face of his nearest pursuer, sand and all. The man flung both hands up to his eyes to wipe out the sloppy sand. But Sveinn got back to his boat, and sailed home to Gairsay to his estate.

A little later Sveinn sailed over to Caithness on business of his own. He sent word to Earl Rognvaldr that he wished to make compensation for the death of Arni Spindle-shanks. And when this message came to him, he summoned to him all those who were entitled to compensation for the manslaughter of Arni, and settled with them as they thought fit, and paid the compensation himself. Many other deeds of violence done that winter, both/

Peter's son Limp-leg], and five others who are not

named/

both by Easterlings and Orkneymen, did the Earl make good out of his own treasury; for they had got on very badly together.

spoke a verse:

1151.  
Spring.

Early in spring the Earl summoned a full Thing on the Mainland. To it came all the chiefs that were in his realm. There he made it known to them, that he meant to go on a crusade to Jerusalem. He says that he will put his realm into the hands of Earl Haraldr Maddadh's son, his kinsman. He prayed them that all should obey him like true men in whatsoever he might require of them while he was away. Earl Haraldr was then nearly twenty years of age. He had grown tall and strong, an ugly man, and very wise, and men thought him a likely man for a chief. Thorbjorn Clerk gave him most help in ruling the land when Rognvaldr first sailed abroad from the Orkneys.

CHAPTER 86.

[OF EARL ROGNVALD'S CRUSADE].

1151.  
Summer.  
325.

0. Fl.

(1) In the summer Earl Rognvaldr prepared to leave the Orkneys, and was rather late in being ready for sea, for they had to wait a long time for Eindrithi, [till] the ship which he had ordered to be built during the winter came West from Norway. But when they were ready for sea, they put out from the Orkneys with fifteen large ships. The following were the captains of the ships: Earl Rognvaldr, Bishop William, Erlingr Crick-neck, Aslacr Erlend's son, Guthormr Melø-pate, Magnus Havarth's son, Sveinn Hroald's son, Eindrithi the Younger, [John Peter's son Limp-leg], [and five others who are not named/

702.

0.

O. 702.

named(2) who were friends of Eindrithi]. They sailed from the Orkneys and South to Scotland, and [thence] to England. And as they sailed past Northumbria Armothr spoke a verse:

It happened one day, when the Earl sat at the board, that "The billows rise high  
While we tack off Humber-mouth  
The mast is bending  
Near low Veslarsandar. (3)  
Sea-spray blinds not  
The eyes of the land-lubber;  
The fledgling rides  
Dry-shod from the Thing."

Thence they sailed South along the coast of England to France. Nothing is told of their voyage ( ) until they came to the sea-port town called Narbonne. There they learned that the Earl who had ruled over the place had died; he was called Germanus. He had left behind him an only daughter, young and beautiful, called Ermengarde. She governed her inherited lands with the advice of the noblest among her kin. They suggested to the Queen, that she should invite the Earl to a sumptuous feast; they said that it would redound to her honour if she gave a fair welcome to such men of rank who had come so far, and indeed would carry her fame far and wide. The Queen left it to them. And when they had settled the matter, messengers went to the Earl, [to tell] him that the Queen invited him to a feast with as many men as he wished to bring with him. The Earl accepted thankfully. He picked the very best of his men to go with him. And when/

when they came to the feast, they were given the best of cheer, and nothing was spared that the Earl might have more honour than he had ever had before.

It happened one day, when the Earl sat at the board, that the Queen came into the hall and a bevy of women with her. She had a golden wine-cup in her hand; she was clad in the finest of clothes; she had her hair loose as maidens use to have it; and had a fillet of gold about her forehead. She served the Earl with wine while the maidens danced before him. The Earl took her hand along with the cup and set her on his knee. And they talked long through the day. Then the Earl spoke a verse:

"Golden lady,  
 None surpasseth  
 Thee in stature  
 Of all women  
 Fair-adorned,  
 On her shoulders  
 - Queen of wisdom -  
 Hangs her hair down  
 Golden, silky.  
 - I have reddened  
 The eagle's claw."

The Earl stayed there a long time in high favour. The townsmen pressed the Earl to settle down there, and declared eagerly that they would give him the lady in marriage.

The Earl said that he wished to go on the voyage  
 he/

he had planned, but said that they would put in at the place on their way back and they might then carry out the plan as they thought fit.

After that the Earl made ready to sail away thence with his company. And as they sailed West round brasnes they had a fair breeze; then they sat and drank, and were very merry.

Then the Earl spoke a verse:

"Long in remembrance  
 Shall this wight keep  
 The words of Ermengarde.  
 The Brave Bride wills that  
 O'er the Sea of Plunder  
 We sail to Jordan.  
 But when we come back,  
 We stalwarts afloat,  
 From the sea, from the South,  
 In autumn, home-bound,  
 Cleaving the whale-road,  
 We shall sail to Narbonne."

Armothr spoke this [verse]:

"Never again  
 Shall I see Ermengarde;  
 Such is my fate.  
 Many a man  
 Is love-sick for the lady.  
 Happy were I  
 One night at her side.  
 Luck would that be!  
 Fair is her forehead.

And/

And Oddi the Little spoke a verse:

"Scarce worthy of Ermengarde

Are we, I ween.

A chief among maidens,

This Lady of Bracelets;

Worthy of honour

Who weareth the crown.

Blessed in all things

She lives under heaven,

The home of the sun."

They sailed until they came West to Galicia in winter [five nights] before Christmas, and they made up their minds to spend Christmas there. They proposed to the inhabitants that they set up a market for them to buy victuals; but food was scarce in the country, and the inhabitants thought it a hard task to feed so large a host.

Now it happened that in the land there lived in a castle a chief, who was a foreigner, and he practised much extortion on the inhabitants. He robbed them if they did not agree to all that he asked of them; he offered them the greatest of violence and oppression.

And when the Earl was bargaining with the inhabitants for the buying of victuals, they made him the offer that they would set up a market for him right on till Lent, but that they must | by some way or other get rid of the men in the castle; and Earl Rognvaldr should bear the brunt [of the attack] and get all the booty that was taken from them.

This plan the Earl brings before his men, and sought/

work/

Fl.  
Decr.19.

325 | Fl.

sought their advice as to what course to take. And most of them were ready [to attack] the men in the castle, and thought it a likely place for [plunder]. And Earl Rognvaldr and his men accepted the offer of the inhabitants.

But when [it came near to Christmas] the Earl calls his men into conference, and said: "Now we have been living here for some time, and have not tackled the men in the castle, while the inhabitants are rather slack in doing business with us; I suppose they must think our promise has been an empty one. But it is an unmanly thing not to lift a finger to carry out that which we have promised. Now, [kinsman Erlingr], I wish your advice as to which way we shall win the castle, for I know that [thou hast many a good plan.] But still I wish to ask every man here to speak his mind as to what seems the likeliest plan."

Erlingr answered the Earl's speech: "I will not be silent before thy bidding, my lord, but I am no counsellor [in such matters.] And it is better to ask such men as have seen more and have more experience of such exploits, such as Eindrithi the Younger. But here it must be as the proverb says, 'Shoot at a bird before you get him'" And we shall try to give some advice, whatever comes of it. If it does not seem a bad plan to you or the other captains, let us all go today into the wood and carry each of us three shoulder-fulls [of faggots] on our backs up under the castle; for I believe that the lime will not stand well if great heat is applied to it. Let us have this done for the next three days and see what happens."

They did as Erlingr advised. And when the work/

Decr.24. work was finished, Christmas was at hand. The Bishop would not allow them to make the attack until after the [Christmas] High Feast.

The chief who lived in the castle was called Guthifreyr. He was a man of wisdom and somewhat advanced in years. He was a good scholar and had travelled widely, and knew many tongues; he was a grasping man, and overbearing.

When he saw their project he calls his men together and said to them:

"Methinks this plan is a clever one - and a bad one to us - which the Northmen have chosen. It is sure to happen with us that if it is set on fire the stone wall about the castle must fail us. Moreover the Northmen [are] strong and sturdy; we must look for a sharp fight if they come against us. Now I shall take counsel with you, as to what shall be done in our present quandary."

0. But his men all bade him take his own way of it [and do as he thought best.]

Then he went on: "My first plan is that you tie a rope round me [tonight] and let me down over the castle wall. I shall dress in rags and go into the camp of the Northmen and see what I can learn."

0. This plan was adopted as he had said it. And when Guthifreyr came to Earl Rognvaldr he pretended to be an old beggar-man, and spoke in French; they understood that tongue best. He walked round all the tents and begged for food. He perceived that there was much among the Northmen jealousy/[and that they were splitting into two factions.]  
Eindrithi/

O. Eindrithi [the Younger] was the leader of one, and the Earl of the other.

Guthifreyr went to Eindrithi and got into conversation with him. He mentioned to him that the chief who held the castle had sent him thither. - "He wishes to make a treaty with thee, and he hopes that thou would give him quarter if the castle be taken. If thou wilt do him this good turn, he will rather give his treasure to thee than to those who wish to have him a dead man."

Of such things they talked and much besides. But the Earl was kept in the dark [about it]; everything at first was done by stealth. And when Guthifreyr had been [as long in the camp as he wished,] he returned to his own men. But they did not remove from the castle anything that they had, nor did he himself take to flight, for they did not know whether the attack would come off; and they did not trust the inhabitants of the country.

#### CHAPTER 87.

##### EARL ROGNVALDR CAPTURES A [CASTLE].

It was on the tenth day of Christmastide that Earl Rognvaldr bestirred himself. It was a fine day. He ordered his men to arm themselves and sounded the advance [to] the castle. Then they dragged the wood up to it and piled it in heaps right round the walls.

The Earl posted each man at his point of attack. The Earl takes the Southern approach with the Orkneymen, Erlingr/

702. Erlingr and Aslacr the West, John and Guthormr the East,  
 [and] Eindrithi the Younger [with his men] the North. And  
 when they were ready to attack, they set fire to the heap  
 of fuel.

Then said the Earl:  
 they were waiting, the Earl spoke these verses:]

"The snow-white Lady

Of the silver bracelet

Brought wine to her guests.

The beauty of Ermengarde

Was shown forth to men.

Now the stalwart crew

Lay fire to this castle

And all that are in it.

Sharp swords spring

Each from the sheath."

And again he said:

[They now attacked the castle] both with fire and  
 missiles. [Some threw stones and some shot arrows] into  
 the fortress, for there was no other way of attack. The  
 inhabitants of the castle stood [only] at intervals on the  
 wall, for they had to guard themselves against the missiles.  
 And they hurled out burning pitch and brimstone, [but] that  
 did not do the Earl's men much harm. It then befell as  
 Erlingr had guessed, that the castle-wall could not stand  
 the fire when the lime gave way; and large breaches were  
 made in it. (1)

Then said There was a man named Sigmundr Fish-hook, a step-  
 son of [Sveinn Asleif's son]. He was one of the keenest  
 in the attack on the castle, and kept going in front of  
 the Earl. He was then scarcely grown up. And after the  
 attack/

At home in the Orreys

The

attack had gone on for a time, all the besieged were driven  
 in off the castle wall. The wind was from the South, and  
 blew the smoke towards Eindriithi and his men. And when  
 the fire [died down], the Earl had water brought to cool the  
 burnt stonework. [They got ready for the attack, but while  
 they were waiting, the Earl spoke these verses:]

"I, Prince of the Burning Brand  
 Remember that Christmas  
 East in the Agderhills  
 With Solmundr the Steward.  
 Now at Christmas again  
 I am as happy  
 Attacking this castle  
 On the Southern wall."

And again he said:

"Glad am I, this autumn,  
 That the Wine-bearer talked to me.  
 Fast was I drawn  
 To the Lady of France.  
 Food for the eagle  
 I make, for the love  
 Of the high-born maiden.  
 Stone and mortar  
 Will crumble and fall."

Then said Sigmundr Fish-hook:

"When spring comes, take over  
 The sea to the lady  
 Who spins at her wheel  
 At home in the Orkneys  
 The/

The words of the shield-bearer,  
 That no man this morning  
 When weapons sang early  
 - No, not even noble knight,  
 Old though he be -  
 Under these castle walls  
 Pressed on further."

After that the Earl and Sigmundr Fish-hook made  
 ready to attack. There was little resistance, and they  
 entered the castle. Many men were slain in the encounter,  
 but those who wished quarter surrendered to the Earl. They  
 took there much booty, but they found no chieftain and next  
 to no treasure. There was soon much talk as to how Guthi-  
 freyr had escaped. Their suspicions at once fell upon  
 Eindrithi the Younger, that he must have let him escape,  
 and he must have got away through the smoke into the wood.

After that, Earl Rognvaldr and his company stayed  
 a short time in Galicia, and [thence] held West along the  
 coast of Spain. They harried far and wide round the coast  
 of heathen Spain, and got much booty there. They ran up  
 into a village [as the Earl told them.] But the inhabit-  
 ants rose in a body and offered battle; there was a hard  
 struggle, and in the end the inhabitants fled, and many  
 were killed.

Then the Earl spoke a verse:

"In Spain I hope  
 To meet the Lady.  
 The foe was routed  
 And fled for weariness.  
 So I am worthy  
 To have Ermengarde.

For the host heard a war-cry,

And their dead strewed the plain."

After/

0, 702.

After that they sailed[~~out~~] from the coast of Spain, and there ran into a great storm, and lay there three days at anchor so that they shipped much water and were near to losing their ships.

Then said the Earl:

"Undaunted am I

On the prow, 'mid the storm

And the straining ropes

So long as they break not -

Cable and sheet.

To the white Flax-Bearer

To the proudest of women

I plighted my troth

When I fared <sup>from</sup> ~~to~~ the North.

The wind drives the sea-steed

Swift to the Straits."

After that they hoisted sail, and sailed close hauled to the Straits of Gibraltar with the wind [on the (starboard) bow].

702.

Then said Oddi [the Little]:

"Three happier days

Has the Prince's friend passed

Mead-drinking at home

With the Lord of the Sea-Flame.

But the high-hearted Rognvaldr

Steered the gay sea-steed

With its shield-sheltered crew

To the Straits of Gibraltar."

And as they beat through the Straits, the Earl spoke a verse/

verse:

For one land-lobber

"An East wind this winter

Has driven our ship

Far from the hands

Of the Lady of France.

We swing out the yard-arm

To weather the gale.

We bind the sail

To the middle of the yard.

The wind drives the sea-stag

Past the coast of Spain."

It chanced one morning that the fog lifted.

[Then they sailed through the Straits of Gibraltar, and then the wind began to moderate. And when they drew out of the Straits, Eindrithi the Younger parted company from the Earl with six ships. He sailed [almost right] over the sea to Marseilles, while Earl Rognvaldr and his company lay behind near the Straits. And it was common talk among the men that Eindrithi had now of his own accord proved whether he had let Guthifreyr escape. Then the Earl had his own sail hoisted; [and] they put to sea, and set their course South along the coast of ~~Barbary~~ [Africa, which we call Serkland the Greater]. Then said Earl Rognvaldr:

"To the North alone

The land recedes,

And the billow plays on

"Gainst the fair ship.

('Twill be long ere this hero

Is slow at verse-making.)

Earth's girdle foams.

A hard cruise I carve

For/

For one land-lubber  
 This day with my thin prow  
 Away from Spain."

Nothing is told of the voyage of the Earl and his men until they came South along the coast of Barbary and lay in the neighbourhood of Sardinia [but] did not know that land was hard by. The weather had changed, so that there fell a great calm, with fog and mist - [though the nights were light] - and they saw almost nothing from the ship, and so made little headway.

It chanced one morning that the fog lifted.

[Then the Earl asked if the men saw anything new. But they said they saw nothing but two small islands rising high out of the sea.] [After that they took victuals and ale, and had a meal.] And when they looked at the islands a second time, one of them had disappeared. This they told to the Earl.

He said:

"These cannot have been islands; they must have been two ships such as men have out in this part of the world called dromonds. These ships are so large as to look like islands. But where the other dromond lay a breeze must have sprung up on the sea, and they must have sailed away. But these must be way-faring men, [either merchants or men on some other errand of their own]."

After that [the Earl] has the Bishop called to him and all the ships' captains. Then he said:

"I summon you, my lord Bishop, and Erlingr my kinsman, for this reason. Do you know any device or plan/

"plan by which we may win a victory over those who are in the shield-wall along the gunwale of the ship, and put the dromond?"

The Bishop answers: "It will be a hard task, I guess, for you to lay a warship alongside the dromond, for you will not be able to do any more than hook a broad-axe on to the bulwark, but they will have brimstone and boiling pitch to throw under your feet and over your heads. You can see, Earl, so wise as you are, that it is the greatest rashness to run one's self and one's men into such risk."

Then Erlingr spoke: "My lord Bishop," says he, "it is likely that thou art right in thinking that there is little chance of victory in rowing alongside them. But I have an idea that, although we try to lie alongside the dromond, it seems to me possible that most of the missiles will fall beyond our ships if we hug her close. But if this is not so, then we can soon get away, for they will not pursue us in a dromond [here in the open sea]."

The Earl said: "That is spoken like a man, [Erlingr], and near to my own mind. I wish it now to be made known to the ships' captains and all the crews that each man is to get ready in his place on the thwart and arm himself in his best fighting-gear. Then we shall row against them. But if they are Christian merchants, then we may make peace with them; but if they are infidels, as I think they are, then may Almighty God will to grant us his grace that we may win the victory over them. And of the booty which we take, we shall set aside every fiftieth penny<sup>(2)</sup> for the poor."

After/

After that men unsheathed their weapons, and set the shield-wall along the gunwale of the ship, (3) and put on such armour as they had with them.

The Earl arranges where each [ship] shall run in. Then they laid on the oars and rowed forward with might and main.

## CHAPTER 88.

### ROGNVALDR CAPTURES A DROMOND.

1152.  
? Spring.

Fl.

O.

O.

Em.

O.

Now when those on board the dromond saw that the ships were rowing towards them, and that an attack was intended, they took fine cloth and costly stuffs and [hung] them over the bulwarks and made a great deal of clamour. And it seemed to the Earl's men that they were challenging [them] to come against them. Earl Rognvaldr laid his ship along the starboard quarter of the dromond, and Erlingr along the port quarter. John and Aslacr [laid] theirs forward on either bow, and others on both beams amidships; and all ships hugged her close. And when they came under the dromond, she was so high out of the water that they could not reach up with their weapons. ~~But they~~ <sup>But those on board</sup> hurled red-hot brimstone and burning pitch over them. And it turned out as Erlingr had expected, that most of what was thrown fell out beyond the ships, so that they did not need to shield themselves [on the side of their ships next the dromond, while those on the other side took their shields and held them over their heads and thus were protected].

When/

When [they saw that] the attack could go no further, the Bishop drew away his ship and two others, and they told off the bowmen to go in them. And they lay within shooting range, and shot from there on to the dromond. And this was [found to be] the best mode of attack. Those [on the dromond] now got under cover, but had little notion what those who lay under the dromond were about to do.

Earl Rognvaldr now called to his men to take their axes and hack through the side of the dromond where it was least protected with iron. And when the men on the other ships saw this move on the part of the Earl's men they adopted the same plan.

Where Erlingr and his men lay a huge anchor hung over the [bows of the] dromond, and the fluke was hooked over the gunwale, but the shank hung down towards Erling's ship. Authun the Red was the name of Erling's forecastle-man. He [was] lifted up to the anchor-stock, and then he drew some more men up beside him, so that as many as could were standing in a bunch on the stock. And from this position they hacked at the ship's side as [best] they could; and their hacking was done the highest up. And when they had hewn an opening large enough to let them into the dromond, they made ready for the attack. And the Earl and his men entered the lower deck, and Erlingr and his men the upper. And when the two [parties] came up into the ship there was a battle both great and hard. Those in the dromond were Saracens, whom we call Mahomet's Infidels. There were a number of black men among them, and they put up the hardest fight.

When/

And/

0. 702. And he also said:  
When he leapt up into the dromond Erlingr got a bad wound in the neck near the shoulder. It healed [in such a way] that he held his head on one side ever after. That is why he was nicknamed "Crick-neck".

702. And when they joined forces, Earl Rognvaldr and Erlingr, the Saracens fell back to the forward part of the ship, and the Earl's men then came on board one after another. There were now a large company, and they pressed the enemy hard. They saw that there was a man on the dromond both taller and more handsome than the rest; the Northmen surmised that he must be their chief. Earl Rognvaldr said that they must not turn their weapons on him, if they could take him by any other means. Then they bore him down with their shields and so he was taken, and afterwards carried to the Bishop's ship, and a few men with him. But they killed every other living soul, and took much booty and many articles of value. When they had finished the greater part of the work, they sat down and took a rest.

The Earl said this:-

"The far-famed Erlingr,  
The warlike spearsman,  
Captured the dromond  
- Our banners were blood-stained -  
With might and with main.  
We slew the dark warriors,  
Far and wide sprinkling  
The blood of the host.  
Fighters fierce  
So  
Reddened the sword-edge."

And/  
Then/

And he also said:

"We captured a dromond!  
 At dawn the warrior  
 Made gory his blade.  
 Now talk we of slaughter!  
 From North and from South  
 Shall the Lady of Narbonne  
 Hear of this battle.  
 Death met the host."

702. There was much talk about the exploit they had just performed. Each man was giving his version of it. And the talk turned upon who had been first to board [the dromond], and they could not agree about it. Then some said that they would cut a fine figure if they did not all have the same story to tell about so great an exploit. And the upshot was that they agreed that Earl Rognvaldr should settle the matter, and that afterwards they would adopt his version of it.

Then said the Earl:

"Anthun the Red  
 Was foremost in pressing  
 Aboard the dark dromond.  
 The warrior keen  
 Was eager for plunder.  
 We reddened our blades  
 In the blood of the host.  
 Livid the corpse fell  
 Down on the deck. -  
 So God willed it."

Then/

D. [and his Then when they had rifled the dromond, they set fire to it and burned it. And when the tall man whom they had captured saw that, he was much disturbed thereby, and turned pale and could not keep himself still. But although they tried to make him speak, he would not say a word, nor make any manner of sign. And he remained immovable, whether they promised him good or ill. But when the dromond began to blaze [up], they saw something like a blazing stream of water gushing into the sea [from the ~~same~~ ship.] At this the captive man was greatly moved. [The Northmen] now realized that they had looked for booty carelessly, and now the metal, whether it were gold or silver, had melted with the heat of the fire.

O. 702. The Earl Earl Rognvaldr and his men sailed thence South along the coast of Barbary, and lay in under a sea-port town, (1) and made a seven days' truce with the inhabitants; and then they traded with them, and gave them silver and other booty. No one would buy the tall man; and thereafter the Earl gave him his freedom and five men with him. He came back the next morning with a band of men, and told Lex. Run. [Earl Rognvaldr that he was a Prince of Barbary, and had been sent from there with the dromond and all the goods that were aboard her. He added that he felt it most that O. they burned the dromond; - ["for," said he, "you lost much "gold and silver] so that no one got the benefit of it.

"But now I have your fortunes very much in my hands. I "shall now do you the best of good turns for having spared "my life and treating me with such honour as you could. "But I should be very glad were we never to see one another "again. And now live in health and happiness." Black.

After that he rode inland. But Earl Rognvaldr [and/

"Round Dracnes

The barons' ships

Rode along

Frankjorn/

O. [and his men] sailed thence South to Crete and lay there a long time before a strong gale. Then Armothr spoke a verse while he kept guard during the night:

"We watch o'er the sea-steed  
 When o'er the stout gunwale  
 The billow breaks wildly.  
 Thus duty is done.  
 While the lazy land-lubber  
 Sleeps by some maiden  
 Soft-skinned and kind,  
 Over my shoulder  
 I gaze towards Crete."

The Earl and his men lay under Crete until they had a fair  
 0. 702. wind for [the Holy Land.] And they arrived at the town of  
 Acre early on a Friday morning, and landed with such pomp  
 and ceremony as was seldom seen there.

Reginald Thorbjorn the Black then made a verse:

"In the Chieftain's Bodyguard  
 Was I in the Orkneys,  
 When the Feeder of Ravens  
 Made war last winter.  
 Now bear we the shield  
 Up the wet wharves of Acre  
 With the trusty Earl  
 On a Friday morning."

The Earl and his men remained in Acre for a time.  
 There sickness broke out in their company, and many men  
 0. 702. [of rank] died. Among them died Thorbjorn the Black.

Oddi the Little said:

"Round brasnes  
 The barons' ships  
 Bore along  
 Thorbjorn/

Thorbjorn the Black.  
 The Sea-bear  
 To Acre trod  
 Ati's ground  
 With the chief of skalds.

"There I saw him,  
 The King's friend,  
 Buried in  
 The High Church.  
 O'er him now lies  
 Earth, - and stones  
 Bright with sunlight  
 Of the South."

Earl Rognvaldr and his men then left the town of Acre, and visited all the holiest places in the Holy Land. They all marched to the Jordan and bathed in it. Earl Rognvaldr and Sigmundr Fish-hook swam across the river, and went ashore there, and forward to where there was some brushwood, and they tied large knots in it. (a)

Augt. 10

Then said the Earl:

"A heath-knot I made  
 On the far side of Jordan.  
 The maid will remember it,  
 In winter - the serpent's bane.  
 Methinks to all stay-at-homes  
 'Twere a long journey hither.  
 Warm blood streamed  
 O'er the broad field." (3)

Then said Sigmundr:

"A/

"A knot I shall tie  
 To-day for the fellow  
 Who sits at home haughtily.  
 The Prince of the Host  
 We have run into danger."

Said the Earl:

"A knot we tied  
 On St. Laurence's Day  
 For a wretched fellow  
 In a dense thicket.  
 Weary I came  
 To a cosy corner."

0. 702.

[After that they came back to Jerusalem].

702.

[And when they came up to the city, Earl Rognvaldr said]:

"A cross hangs  
 On this skald's breast;  
 And a palm branch  
 Is between his shoulders. (4)  
 Evil thoughts  
 Shall be laid aside.  
 My men press forward  
 Up the slopes." (6)

1152.  
 Summer.

Earl Rognvaldr and his men sailed away from the  
 Holy Land in summer, meaning to sail North to Istanbul;

1152.  
 Autumn.

and in the autumn they came to the place called Imbólar.

0. 702.

[They stayed there a long time. [There was a common say-

0. 702.

ing in the town], if men met in a crowded [street or alley],  
 and one thought it necessary that the other approaching him  
 should yield him the road, then he says thus: "Mithhæfi,  
 Mithhæfi." (6)

It/

O. 702.

It befell one evening as the Earl and his men were leaving the town, and Erlingr Crick-neck was walking along the wharf out [to his ship,] some townsmen met him and said "Mithhaefi, mithhaefi." Erlingr was very drunk, and pretended he did not hear. And when they ran against one another, Erlingr jumped off the wharf and over into the mud that lay beneath; and his men leapt [down] to him and pulled him out, and [they had to strip him of every stitch of his clothes and wash him.]

O. 702.

702.

And next morning when the Earl met him, and heard [the story], he smiled at it and said:

"My friend will not shout

'Mithhaefi! Make way!'

So into the mud

He fell all his length

('Twas almost a stroke

Of very bad luck!)

A sorry sight

Was the Prince's kinsman

When he came a cropper,

- When mire of Imbólar

Dripped from the scamp."

Fl. | 325

O. Fl.

Some time after it happened in this town, when they came out of the town very drunk, that John Limp-leg's men missed him, but no | man else. They sent at once to search for him in the other ships that night, but he was not to be found. But they could not search for him ashore [by night.] But in the morning they were afoot as soon as it was light, and they found him a little way from/

from the town-wall, and he was dead, and they found a wound on him. But it was never known who had dealt him the blow. They prepared his body for burial and found a grave for him at a church.

F1. [After that] they sailed away thence. And nothing is told of their voyage till they come North to Engilsnes (7). There they lay at anchor for several days and awaited the wind which seemed to them suitable for [sailing] North across the sea to Istanbul. They now showed fine seaman-ship, and sailed with much pomp just as they knew Sigurthr the Crusader had done. And while they crossed the sea Northwards, Earl Rognvaldr spoke a verse:

"Let us ride Raefill's sea-steed  
To Istanbul;  
Let us leave the ploughshare  
In field untouched;  
Let us cleave our way  
With dripping prow.  
Let us take the bounty  
Of the <sup>mighty</sup> ~~valiant~~ Monarch,  
Push on to clash of sword,  
Redden the wolf's jaws,  
And honour <sup>the King</sup> ~~our Prince~~."

#### CHAPTER 89.

[OF EARL ROGNVALD'S VISIT TO ISTANBUL].

When Earl Rognvaldr and his men came to Istanbul, they/

they were well received by the Emperor and the Vaeringjar<sup>(1)</sup>

0. Fl. At that time, [Menelaus was] Emperor of Istanbul, whom we call Manuli. He gave the Earl much money, and offered them military pay if they would remain with him. They

0. Fl. remained there [well] through the winter on the most friendly terms. Eindriithi the Younger was there, and he had much honour from the Emperor. He paid little heed

0. Fl. to Earl Rognvaldr and his men, but spoke rather disparagingly of them [before] other men.

Earl Rognvaldr made ready ~~for his voyage from~~ <sup>to leave</sup>

1153. Spring. Istanbul that winter, and ~~sailed~~ <sup>went</sup> first West to Durazzo in Bulgaria. Thence he sailed West over the sea to ~~Apulia.~~ <sup>Puglia.</sup>

There Earl Rognvaldr left the ships, and [with him] Bishop

Fl. 702. William and Erlingr, and all the [noblest] of their com-

Fl. 702. pany, and got themselves horses [there], and rode thence first to the city of Rome, and so out back along the Path

1153. Summer. to Rome<sup>(2)</sup> till they came to Denmark; and thence they sailed North to Norway. There men were very glad to see them. And this crusade became the talk of the day. And they all passed for men of more importance after the journey they had made.

While they had been on their voyage Ogmundr the Brave, the brother of Erlingr Crick-neck, had died. He

was thought the more outstanding of the brothers while

1153-1161. they were both alive. Erlingr at once threw in his lot

with King Ingi, for of the two brothers he was most at-

tached to him; and they did not part so long as they both lived.

1161. But after the death of King Ingi, there was chosen as King over the people Magnus, son of Erlingr and Cristina/

332. Fl. <sup>h</sup>  
Cristina, daughter of [King] Sigurthr the Crusader; but Erlingr had sole rule over all the land in Norway.

Valdamarr King of the Danes gave Erlingr the title of "Earl" and he became the greatest of chiefs, as is told in his Saga. (3)

?1155x1157.

Eindrithi the Younger came home a few years later than Earl Rognvaldr and his men. He threw in his lot with King Eysteinn, for he would have nothing to do with Erlingr. But after the death of King Eysteinn,

1157.

Eindrithi the Younger and his friends raised forces, and [with them] Sigurthr, son of Havarthr the Freeman of Rþr, and chose as King, Hakon Broad-shoulders, son of King

1161.

Sigurthr Harald's son. They slew Gregory Dag's son and

1162.

King Ingi. Eindrithi and Hakon made an attack on Erlingr

332. Fl.

Crick-neck off [Sekken]. There fell Hakon, while Ein-

1163.

drithi fled. Shortly afterwards (4) Earl Erlingr had

Feb. 27.

Eindrithi the Younger put to death East in Viken.

#### CHAPTER 90.

0.

being [EARL ROGNVALDR RETURNS HOME TO THE

#### ORKNEYS].

1153.

Summer.

325.

had an earl [After his arrival in Norway] Earl Rognvaldr

332. Fl.

stayed in Hordland well through the summer. He heard much news there from the Orkneys. It was told him that there was much quarrelling, and [that] for the most part the goethingar had divided into two factions, and there were few who stood aloof and refrained from taking sides. Earl/

Earl Haraldr was on one side, and on the other side Earl Erlendr and Sveinn Asleif's son.

And when the Earl heard that, he spoke a verse:

"Now my gœthingar what was happening in the

Orkneys will Have broken their oaths; on his crusade.

'Tis blasphemy truly! the Earl went abroad.

[there] can Ill-counsel of men King Sveinr, son of Har-

aldr Gilli; Is revealed today. And when he came to the

Orkneys, he No peace from me Haraldr with his forces.

For traitors at home! Earl Haraldr Maddað's son

had gone over I must walk warily, ship of twenty thwarts

with eighty I must tread softly, so. But when King Ey-

steinn lea As long as I carry three outters and sailed

West over A beard [on my chin]." to Thors. He arrived

Earl Rognvaldr had no ships at his command.

He asked his kinsmen and friends to have several warships built for him during the winter. They agreed gladly, and promised there and then all that he asked.

The Earl spent the summer in preparations to sail West to the Orkneys to his realm, and he was late in being ready for sea, for he put off much time. He sailed West in the merchant ship that belonged to Thorkell

Asgrim's son; he was an Icelfander [of good birth], and had an estate at Byskupstungur. The Earl had, in spite of all, a large band of men on the ship, and a retinue of men of rank. They reached Scotland in the depth of winter and lay a long time off the coast of Scotland in the shelter of Tarbatness. (1) The Earl came a little before Christmas to the Orkneys, and his friends gave him a hearty welcome. (2)

## CHAPTER 91.

0. [OF KING EYSTEINN HARALD'S SON].

325. Now it must be told what was happening in the Orkneys while Earl Rognvaldr was out on his crusade.

1151. During the summer that the Earl went abroad, Summer. [there] came West from Norway King Eysteinn, son of Haraldr Gilli; he had a large army. And when he came to the Orkneys, he made for South Ronaldsay with his forces.

Then he learned that Earl Haraldr Maddadh's son had gone over to Caithness in a ship of twenty thwarts with eighty men; he lay in Thurso. But when King Eysteinn learned that, he manned three cutters and sailed West over the Pentland Firth and so to Thurso. He arrived there with such [stealth] that the Earl and his men were unaware of them until [the King's] men boarded their ship and made the Earl captive. He was led before the King, and they came to this agreement, that the Earl ransomed himself for three gold marks;<sup>(1)</sup> but he gave his realm into the hands of King Eysteinn, so that he would hold it from him for ever afterwards. Then the Earl made himself King Eysteinn's man and bound himself to that by oaths.

Thence King Eysteinn sailed to Scotland, and spent the summer harrying there. He harried far and wide round the coast of England on this cruise, and it was thought that he was [now] avenging King Haraldr Sigurth's son.

1151. After that King Eysteinn sailed East to his Autumn. realm in Norway; and there were very diverse stories told of his expedition.<sup>(2)</sup>

Earl/

Earl Haraldr was in his realm in the Orkneys, and he was well liked by most men. Earl Maddadh, his father, was then dead, and Margaret his mother had come out to the Orkneys. She was a handsome woman, and very haughty. At that time died David King of Scots, and Malcolm his son was then crowned King. He was but a child at the time when he took over the realm.<sup>(3)</sup>

CHAPTER 92.

[OF EARL ERLENDR].

Erlendr, son of Haraldr Smooth-tongue lived mostly in Thurso, but was sometimes [in the Hebrides], or on harrying cruises after the death of Earl Ottarr. He was a man of the highest promise, accomplished in most things, generous as regards money, affable and open to advice, and most popular with his men. He had a large following.

There was a man called Anakol; he was the foster-father of Erlendr and had most influence over him. Anakol was a viking, of good family, and a valiant fellow, a Hebridean by birth.<sup>(1)</sup> He was Erlend's Councilllor-in-chief.<sup>(2)</sup>

Now when Erlendr heard that Earl Rognvaldr had gone abroad from his realm [on a crusade] to Jerusalem, he went to see Malcolm King of Scots, his kinsman, and asked him to give him the title of "Earl", and the overlordship of Caithness, just as Haraldr his father had had from King David, King Malcolm's [grand]-father.<sup>(3)</sup> Now since Erlendr had noble friends there, who supported his claim/

Fl. claim [and Malcolm was but a child], it turned out that Erlendr got the title of "Earl" and half of Caithness jointly with his kinsman Haraldr.

Erlendr then went to Caithness and there joined his friends. After that he gathered forces round him, and sailed out to the Orkneys, where he bade them do homage to him.

But Earl Haraldr Maddadh's son gathered forces round him as soon as he heard about Erlendr, and he had a large band of men. Then men mediated between the kinsmen and sought to bring them to terms. Erlendr demanded half of the Isles from Haraldr, but he [would] not give [them] up. And the upshot was [that] a truce was made for a year; but it was agreed that Erlendr should go East to Norway to see King Eysteinn, and ask for himself the share which Earl Rognvaldr had; Haraldr said that then he would give it up.

Then Erlendr sailed East to Norway, while Anakol and some of his army stayed behind in the Orkneys.

Gunni Olaf's son, brother of Sveinn Asleif's son, had got a child by Margaret, Earl Harald's mother. But the Earl made him an outlaw; and from this there arose a feud between [Sveinn and Earl Haraldr]. Sveinn sent his brother Gunni South to Lewis to his friend Ljotolfr, with whom Sveinn had been in days gone by. Ljotolfr had a son called Fugl. He was with Earl Haraldr; and there was little love lost between him and Sveinn.

332. Fl. After [Earl] Erlendr sailed East to Norway, Earl  
1151 ~~or 1150~~. Haraldr went over to Caithness and spent the winter in  
Winter. Wick. Sveinn Asleif's son was then at Freshwick in  
Caithness, and was keeping guard over his stepson's  
estate/

estate. He had first married Ragnhildr Ogmund's daughter; they had been but a short time together; Olafr was their son. Then he had married Ingirithr Thorkell's daughter. Their son [was] Andrew.

332. Fl.

1152.  
Apr. 2.

It was on Wednesday in Easter Week that Sveinn Asleif's son had gone up to Lambaborg with a handful of men. Then they saw that a cargo-ship was coming from the East from the Pentland Firth. Sveinn came to the conclusion that this must be Earl Harald's men whom he had sent for his skatt in [Shetland.] Sveinn bade his men

332. Fl.

go aboard their ships and attack the cargo-ship; and so they did. They took the cargo-ship, and all that was [of value] in it, while they pushed Earl Harald's men ashore; and they went East to Wick and told him. Earl Haraldr answered little on the matter, and said that Sveinn and

332.

[he would take turns in having plunder]; and he boarded out his men in various places during Easter. Then the men of Caithness said that the Earl was on ~~his usual fishing grounds.~~ ing grounds. (4)

332. Fl.

1152.  
Apr. 8.

But immediately after Easter Week, Sveinn sailed with the cargo-ship and a rowing cutter out to the Orkneys. And when they came to [Scapa], they captured a ship from Fugl Ljotolf's son. He had just come North from Lewis from his father, and was bound for Earl Haraldr. And on their ~~voyage~~<sup>way</sup> they took twelve ounces of gold from Sigurthr-Clumpy (6), a servant of Earl Harald's. The money had been brought to a house, but the owners were in Kirkwall.

332. Fl.

Then Sveinn went back over to Caithness, and up into Scotland, [and found] Malcolm King of Scots in Aberdeen; he was then nine years old. (6) There Sveinn spent a month with him in high favour, and the King of Scots bade/

bade him keep all the rights and dues in Caithness which he had had before he had fallen out with Earl Haraldr. Sveinn got ready after that to sail away, and the King of Scots and he parted with great affection. Then Sveinn went [down] to his ships and sailed North to the Orkneys.

1152. Fl.  
Summer.

Anakol was in Deerness at the time when Sveinn and his men were sailing from the South, and they saw his sails away to the East of Mull Head. They sent a man to Sveinn and his men, Gauti, a bondi from Skeggbjarnarstaðir; and Anakol asked that Sveinn come to terms with Fugl over the capture of the ship, because they were of the same kin, and Fugl was then with Anakol. Now when Gauti found Sveinn, he tells him Anakol's message. Then Sveinn asked them to go to Sanday, and they would meet in conference there; for, he said, he was going thither immediately. There was a [large number at the] meeting, and an agreement was slow in being reached. The upshot was that Sveinn was to fix as he chose the compensation he was to pay.

332.

1152. Fl.  
Sept. 29

After that Anakol joined forces with Sveinn, and they bound themselves to seek a settlement between him and Earl Erlendr when he came from the East, for they were [bitter] enemies over the burning of Frakokk.

Fl.

Sveinn and Anakol sailed to Stronsay and lay off Huipness several nights. At that time, Thorfinnr Brusil's son dwelt in Stronsay; he had then to wife Ingigerthr, Sveinn's sister, whom Thorbjorn Clerk had divorced. While Sveinn and his men lay off Huipness, Earl Erlendr sailed in there from the open sea; and Anakol and Thorfinnr Brusil's son at once sailed to meet him, and sought to make terms between him and Sveinn. And the Earl entered/

entered into the terms reluctantly; he said that Sveinn had always been a bad enemy to his own kin, and had not held to his promise to Earl Ottar and his men, to give him (i.e. Erlendr) forces to gain his realm.

332. Fl.

Then Sveinn offered the Earl his following and counsel. And negotiations went on [all] day. And they did not come to a satisfactory settlement until both Anakol and Thorfinnr declared that they would accompany Sveinn out to the Isles if the Earl would not come to terms with him. Earl Erlendr told him the decision of King Eysteinn in the East, that he should have the share of the Orkneys which had formerly belonged to Earl Haraldr. Sveinn suggested this plan, when he and the Earl were come to terms, that they go without delay to see Earl Haraldr, before he learned this from others, and ask him to give up the realm to him. It was done as Sveinn said. They found Earl Haraldr on board ship off Cairston. (8) It was Michaelmas morning, when Earl Haraldr and his men saw a warship approaching them, and they feared that it must be a hostile force. They leapt ashore and into the castle that was then there. (9)

1152.  
Septr. 29

There was a man called Arni Hrafn's son, and he leapt from Earl Harald's ship and [ran] to Kirkwall. He was so terrified, that he did not notice that he had his shield on his back until he stuck fast in the Church door. There was a man called Thorgeirr who was in there before [him]. (10) Arni's messmates thought that he was lost and sought him for two days.

Earl Erlendr and Sveinn and their men leapt ashore after Earl Haraldr and his men in the castle, and attacked/

attacked the whole day both with fire and missiles. They made a stout defence and nightfall broke off their encounter. There were many men wounded on either side; and Earl Haraldr and his men were on the point of surrender, had the attack lasted any longer. But in the morning, there arrived bondar who were friends of both parties, and sought to bring them to terms. And Earl Erlendr and Sveinn were loath to make peace. But yet negotiations went forward, so that they made a settlement whereby Earl Haraldr swore this oath, that Erlendr should have his (i.e. Harald's) share of the Isles, and he should never make any claim against him for that realm. These oaths were made before many witnesses from among the best men there in the Isles.

And after that Earl Haraldr sailed over to Caithness and so up into Scotland to his kinsmen. Few Orkney-men on this occasion went with him.

Earl Erlendr and Sveinn and his men summoned a Thing of the bondar in Kirkwall, and the bondar from all the Isles came to it. Earl Erlendr pleaded his cause before them, and likewise many others, his friends and kinsmen. The Earl said that King Eysteinn had given him the realm in the Orkneys, which had in the past been under the guardianship of Earl Haraldr. He then asked the bondar to pay him homage; he had there [King] Eysteinn's letters which proved [what he said]. The upshot was that the bondar paid homage to Earl Erlendr. Then he took under him all the Orkneys and made himself chief over [them]. But it was agreed between Earl Erlendr and the bondar, that he would not withhold from Earl Rognvaldr that/

Fl.

Fl.

Fl. that portion of the realm which he had, if by any chance he came [back] for it. But if Earl Rognvaldr laid claim to more than half, then the bondar would defend that along with Earl Erlendr.

Jan. 6 Sveinn Asleif's son was usually with Earl Erlendr, and bade him be wary, and put no trust in either Earl Haraldr or the Scots. They lay well into the winter on board ship, and kept spies posted at some distance from them.

1152. Christmas. Fl. But as it drew near to Christmas and the weather grew more severe, Sveinn sailed home to his estate [in Gairsay], but bade the Earl be no less wary although they were parted. And so the Earl did, for (11) he lay a long time on board ship, and he had no gathering anywhere for a Christmas feast.

## CHAPTER 93.

### EARL HARALDR COMES TO THE ORKNEYS

#### UNAWARES.

1153. Jan. 3. 325. It happened on the tenth day of Christmas-tide ( ) that Sveinn Asleif's son sat drinking with his servants in Gairsay. He rubbed his nose and said: "I have a notion "that Earl Haraldr is now on his way to the Isles."

1153. Jan. 5. His servants say that was unlikely owing to the storms they were having.

He said he knew that they would think so. - "And "now", said he, "I shall not tell the Earl of this merely "on the strength of my foreboding. But yet I fear I might "do worse than that."

There/

given up. There the subject dropped and they fell to drinking as before.

1153.  
Feb. 25.

Earl Haraldr made ready for his voyage out to the Orkneys at Christmas; he had four ships and twenty men. He lay two nights off Graemsay. They landed in Hamnavoe on the Mainland. Thence they went on the thirteenth day of Christmastide to Firth. They were in Maeshowe while a snow storm drove over them, and two men among them went mad there; and that caused them much delay. It was near daybreak when they reached Firth.

Jan. 6

Jan. 7.

It happened that Earl Erlendr had gone aboard his ship, but he had been drinking all day up in a house there. (1)

Fl.

Earl Haraldr and his followers killed two men there; one was called Ketill [but the other is not named]. And they took captive four men, Arnfinnr, brother of Anakol; another called Ljotolfr, and two others.

Earl Haraldr sailed back to Thurso, and Thorbjorn Clerk and his men, but the brothers Benedict and Eirikr went to Lambaborg, taking Arnfinnr with them.

Fl.

Immediately after nightfall, when Earl Erlendr became aware of the presence of an enemy, he sent a man to Gairsay to tell Sveinn; and immediately after sunrise he [i.e. Sveinn] had ships launched and sailed to meet Earl Erlendr according to the message; and they stayed on ship-board a great part of the winter.

1153.  
Jan. 8.

Benedict and his brother sent word that Arnfinnr would be at once set free if Earl Erlendr and his men let them have the ship which they had taken off Cairston. The Earl was rather eager that the ship be given/



1153.  
Spring.

Fl.

In the following spring, Earl Haraldr made ready to leave Caithness, and sailed North to Shetland. He meant to take the life of Erlendr the Younger; <sup>(6)</sup> for he had sought to marry [his] mother Margaret, but [the Earl] had refused him. After that he got himself a band of men and carried her off from the Orkneys, and conveyed her North to Shetland; and he took up house in the Broch of Mousa, <sup>(7)</sup> where he laid in a large store of provisions.

Fl.

Now when Earl Haraldr came to Shetland he took up his position round the Broch and cut off all supplies. But it [was] an awkward place on which to make an assault. Men now came forward and tried to bring them to terms. Erlendr asked that the Earl give him the woman in marriage, and promised his support to the Earl; he said it was worth more to him to get [back] his realm, and added that the likeliest way to do that was to make as many friends as possible. Many supported Erlendr in this suit, and the upshot of the matter was that they came to terms; and Erlendr got Margaret to wife and after that <sup>(8)</sup> made ready to go with the Earl. And they sailed East to Norway in the summer.

1153.  
Summer.

And when news of this reached the Orkneys, Earl Erlendr and his friends took counsel among themselves, and Sveinn urged that they should go a-harrying and thus increase their resources. And so they did, and sailed South to the Moray Firth and harried along the East coast of Scotland. They sailed South to Berwick-on-Tweed. There was a man called Knutr the Wealthy. He was a merchant and lived usually in Berwick. Sveinn and his men captured a large and fine ship of Knut's and much booty therewith; ~~there was on board also his wife.~~ <sup>his wife was there on board also.</sup> After that/

that they sailed South under Blyhólmr. (9)

Knutr was in Berwick when he heard of the stealing. For a hundred marks of silver he made a bargain with the men of Berwick that they would try to recover his property. They were most of them merchants who went on the search. They sailed in fourteen ships in pursuit of them.

Now when Erlendr and Sveinn and their men lay under Blyhólmr, Sveinn advised his men to sleep without the awning over them; he said he had an inkling that the men of Berwick would come upon them in a large body that night.

But the wind was keen and the men paid no heed to what he said. And all the men lay under the awnings; but on Sveinn's ship there was no awning abaft the mast. Sveinn sat up on the poop in a fur cloak on a chest, and said that he meant to spend the night in "being prepared." (10)

There was a man called Einarr Skew-legs in Sveinn's ship. He said that tall tales were told of Sveinn's bravery. - "He is called a bolder man than other men, but now he does not dare to pull an awning over his ship."

Sveinn pretended not to hear.

There were sentries up on the island. Sveinn heard them quarrelling about what they saw. He went up to them and asked what they were squabbling about. They said they were not sure what it was they saw. Sveinn was the most keen-sighted of men, and when he looked closely he saw that it was a fleet of fourteen ships.

He went on board his ship and ordered the sentries/

sentries to go aboard and spread the news. Sveinn bade his men wake up and pull down the awnings. Upon that there was great commotion and most [of them] shouted to Sveinn asking what they were to do. He bade them be silent and said that his advice was to lay the ships between the island and the [main]land, - "and so [we shall] see if they will sail round past us; but if that does not work, then let us row against them as hard as we can."

But other counsellors spoke against [this], and said that the only plan [was] to sail away from them; and so it was done.

Then said Sveinn: "If you wish to sail away from them, put out to sea." Sveinn was last to be ready for sailing. Anakol waited for him. But when Sveinn's ship sailed ahead, he had his sail shortened and waited for Anakol, for he did not wish him to be left behind in a single ship.

Then said Einarr Skew-legs, when Sveinn and his men sailed with all sail spread: "Sveinn," says he, "our ship has stuck, hasn't she?"

Sveinn says: "I think not," says he. "But I advise thee to make less question of my courage if thou art so badly scared as not to know whether the ship is moving or not; for this is the fastest of all ships afloat."

The men from Berwick sailed South past them, but Sveinn and his men now turned in under the mainland. And when they put in at the Isle of May, Sveinn sent to Edinburgh to tell the King of Scots of their plundering. But before they came to the town, there rode twelve men to/

to meet them with their saddle-bags full of silver. And when they met, the Scots enquired after Sveinn Asleif's son.

1152.  
Decr. 23.

They said where he was, and asked what they wanted of him.

The Scots said that they had been told that Sveinn had been taken prisoner, and the King of Scots had sent them to ransom him with the money they had with them.

1154.  
Spring.

Sveinn's men told them the news in their turn, and they went to the King of Scots and told him their errand. The King of Scots spoke lightly of the robbing of Knutr and sent Sveinn a costly shield and many fine gifts besides.

1153.  
Autumn.

Earl Erlendr and Sveinn and their men sailed for the Orkneys in the autumn, and arrived rather late.

1153.  
Summer.

That summer Earl Haraldr sailed East to Norway. (11)

1153.  
Christmas.

At that time also Earl Rognvaldr and Erlingr Crick-neck returned from Istanbul to Norway, as was said before; (12) and a little before Christmas, Earl Rognvaldr arrived in the Orkneys.

#### CHAPTER 94.

##### THE SETTLEMENT BETWEEN THE EARLS.

1153.  
Decr.  
325.

Mediators at once went between Earl Rognvaldr and Earl Erlendr and sought to bring them to terms. Prominence was given to the agreement that had been made between/

between the bondar and Earl Erlendr, that he should not withhold from Earl Rognvaldr his share of the Isles. Negotiations culminated in a meeting between the earls in Kirkwall, and they came to terms and bound themselves to them by oaths. This was two nights before Christmas. And they settled it that each of them should have half of the Isles, and both should defend them against Earl Haraldr or [any] others that laid claim to them. At that time Earl Rognvaldr had no fleet, until the following summer, when his ships came West from Norway.

1153.  
Decr. 23.

That winter all remained quiet. But in the following spring the Earls made their plans to meet Earl Haraldr if he came from the East; and Earl Erlendr and Sveinn Asleif's son and **their** men sailed to Shetland, meaning to intercept him if he made his attack there. Earl Rognvaldr sailed over to Thurso, for they had an inkling that Haraldr would make for there if he came from the East; for he had many kinsmen and friends there. Earl Erlendr and Sveinn and their men spent the summer in Shetland, and stopped all ships, so that none went to Norway. (1)

1154.  
Spring.

1154.  
Summer.

Earl Haraldr sailed West from Norway in summer, and had seven ships. He made land in the Orkneys, but three of his ships were driven out of their course towards Shetland, and Earl Erlendr and his men captured them.

Now when Earl Haraldr came into the Orkneys, he got word there that Earl Rognvaldr and Earl Erlendr had come to terms whereby each was to share half of the Isles with the other. Earl Haraldr now saw fairly clearly his lot/

lot - that there was nothing meant for him. He now made up his mind to sail over to Caithness to see Earl Rognvaldr before Earl Erlendr and his followers came from Shetland.

Fl. Earl Erlendr and Sveinn and their men were in Shetland when they heard that Earl Haraldr had arrived in the Orkneys. They at once held South to the Isles with five [war]-ships, and met treacherous currents and a gale of wind in Sumburgh Roost, and there were separated. Sveinn bore away<sup>(2)</sup> to Fair Isle with two ships, and thought the Earl and his men lost. Thence they held South to Sanday, and there before them lay Earl Erlendr with three ships, and there was a most joyful meeting.

They sailed thence to [the Mainland], and learned that Earl Haraldr had gone over to Caithness.

Fl. Now it must be told of Earl Harald's project that he came to Thurso with six ships. Earl Rognvaldr was then up in Sutherland at the wedding in which [he] gave his daughter Ingirithr to Eirikr Stay-trickster.

Sept. 25. News immediately reached him that Earl Haraldr had arrived in Thurso. Earl Rognvaldr rode with a large company Fl. from the wedding over [from Berriedale] to Thurso.

immediate. Eirikr Stay-trickster was a kinsman of Earl Harald's, and did his utmost to bring them to terms, and many others supported him in the matter, and said that to them it was clear that there must be no breach between them by reason of their ties of kinship, of fosterage, and of friendship.

South. The upshot was that they summoned a meeting and made a truce, and they were to meet in a castle<sup>(3)</sup> in/

in Thurso and discuss [the matter] alone; but an equal number of men from each [party] was to stay outside the castle.

They had a long talk and got on [very] well together. They had not met [face to face] since Earl Rognvaldr had returned from abroad. And in the evening word was passed to Earl Rognvaldr that Earl Harald's men had come thither armed. Earl Haraldr said that no harm would be done. Immediately upon this they heard heavy blows struck outside, and at that they ran out.

There had arrived Thorbjorn Clerk with a large band of men, who, when they met Earl Rognvald's men, at once set upon them without warning. The Earls called out that they were not to fight; then men ran up from the town and separated them. There fell thirteen of Earl Rognvald's servants, and he himself was wounded in the face.

After that their friends set about making peace between them, and the upshot was that they came to terms and renewed their fellowship with oaths. That was four nights before Michaelmas.

Then it was also agreed that they should sail immediately that night out to the Orkneys against Earl Erlendr and Sveinn. They held West<sup>(4)</sup> with thirteen ships into the Pentland Firth, and made for South Ronaldsay, and touched land in Widewall Bay, and went ashore there. Earl Erlendr and his men lay on ship-board in Barthwick, and thence they saw a large band of men on South Ronaldsay, and sent spies after them. Then they learned/

learned that the Earls had come to terms . It was also told them, that they would not be allowed the chance of a cattle-drive<sup>(5)</sup> or any form of getting food, and the intention was to cut them off from supplies there in the [island.]

Then Earl Erlendr and his men took counsel, and he asked their advice. And they agreed one and all to leave it to Sveinn to say what plan it were best to adopt.

1154.  
Septr.28.

Now Sveinn decided that they would sail that very night over to Caithness, adding that they had not strength [enough] to deal with both [the Earls] there in the Isles. He spread the rumour among the people that they meant to sail to the Hebrides and stay there that winter.

It was Michaelmas Eve when they sailed into the Firth. But as soon as they reached Caithness, they overran the inhabited parts, and held a great cattle-drive, and took them aboard their ships. There was a gale blowing and foul weather; and the Firth was nearly always impassable; But as soon as the wind slackened, Sveinn sent men in a boat from the Ness across [with the tale] that Earl Erlendr had had a great cattle-drive in Caithness and that they lay ready to sail to the Hebrides as soon as they got a fair wind.

Fl.

And when this piece of news came to the ears of Earl Rognvaldr in the Isles, he called a Council of War<sup>(6)</sup> and spoke to his men. He bade them be wary and keep a good look-out, and lie every night aboard ship; - "for I expect Sveinn at any moment, the more so when he has spread rumours that he means to sail away."

In/

1154.  
Winter.

In the beginning of winter Sveinn and his men sailed out of Thurso, and turned West along the coast of Scotland. They had seven ships, all large and well-manned. They rowed all the time.

Now when they had come some distance away from the Ness, spies of Earl Rognvald's went out to the Isles and informed him of what they had done. The Earls then moved their ships to Scapa, and Earl Rognvaldr desired them to lie aboard ship for a time.

When Sveinn and his men came about as far West as Ru Stoer, Sveinn remarked that they need not torment themselves with rowing any longer, and then bade them turn about ship, and hoist their sails. This order seemed to the men rather an absurd one. But yet it was done as Sveinn wished. (¶) And when they had veered round, the swift snake-ships (§) at once sped forward before a following wind; and their voyage was without incident until they came to Walls in the Orkneys. There they learned that the Earls lay off Scapa with fourteen ships, below [Knarston]. Erlendr the Younger was now there, and Eirikr Stay-trickster, and many other men of rank. Thorbjorn Clerk had sailed East into the Firth to Paplay to Hakon the Elder his kinsman by marriage; Thorbjorn was then married to his daughter Ingigerthr.

Fl.

1154.  
Octr.24.

It was four nights before Simon's Mass, when Sveinn gave his decision that he would attack the Earls that night. But that seemed to the men a somewhat rash proceeding, against such heavy odds. [But] Sveinn would have his way. And so it was, for the Earl too was rather eager for it.

Fl.

That/

That night there came on a blizzard of melting sleet. Earl Rognvaldr now left his ship and made for his ~~house~~<sup>hall</sup> in Orphir; he saw no reason for danger. He had six men with him. They reached Knarston in [the midst of] the storm. There lived Botolfr Bungle, an Icelander and a good skald. He asked Earl Rognvaldr to stay with him over the night, and he had much to do to persuade him. They went in, and their clothes were pulled off them. They lay down to sleep, while Botolfr was to keep watch.

On that same night, Earl Erlendr and his followers made the attack on Earl Haraldr and his men, coming up without warning so that they were not aware of them until they heard the war-cry. Then they leapt to their weapons, and defended themselves like men. There was great slaughter, and the attack ended by Earl Haraldr leaping ashore, when there were five men left alive on the ship. There fell Bjarni, brother to Erlendr the Younger, a man of rank, and a hundred men with him, while many were wounded. All the men leapt ashore and fled inland. Few were killed among Earl Erlend's followers; and the Earl took there the fourteen ships which the Earls had, and all the booty that was in them.

When most of the work was done, they learned that Earl Rognvaldr had left his ship that night, and gone up to Knarston. [And thither they went]. Bondi Botolfr was out in front of his door when they came up, and greeted them in friendly fashion.

They asked if Earl Rognvaldr were there.

Botolfr said that he had been there that night.

But/

ship, and But they began to bluster and demanded to know where he was at that moment, and said that he must know.

Botolfr stretched his arm up behind the farm-yard, and spoke a verse:

"The Prince goes a-fowling

At the foot of the hill.

Skilful his archers!

'Tis death for the heathcock.

Bows are bent keenly

When the Wound-snake Wielders

Meet with the moor-fowl.

The Chieftain defends

The land with the sword."

The Earl's men ran full tilt out of the yard, and each thought he would have the best of it if he ran fastest and was the first to catch the Earl. But Botolfr went in and awoke the Earl, and told him what had happened during the night, and also what the Earl's men were doing. He and his men then leapt up and got into their clothes, and at once set off for the Earl's <sup>hall</sup> ~~house~~ in Orphir. And when they got there, Earl Haraldr was there before them in hiding. They immediately set sail for Caithness each in his own boat, one with three men, and the other with four. All their men made their way to Caithness as they got the chance of a passage.

[Earl] Erlendr and Sveinn took all the ships of the Earls and a great deal of other property. Sveinn Asleif's son got them to allot to him as his share all the valuables of Earl Rognvaldr which were taken from his ship/

332. Fl. ship, and sent all over to Caithness to the Earl. Sveinn urged Earl Erlendr to lay his ships out in Walls and lie at that part of the Firth, (9) where they might see the approach of a fleet as soon as it left the Ness; he thought it a good point from which to launch an attack, if they chanced to cross.

332. Fl. But [Earl] Erlendr, at the instigation of his followers, decided to sail North to Damsay; and there they spent the days drinking in a large hall, but lashed their ships together every evening and slept on board them every night.

332. Fl. It was [five] nights before Christmas when  
1154. Sveinn Asleif's son went East to Sandwick to Sigrithr his  
Decr. 20. kinswoman; he was to settle a quarrel between her and a neighbour of hers called Bjorn. But before he set off, he advised Earl Erlendr to sleep on board ship by night, and be none the less wary although he was not with him. Sveinn spent one night at Sigrithr his kinswoman's house.

332. Gils was the name of a tenant of Sveinn's, and a good friend of his. He asked Sveinn to spend a night at his house [and discuss his affairs]. He had had some ale brewed, and wished to feast Sveinn with it. When Sveinn and his men arrived at Gils's, it was told them that Earl Erlendr had not gone aboard ship the evening [before]. And immediately Sveinn heard that, he sent Margathr Grim's son and two other men to the Earl, and bade him give heed to his advice, although he had not done so the night before. - "But methinks 'tis unlikely  
332. "that I shall be this Earl's Councilor-~~[in chief]~~ much  
Fl. "longer."  
332. (11)

Margathr/

332. Fl. Margathr and his comrades went to Earl [Erlendr] and delivered Sveinn's message.

The Earl's men said that Sveinn was a strange fellow; they said that sometimes he thought nothing too dangerous, but sometimes he was so scared that he did not know [how to look after] himself or others. They declared that they would sleep in peace ashore and would not go to the ships.

332. Fl. The Earl said that it would be as Sveinn had told them before. And the upshot was that the Earl went on board [his] ship with twenty[-four] men; but the rest lay in the ~~house~~<sup>hall</sup>.

Margathr and his companions lay [on board Sveinn's ship] in another bay<sup>(12)</sup> a short distance away.

1154.  
Decr. 21. That very night, Earl Rognvaldr, Earl Haraldr and their followers came unawares upon Earl Erlendr so

332. Fl. that the sentries who kept watch on the island [and on the ship] were not aware of them until they climbed up on to the ship. There was a man called Ormr, and another Ufi. They were in the after-cabin<sup>( )</sup> of [Erlend's] ship. This Ufi jumped up, meaning to waken the Earl, but could not rouse him, so dead drunk was he. Ufi caught the Earl up in his arms, and leapt overboard with him into a dinghy that floated alongside. But Ormr leapt from the shp on the other side, and he got safely to land. [But] Earl Erlendr was killed, and most of the other men who were in the ship.

332. Fl. Margathr and his companions awoke [during the night] with the battle-cry, and they [cut their hawsers], took/

took to their oars, and rowed round the point. Now the full moon was shining brightly, and they saw that the Earls were now making off. They now felt fairly certain that the tables had been turned upon them. Then they rowed away, and went first to Rendall<sup>(13)</sup>; but they sent men to Sveinn to tell him what they had seen.

332. Fl.

Earl Haraldr was for giving peace to [Earl] Erlend's men, but Earl Rognvaldr wished to wait first [to see] whether his body would be found [or whether he had escaped].

332.

1154.

Decr. 23.

Earl [Erlend's] body was found two nights before Christmas. A spear-shaft was seen sticking up out of a heap of sea-weed, and when a search was made, the spear was stuck through the Earl. His body was borne to Church,<sup>(14)</sup> and peace given to his men and likewise to four of Sveinn's servants who were taken.

332. Fl.

There was a man called John, and he was nicknamed Wing; he was son of the sister of John Wing who has been mentioned before.<sup>(15)</sup> John had been with Hakon the Elder and [had] got his ~~sister~~ with child; and he then ran away on a viking cruise with Anakol. But now he was a follower of Earl Erlend's, although <sup>he</sup> had not taken part in the fight.

332. Fl.

All Earl Erlend's men made their way to Kirk-wall and took sanctuary in [St.] Magnus Cathedral. The Earls went thither, and a meeting to discuss terms of peace was held [in the Cathedral]. John Wing did not get pardon from the Earls until he promised to take the woman into lawful wedlock.<sup>(16)</sup> All men there swore oaths/

343 | 332.

oaths of allegiance to the Earls; and they settled up affairs rather easily.

John Wing bound himself over into the service of Earl Haraldr and became his steward. (14)

CHAPTER 95.

SVEINN KILLS ERLENDR.

After the death of Earl Erlendr, Sveinn Asleif's son went to Rendall and found there Margathr [and his men], and they were able to tell him the whole story of what had happened at Damsay.

After that Sveinn and his company sailed to Rousay and got there at flood-tide. There they took ashore all the ships' tackle and put it in a place of safety. The men were then billeted among the inhabitants, and spies were sent out to keep an eye on what the Earls and other men of importance were about.

Sveinn climbed up the hill there with five men, and went down the other side to the sea, and in the darkness stole up to a farmhouse. [There] they heard a great babel of voices. In the house were that father and son, Thorfinnr and Ogmundr, and Erlendr, a kinsman of theirs by marriage. (15) This man was laying forth before father and son how he had given Earl Erlendr his death-blow, while they all thought they had fought valiantly.

[And when Sveinn hears that, he runs into the house upon them and his followers after him. Sveinn was/

1154.  
Dec. 22-25.  
325.  
Fl.

Fl.

Fl.

325 | 332.

was quickest and dealt Erlendr his death-blow on the spot. But they made Thorfinnr prisoner and took him with them, while Ogmundr was slightly wounded.

Sveinn and his men sailed to Tingwall; there lived Helgi, Sveinn's uncle; and they stayed there in hiding for the beginning of Christmas.<sup>(2)</sup>

1154.  
Christmas.

Earl Rognvaldr sailed to Damsay at Christmas, but Earl Haraldr stayed behind in Kirkwall. Earl Rognvaldr sent men to Tingwall to Helgi, and bade him tell his kinsman Sveinn, if he had any idea where he was, that the Earl wished to invite him to his house for Christmas, and added that he would do his best to make peace between him and Earl Haraldr.

Fl.

And when this message came to Sveinn he sailed to see Earl Rognvaldr with five men, and he stayed with him right through Christmas [on friendly terms].

Now after Christmas, the meeting to settle terms of peace was arranged between Sveinn and the Earls; there they were to put an end to all the differences that had not been settled up to that date. And when they met, Earl Rognvaldr did his level best to make terms of peace between Earl Haraldr and Sveinn. But most men who were neither friends nor kinsmen of Sveinn's kept putting difficulties in the way. These men said that there would always be trouble from Sveinn, unless he were banished from the Isles.

But a settlement [was made] that Sveinn should pay a gold mark<sup>(3)</sup> to each of the Earls, and give up half of his lands and his good warship.

To this decision Sveinn replied: "This settlement will hold best if I am not treated disrespectfully"

Earl/

Earl Rognvaldr would not take the payment from Sveinn, saying that he did not wish to do him ill, and declares that he set greater store on his friendship than on his property.

After the settlement Earl Haraldr sailed to Gairsay to Sveinn's house, and dealt there rather wastefully with his corn and other stores.

Now when Sveinn got word of it, he brought the matter before Earl Rognvaldr and said it was a breach of the terms of peace and declared that he would go home and see after his property.

Earl Rognvaldr said: "Stay with me, Sveinn, and "I shall send word to the Earl and put thy case before "him for his consideration. But I do not wish thee to "pick a quarrel with Earl Haraldr, for thou wouldst find "him a hard man to deal with, - mighty man as thou art, "and bold."

But Sveinn would brook no hindrance, and sailed with nine men in a cutter to Gairsay, and reached it late in the evening. They saw a fire in the bake-house. Sveinn went up to it. He wished them to take a faggot<sup>(4)</sup> and set it to the hall, and burn the house and the Earl in it.<sup>(5)</sup>

There was a man called Sveinn, son of Black-Kari. He was the man of most weight among those who were with Sveinn. He strongly dissuaded him from this and said it was possible that the Earl was not in the house; and though he were there, he said that they would be refusing egress to his wife and daughters, and declared it would never do to burn them inside.

Sveinn and his men then went to the [main-] door/

door, and in so that they faced the door of the hall. The men who were in the room then sprang up and shut the door. Sveinn and his men now saw that the Earl was not in the house. (6) But those who were inside gave up the defence and surrendered their weapons to Sveinn and his men, and all went out unarmed. And Sveinn gave peace to all the Earl's servants. Sveinn ran off all his ale, and took away his wife and his daughters. He asked his wife Ingirithr where Earl Haraldr was, but she would not tell.

Said Sveinn: "Don't speak then, and point [him] out to us."

She would not do that [either]; she was a kinswoman of the Earl's.

Sveinn gave up some of the weapons [to their owners] when they came to the ship. But when [all] this got about, there was an end to the peace-settlement between the Earls.

Earl Haraldr had gone to a small island (7) to hunt hares. Sveinn held towards Eynhallow. (8) It is an island with cliffs towards the sea, and [there is] a large cave in the cliff and the sea rises above the cave mouth at flood-tide. (9)

When Earl Harald's servants got their weapons from Sveinn and his men, they at once went to find Earl Haraldr and told him of their encounter with Sveinn. The Earl immediately had his ship launched, and egged them on to row after him, - "and let us now fight out to the bitter end."

Then they began to row after them, and they each/

each spied the other and recognised one another. And when Sveinn saw that the Earl and his men made upon him, Sveinn said: "We must set about finding ourselves some plan, for I have no mind to fall foul of him with matters so hot between us<sup>(10)</sup> and the odds probably against me. The plan we shall take," says he, "is to sail to the cave and then see what turn our fortunes will take."

Thus did Sveinn and his men. They reached the cave at ebb-tide. They pulled the boat up [high and dry], for the cave sloped up into the cliff. [Then] the sea rose above the cave-mouth.

Earl Haraldr and his men sailed all day round the island in search of them, and did not find them; and they saw no ship sail away from the island. They were much surprised at this; they thought it unlikely that Sveinn could have foundered. They sailed round and round the island in search of [the boat], and, as was to be expected, did not find it.

The most they could make of it was that Sveinn and his men must have sailed to other islands. Then they rowed in search of him where they thought likeliest.

Immediately after the Earl rowed away the sea fell below the cave's mouth. Sveinn and his men had heard the talk of the Earl and his men. Sveinn left his boat behind in the cave, but they took an old merchant-ship belonging to the monks in the island,<sup>(11)</sup> and made for Sanday. They landed there, but pushed out the merchant-ship, and it drifted about from shore to shore until it broke up. And then Sveinn and his men went up into the/

the island, and came to a house that was called Völunes ( )  
 There dwelt a man called Barthr, a kinsman of Sveinn's.  
 332 | Fl. They called | him out stealthily, and Sveinn said that he  
 wished to stay with him.

Barthr said that he might do as he liked; -  
 "but I dare not have thee here except in hiding."

They went in, and were [left] alone in a part  
 of the house with only a wicker partition between them  
 and the rest of the household. There was a concealed  
 door in the room Sveinn and his men were in, and it was  
 loosely filled up with stones.

O. That evening [there] arrived John Wing Earl  
 O. Harald's steward, and with him six[of Earl Harald's men].  
 Bondi Barthr welcomed him cordially; and large fires  
 were kindled for them and they baked themselves in front  
 of them. (13) John was much excited and told the whole  
 tale of what had happened between the Earls and Sveinn.  
 He laid much blame on Sveinn, and said he was a truce-  
 breaker and true to no man. - "He has already made peace  
 "with Earl Haraldr, and then wants to go after him and  
 burn a house over his head." And he said that there  
 would never be peace in the land until Sveinn was driven  
 out of it.

Bondi Barthr and John's retainers tried to  
 speak up for Sveinn.

After that John took to blaming Earl Erlendr,  
 and said it was no great loss when he was killed. He  
 was such an overbearing man, he said, that no one's head  
 was safe under his rule.

And when Sveinn heard that, he could not stand  
 it/

it, and caught up his weapons and rushed at the secret door and heaved out the stones. This made a great clatter. Sveinn meant to dash up in front of the hall-door. John was sitting [in beside the fire] in his shirt and linen pants; and when he heard Sveinn, he lost no time in tying on his shoes, and ran from the hearth outside and right away from the farm. Now the night was pitch dark, and it was keen frost. During the night he came to another farm. And his feet were much frost-bitten, so that several toes dropped off.

At the request of Bondi Barthr Sveinn gave quarter to John's retainers. Sveinn stayed there that night, but next morning they put off in a cutter which belonged to Barthr and which he gave to Sveinn.

They now sailed South to Barthwick and remained there beside a cave. By day Sveinn was often in a house<sup>(14)</sup>, and did his drinking there, but at night he slept on board his ship, and thus he guarded himself against his enemies.

## CHAPTER 96.

### OF EARL ROGNVALDR AND SVEINN.

It happened early one morning that Sveinn and his men saw a large warship [sailing from the Mainland] to South Ronaldsay, and Sveinn at once recognised it as Earl Rognvald's ship, which he himself was probably steering. And they put in at the very place where lay the cutter of Sveinn and his men; and five men came ashore from the Earl's ship.

Now/

Now Sveinn and his men were on a cliff and pelted the Earl's men with stones from there. And when the men saw that from the ship, they seized their weapons. But when Sveinn and his men saw that, they ran from the cliff down on to the beach and launched the cutter and jumped into it. The warship had run up on shore, so that it was grounded fast. Sveinn stood up in the cutter, when they rowed out past the warship and held his spear in his hand. And when Earl Rognvaldr saw that, he took his shield and held it before him.

But Sveinn did not throw the spear. And when the Earl saw that they were going to separate, he had the truce-shield(,) held aloft, and asked Sveinn and his men to go ashore. Now when Sveinn saw that, he bade his men make for the land, saying that he was always happiest when he was on good terms with Earl Rognvaldr.

## CHAPTER 97.

### OF EARL ROGNVALDR AND SVEINN.

After that Earl Rognvaldr and Sveinn went ashore, and they had a long talk and got on very well together. And while they sat talking, they saw the sails of Earl Haraldr on his way from Caithness to Walls. And when the ship drew [in under the island](,) Sveinn asked the Earl what plan it were best to adopt. The Earl says that Sveinn should sail over to Caithness at once.

This was in Lent. There and then they [both] left/

1155.  
Lent.  
Fl.

O.

O.

left South Ronaldsay. The Earl sailed to the Mainland, but Sveinn sailed West to Stroma; and Earl Haraldr and his men saw the ship, and felt sure it was Sveinn's. They immediately put out into the Firth after them. And when Sveinn and his men saw that the Earl was making in their direction, they left the boat, and went ashore and hid themselves.

Now when Earl Haraldr came to Stroma, they saw Sveinn's boat, and suspected that the men's homes must be fairly near, and so he and his men would not land.

There was a man named Amundi, who was the son of Hnefi. He was a friend of Earl Harald's, and the uncle of the step-children of Sveinn Asleif's son. He acted as go-between, and got them to agree that the same terms of peace should hold as had been made during the winter.

At this point there arose a strong gale of wind, and both parties were compelled to stay there the night; and Amundi got both of them into one bed, Earl Haraldr and Sveinn. In the house there slept many men from both sides.

After this agreement Sveinn sailed over to Caithness, and Earl Haraldr over to the Orkneys. Sveinn heard of a remark of the Earl's, in which he spoke of the agreement as rather loosely made. Sveinn paid little heed to that. He sailed South to Argyll, and spent Easter with his friend Sumarlithi. But Earl Haraldr sailed North to Shetland and stayed there well through the spring.

1155.  
Easter.  
Mar.27-  
Apr.3.

1155.  
Apr.3x.

After Easter Sveinn sailed from the South and met on his voyage two brothers of John Wing; one was called Clumpy-Peter, and the other Blann. Sveinn made them/

them captive and took their property from them, and then brought them ashore. And a gallows was then hewn for them. And when all was ready, Sveinn said that they were to run away up country. He said they were a greater shame to their brother alive than dead. They were out in the open a long time, and were much frost-bitten before they reached a farmhouse.

Sveinn sailed thence to Lewis in the Hebrides, and lived there for a time. But when John Wing learned that Sveinn had captured his brothers, but did not know what he had done with them, he sailed immediately to Eynhallow and there captured Olafr, son of Sveinn Asleif's son, and foster-son of Kolbeinn Lump, and sailed with him to Westray. They came upon Earl Rognvaldr at Rapness; and when the Earl saw Olafr [he] said: "Why art thou here, Olafr?"

He answers: "It is John Wing's doing."

The Earl looked to John and said: "Why hast thou brought Olafr here?"

He answered: "Sveinn has captured my brothers, and I do not know but he may have slain them."

The Earl said: "Take him back as quickly as thou canst, and do not dare to do him any harm, whatever may have befallen thy brothers; for thou wilt not be safe in the Isles from either Sveinn or Kolbeinn if thou touch him."

## CHAPTER 98.

### OF EARL ROGNVALDR.

In spring after Easter Sveinn made ready to leave/

leave the Hebrides, and he had sixty men. He set his course for the Orkneys and came first to Rousay.

There they took the man called Hakon the Elder; he had been with Earl Haraldr at the death of Earl Erlendr. Hakon ransomed himself with three gold marks, and thus freed himself from Sveinn.

O. There in Rousay Sveinn and his men found the ship that the Earls got Sveinn to hand over, and two planks were hewn out. Earl Rognvaldr had had this done, because [no one] would buy the ship from the Earls or accept it as a gift.

O. Sveinn sailed thence to the Mainland and found Earl Rognvaldr in Birsay. The Earl gave him a cordial welcome, and Sveinn was with him [well] through the spring. Earl Rognvaldr said that he had hewn the planks out of the ship because he did not wish him to do any rash deed when he came from the Hebrides.

[Sveinn had fourteen men with him at Earl Rognvald's.] (1)

1155  
May 22.

At Whitsuntide that spring Earl Haraldr came from Shetland, and as soon as he arrived in the Orkneys, Earl Rognvaldr sent men to him to tell him that he wished Sveinn and him to make a compact anew. Then a meeting to discuss terms was fixed for Friday in Holy Week in [St.] Magnus Cathedral. And Earl Rognvaldr went to the meeting with [nothing but] a broad axe, and Sveinn with him. They came to the same terms as they had come to in the winter.

1155  
May 27.

## CHAPTER 99.

OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON.

1155.  
May 27.  
Fl.

Then Earl Rognvaldr gave Earl Haraldr the ship that had belonged to Sveinn, but he gave to Sveinn all the rest that had been made over from him and fell to his share. Earl Rognvaldr and Sveinn stood outside the Cathedral door, while the sail was carried out; it had been laid up in [St.] Magnus Cathedral; and Sveinn frowned somewhat when they carried out the sail.

May 28.

On the following Saturday, when **D**ivine **S**ervice at **N**ones was over, Earl Harald's men came to Sveinn Asleif's son and said that he would like Sveinn to come and have a talk with him. Sveinn consulted Earl Rognvaldr in the matter; and he gave Sveinn little encouragement to go, saying that he did not know if either of them were to be trusted.

But none the less Sveinn went, and five others with him.

Earl [Haraldr] sat in a little sitting-room on a cross-dais, and Thorbjorn Clerk by his side; several other men sat beside the Earl.

[They greeted him respectfully and he returned the greeting graciously. They made room for Sveinn to sit down beside him.] They sat for a time drinking.

After that Thorbjorn went [out], and Sveinn and his men remarked that they had their doubts about what the Earl

was up to. A little [later] Thorbjorn came back, and

gave to Sveinn a scarlet kirtle, a cloak, [and a sword];

he said he did not know whether he could call them a gift/

O. gift, for these valuable articles [had been] taken from  
 O. Sveinn the winter [before]. Sveinn accepted these  
 O. gifts [gladly].

Earl Haraldr gave Sveinn the warship that had belonged to him and half of his lands and estates; and he bade Sveinn stay with him and said that their friendship would never be broken.

Sveinn took this well, and that very night he went and told Earl Rognvaldr what had passed between Earl Haraldr [and himself]. Earl Rognvaldr was well pleased with the affair and bade Sveinn take good care not to fall out with him again.

Em.

## CHAPTER 100.

OF THE EARLS.

1155.

Fl.

O. A little later the three chiefs, Sveinn, Thorbjorn [and] Eirikr, resolved to go a-harrying. They  
 O. all sailed West to the Scilly Isles, and there won a  
 June 9. great victory at Port St. Mary on [St.] Columba's Day and took immense plunder. After that they returned to  
 O. the Orkneys [the very best of friends].

After the peace-settlement between Earl Rognvaldr and Earl Haraldr and Sveinn Asleif's son, the Earls were always together; and Earl Rognvaldr had the chief say in matters, but they were very good friends.

When they came back from the Scilly Isles, Thorbjorn Clerk went to Earl Haraldr and became his Councillor. [But] Sveinn went home to Gairsay and spent/

O.

O.  
1155.  
Winter.

spent [the winter] there with a large following, supporting himself with his spoil of war as well as with the other stores he had there in the Isles. He was most attached to Earl Rognvaldr. Every summer he spent a-harrying.

It was said that Thorbjorn Clerk did not improve relations between Earl Rognvaldr and Earl Haraldr.

There was one of Earl Rognvald's Bodyguard and a friend of his called Thorarinn Bottle-nose; he was always with the Earl. There was a friend and follower of Thorbjorn Clerk's called Thorkell. Thorarinn and Thorkell had a quarrel over their drink in Kirkwall, and Thorkell wounded Thorarinn and then escaped to Thorbjorn. Thorarinn's messmates followed up Thorkell, but Thorbjorn and he defended themselves from a loft. The Earls were told of it, and they came to separate them.

Thorbjorn did not wish Earl Rognvaldr to give judgment in the quarrel, and complained of the hue and cry [being raised in his house]. (1) But when Thorarinn had recovered from his wound, he killed Thorkell on his way to church. Thorarinn dashed into the church, but Thorbjorn and his men pursued him and his band of followers. Earl Rognvaldr got word of it, and he came up with a large body of men, and asked whether Thorbjorn meant to break into the church.

Thorbjorn said that it was not the business of the church to shelter those that were in it. Earl Rognvaldr said that for the present the church was inviolable; and Thorbjorn was pushed away from the church [-door]. There was no settlement made in the matter. Thorbjorn went over to Caithness and lived there for a time/

O.

time. There was no love lost between them, for Thorbjorn had done much mischief, both in treatment of women and in man-slaying.

Thorbjorn sailed secretly out to the Orkneys in a cutter with thirty men and landed at Scapa. He walked to Kirkwall with three men. In the evening he rushed all alone into an ale-house where Thorarinn was sitting drinking. Thorbjorn hewed him his death-blow on the spot. Then he dashed out [getting] well away in the darkness. For this Earl Rognvaldr made Thorbjorn Clerk an outlaw over all his realm.

Thorbjorn went over to Caithness and stayed in hiding with Hosvir his brother-in-law; he was nicknamed "the Strong". His wife was Ragnhildr, Thorbjorn's sister. Their son was Stephen Councillor, a close follower of Thorbjorn's. (2) A little later Thorbjorn went to see Malcolm King of Scots, and was with him [a long time] in high favour. With the King of Scots was that man called Gilli Odran; he was a man of good family, but overbearing in the extreme. He incurred the wrath of the King of Scots for crime and man-slaying which he had committed within his realm. Gilli escaped to the Orkneys, and the Earls took him in. Gilli Odran lived [usually] in Caithness and had the stewardship of the Earls [there].

There was a bondi of rank in Caithness called Helgi; he was a friend of Earl Rognvald's. Gilli Odran and he quarrelled about the stewardship, and Gilli/

Gilli Odran went to him and slew him. But after the slaying he went West to the West Coast of Scotland and the chief called Sumarlithi the Freeman took him in; he had the realm in Argyll on [the West coast of Scotland]. Sumarlithi's wife was Ragnhildr, daughter of Olafr Snippet, King of the Hebrides. [Ragnhild's mother was Ingibjorg, daughter of Earl Hakon Paul's son]. The following were their children: King Dougal, Rognvaldr and Angus; this was called the Dale-Dwellers Family.

O.

1156.

Summer.

O.

1156.  
Summer.

Earl Rognvaldr summoned to him Sveinn Asleif's son before he went a-harrying; and when they met, Earl Rognvaldr bade him keep an eye on Gilli Odran if he came across him.

Sveinn said he did not know what his luck would be in that.

## CHAPTER 101.

SVEINN KILLS SUMARLITHI.1156.  
Summer.

After that Sveinn went on a viking cruise with five warships. And when he came round West off the West coast of Scotland, Sveinn heard that Sumarlithi the Freeman had gone aboard ship and meant to go on a viking cruise. He had seven ships, of which Gilli Odran steered one, and he had gone into a sea-loch after a force of men that had not turned up.

As soon as Sveinn got word of Sumarlithi, he

O.

[went/

[went after him], joined battle with him, and there was a hard fight. And in that battle there fell Sumarlithi the Freeman and many men with him. At this point Sveinn noticed that Gilli Odran was not there. Sveinn then sailed in search of him and found him in Loch Gleann Dubh; and there he killed Gilli Odran and fifty men with him. (1)

After that Sveinn went on [his] viking cruise and [came] home in autumn as his custom was. And when [he] came home he at once went to see Earl Rognvaldr, who was well pleased with [Sveinn's] exploits [during the summer].

1156.  
Autumn.

O.

O.

Ann.

## CHAPTER 102.

### OF EARL ROGNVALDR AND EARL HARALDR.

F1.

It was the custom of the Earls nearly every summer to go over to Caithness and up into the forests there to hunt red-deer and reindeer. (1)

1156-1158.

Thorbjorn Clerk was with Malcolm King of Scots, but sometimes he went down to Caithness and lived in hiding with his friends. He had three friends in Caithness in whom he put the greatest trust. One was Hosvir his brother-in-law; another Lifolfr, who lived in Thurso Dale; the third was Hallvarthr Dufa's son who lived [at Forsie in Calder<sup>Dale</sup>], which projects off Thurso Dale. These were bosom friends of his.

O.

## CHAPTER 103.

THE DEATH OF EARL ROGNVALDR.

1158.  
Augt.  
Fl.

When Rognvaldr had been Earl for twenty-two years<sup>(1)</sup> after the kidnapping of Earl Paul, the Earls went over to Caithness in late summer as their custom was. And when they came to Thurso they heard some rumour that Thorbjorn was up in Thurso Dale in hiding with not a few men, and that he meant to make an attack [on them] from there if he got the chance.

Augt. 19.

The Earls then mustered forces, and set off with a company of one hundred. Twenty were mounted, while the rest went on foot.

In the evening they set off up the dale and got lodging [for the night there in some "erg" or "setr" as we call them].<sup>(2)</sup> That evening when they were sitting by the fire, [Haraldr had a fit of sneezing.

O.

Then said Earl Rognvaldr: "Sneezing means luck "to our expedition."

"Kingsman", said Haraldr, "'tis true if I sneeze "no further."<sup>(3)</sup>

Augt. 20.

In the morning they marched from there<sup>(4)</sup> and that day Earl Rognvaldr rode usually in front, and [with him] a man called Asolfr, [a Norwegian, son of Gunni of Agder]. Another with him was called Jomarr, a kinsman of his. Five of them rode together on up [to] [and] along Calder Dale,<sup>(5)</sup>  
~~the valley of Loch Calder~~

O.

O.

O.

O.

And when [they] came to the farm [called Forsie],<sup>(6)</sup> Bondi [Hallvarthr] was up on a stack of oats building it, while his servants were forking for him.

Earl/

Earl Haraldr and his men rode a little to the rear.

Now when Hallvarthr saw that it was Earl Rognvaldr, he greeted him by his name, shouting very loudly, and asked the news; and he could have been heard well enough had he been even further away.

It was a short distance from the dwelling-house, and the house stood on a high piece of rising ground, (7) and to reach the farmhouse they had to go through a narrow lane between two high walls. (8) In this house Thorbjorn Clerk sat drinking.

O. The lane led up to the end of the house near the gable, and there was a [main-]door [in the house, but there was another] in the gable which was loosely filled up with stones. (9)

When Thorbjorn and his fellows heard the sound of voices and [Hallvarthr] greeting Earl Rognvaldr and his companions, they immediately leapt to their arms and heaved out the stones from the concealed door and jumped out. Thorbjorn ran round the end of the gable and on to the wall at the side of the lane. (10) Just at that moment Earl Rognvaldr and his companions came up to the [main-]door. In a trice Thorbjorn struck at the Earl. But Asolfr thrust his arm in the way, and the sword took off his hand. Then [the sword] came down on the Earl's chin and gave it a great gash.

O.

When Asolfr [lost the hand] he said: "May they serve the Earl better who have more gifts to thank him for." (11)

He was then eighteen years of age, and had but lately come into the Earl's service.

Earl/

O. bog in Earl Rognvaldr tried to dismount when [he] saw Thorbjorn, but his foot stuck fast in the stirrup.

At this point Stephen came up and thrust a spear at the Earl. Then Thorbjorn dealt the Earl another wound; but at the same moment Jomarr drove a spear into Thorbjorn's thigh and the thrust pierced the lower part of the abdomen.

Thorbjorn and his companions then ran round behind the house, and there they had to run round<sup>(12)</sup> a large stretch of rising ground<sup>(12)</sup> towards a wet bog.<sup>(13)</sup> Just then [up] came Earl Haraldr and his men, and their path ~~took~~<sup>led</sup> them ~~such~~ so that they passed opposite to<sup>(14)</sup> Thorbjorn and his men, and each [party] recognised the other.

Then those of the Earl's men who had an inkling of what was afoot said that they should turn aside after Thorbjorn. But Earl Haraldr put them off, and said he would await Earl Rognvald's judgment in the matter, - "for, as you know, Thorbjorn is a close connection of mine by kinship and by many other ties."

O. But Earl Rognvald's men crowded round him [as he lay dying],<sup>(15)</sup> and some time passed before Earl Haraldr learned the real truth. [Thorbjorn and his men] had now reached the bog and crossed the morass that ran along it.<sup>(16)</sup> But at the instigation of the Earl's followers, Earl Haraldr and his men ran over and down<sup>(17)</sup> to the bog, and they met at the morass so that one party was on either side; and Thorbjorn and his men defended [their] side of the gully. There now gathered round him all those men ~~who~~ from the farm who had followed him, and they numbered altogether fifty men.<sup>(18)</sup> They defended themselves stoutly, having a strong position, for<sup>(19)</sup> the morass was both deep and broad, and the bog/

bog in front soaking wet up to its edge; (20) and the only way they could get at them was by hurling spears.

Thorbjorn said that they were not to throw any spears back, and when the shooting died down they began to parley; and Thorbjorn called to Earl Haraldr and spoke as follows:

"This will I ask thee, kinsman, that thou give me  
 "peace. But I shall put this matter entirely in thy hands  
 "for thy sole judgment. I shall spare myself in nothing  
 "within my power that may redound more to thine honour than  
 "[ever] before. I hope also, kinsman, that thou wilt re-  
 "member that there have been quarrels in which thou wouldst  
 "not so far have distinguished between [thy kinsmen] - Earl  
 "Rognvaldr and myself - as to kill me though I had done this  
 "deed - [I mean] when he had thee very much under his thumb (21)  
 "and gave thee no more say in matters than his page-boy. But  
 "I gave thee the finest of gifts and sought to further thy  
 "honour in every way I could. But the deed I have done is a  
 "great crime, and that lies [heavily] upon me; while the  
 "realm [and all the honours that were his have] fallen into  
 "thy hands. Thou mayst also know that Earl Rognvaldr meant  
 "the same fate for me as I have now dealt to him. And I fancy  
 "kinsman, that if luck had willed it that I were dead and  
 "Earl Rognvaldr alive, thou wouldst have made no fuss about  
 "him; and thou wilt make a dead man of me."

Thorbjorn now pled his cause most persuasively and at length. (22) Many men also urged his case and begged peace for him. The upshot was that when [so] many were pleading the Earl began to listen.

Then/  
 Against/

"against. Then Magnus, son of Havarthr Gunni's son, a goethingr and kinsman of the Earl's, took up the tale; he was the man of highest rank among the Earl's men there. He said: Haraldr and his men were standing on the edge of the morass.

"We cannot be giving thee advice, Earl, after such a crime as this. But I shall tell [thee] what popular opinion will be if Thorbjorn is given peace after this deed and after he has dared to tell thee to thy face, in almost every word, that he committed this crime on thy behalf and for thy honour; when it will be an everlasting shame and disgrace to thee and all the Earl's kin if he be not avenged. It is my opinion that Earl Rognvald's friends will believe that thou hast been plotting the Earl's death for a long time, and [only] now has the plot succeeded. Or thinkest thou that he will relieve thee of complicity when he comes to face charges against him; for no one makes answer for thee when he tells thee to thy face that he has done this deed on thy behalf? Or how couldst thou better confirm the truth of [what he may say] than by giving him peace? As for me, my mind is made up that he shall never have peace from me, if any good men and true will follow me - whether thou like it or not."

The same plea was put forward by [Magnus'] brothers, Thorsteinn and Hakon, and by Sveinn Hroald's son. Then they turned away from the Earl and up along the edge of the morass, trying to find a place to cross it. (23)

And when Thorbjorn and his men saw Magnus and his fellows turn up along the gully, Thorbjorn remarked: "Now they must have disagreed in their counsels. The Earl must wish to give me peace, but Magnus must be pleading against/

"against it."

Now while they were discussing this [turn in affairs], Thorbjorn and his men moved away from the gully. Earl Haraldr and his men were standing on the edge of the morass. And when he saw the uselessness of giving peace, he leapt over the morass in full armour; and the morass was 9 ells (13½ feet) wide. (24) His followers leapt after him, and no one made a clean jump; but most of them got hold of the bank and so floundered to land.

O. Thorbjorn's men urged that they should turn [either against the Earl and his men or] against Magnus and his men, and fight it out with them there and then.

Then said Thorbjorn: "My advice is that every man do as he thinks best. But I shall still be for meeting "Earl Haraldr."

The majority were against this, and [wished] rather to make for the woods (25) and save themselves.

Thorbjorn would not take that advice.

O. [And when his followers heard that they fled] from him and tried to save themselves in various ways. And Thorbjorn was left behind with eight men. And when he sees that Earl Haraldr has crossed the gully he goes to meet him and fell on his knees before him and says he brings him his head.

Many of the Earl's men also begged for peace for Thorbjorn.

O. Then the Earl said: "Save thyself, Thorbjorn; I have no heart to slay thee. [But never will I see thee hereafter.]"

Then while they were talking they moved over and down/

down along Alltan Ghuinne. (26) Magnus and his fellows came hard after them. And when the Earl saw that, he said: "Save thyself, Thorbjorn; fight for thee I will not against my own men."

O. Then Thorbjorn and his comrades parted from the  
 O. Earl's company and [went] to some deserted shielings called  
 O. "Asgrim's erg" (Assery). (27) Magnus and his fellows followed  
 O. after Thorbjorn and his companions [when they saw them turn aside], and  
 O. at once set fire to the building. [Yet even then] Thorb-  
 O. jorn and his comrades defended themselves like men. [But]  
 when the building began to cave in with the fire, Thorbjorn  
 and his comrades came out, and every weapon that could reach  
 them was at once brought to bear on them; and they were al-  
 ready much distressed by the fire. There they fell, all  
 the nine brothers-in-arms. (28) And when Thorbjorn's wounds were  
 examined, the intestines had slipped out of the wound that  
 Jomarr had given him.

Earl Haraldr continued his journey down along the dale, (29) but Magnus and his company turned back to Forsie, and laid out Earl Rognvald's body and bore it down to Thurso.

#### CHAPTER 104.

##### THE REMOVAL OF EARL ROGNVALD'S BODY.

1158.  
 Augt. 20.  
 Fl.

Earl Rognvaldr Kali's death-day is five days after the first Assumption of St. Mary in summer. (1)

Earl Haraldr and his men went thence out to the Orkneys/

1192.

Orkneys with the body with a goodly company, (2) and prepared a tomb in [St.] Magnus Cathedral, and it remained there till the time that God revealed his merit with many great miracles, (3) and Bishop Bjarni by leave of the Pope had his relics taken up. (4) There on the stone on which the blood of Earl Rognvaldr had dropped when he lost his life, it may be seen even to-day as fresh as if it were new-shed blood.

Earl Rognvaldr was much mourned, for he was very popular there in the Isles (6) and far and wide elsewhere. He had been a friend in need to many a man, liberal in money matters, equable of temper, steadfast in friendship; skilful in all feats of strength, and a good skald.

He left a daughter, Ingigerthr, an only child, who was married to Eirikr Stay-trickster. Their children were Haraldr the Younger and Magnus Mangi, (7) Rognvaldr and Ingibjorg, Elin, Ragnhildr.

## CHAPTER 105.

O. [OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON].

1158.  
Autumn.  
Fl.

After the death of Earl Rognvaldr, Earl Haraldr took all the Isles under him and made himself sole ruler over them, [and no man gainsaid him]. Earl Haraldr was a great chief, the tallest and strongest of men, [obstinate and hard-hearted]. He married Affrica (Afreka); their children were Henry (Heinrékr) and Hakon, Helena and Margaret

1158-?1171.

When Hakon was a few years old, Sveinn Asleif's son asked for him to foster, and he was brought up at his house/

house. And as soon as he was old enough to take his part with other men, Sveinn took him a-harrying with him every summer, and treated him with all honour.

It was ~~a custom~~ <sup>custom</sup> of Sveinn's at that time to spend the winter at home in Gairsay, and he always kept eighty men there at his own expense. He had a drinking hall so large, that there was not another to match it for size in the Orkneys. (1) Sveinn always had a busy time in spring, and had a great deal of seed sown, and did a great deal of the work himself. But when the work was finished, he went every spring on a viking-cruise, and harried round the coasts of the Hebrides and Ireland, and came home after mid-summer; that he called [his] Spring Viking-cruise. Then he was at home until the grain was cut, and the corn led in. Then he went on a viking-cruise, and did not come home until a month after the beginning of winter; and that he called his Autumn Viking-cruise.

#### CHAPTER 106.

#### [OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON].

It happened on one occasion that Sveinn sailed on a Spring Viking-cruise. There went with him Earl Harald's son, Hakon; they had five rowing ships and all [of them] large. They harried round the Hebrides. People were now so scared of him in the Hebrides, that they buried all their movable property in the earth, or under heaps of stones.

(1) Sveinn sailed right South to the Isle of Man, and was/

was ill off for booty. Thence they sailed out round the coasts of Ireland and harried there. Now when they had come nearly as far South as Dublin, there sailed in from the open sea two ships<sup>(2)</sup> that had come from England and were making for Dublin. They were laden with English broad-cloth; and that was a fine prize.

O. Sveinn and his men bore down on the ships and offered them battle. The Englishmen put up little defence, [until Sveinn boarded the ships. But the Englishmen were all made prisoners]. And they took every article that was in the ships, except that the Englishmen kept the clothes they stood in and some provisions and then sailed [off] with their ships.

O. Now when Sveinn came to the Hebrides they divided the spoil. They sailed from the West with great pomp. [When] they lay in at any harbour they cut a dash by spreading over them awnings of English broad-cloth. And when they sailed into the Orkneys, they sewed the cloth on to the front of the sails so that it looked as if the sails were made wholly of broad-cloth. They called that the "Broad-cloth Cruise."

? 1171.  
Summer. Sveinn sailed home to Gairsay to his farm. He had taken from the ships much wine and English mead. When Sveinn had been at home a short time, he asked Earl Haraldr to pay him a visit and prepared him a feast worthy of the occasion. When Earl Haraldr was at the feast, there was much talk of Sveinn's hospitality.

The Earl said: "I should like thee now, Sveinn, to "leave off harrying. It is still a fine thing to drive "home with a whole waggon. But thou knowest that thou hast "long/

"long supported thyself and thy men with plundering; but  
 "to most men of the sword it comes that they lose their lives  
 "by harrying, if they do not break themselves away from it."

Then answered Sveinn, looking at the Earl, and speaking with a smile he said thus: "That is well spoken, my lord, and in friendly fashion; and it would be good to take sound advice from thee. But some complain that you are not over just men yourselves."

The Earl answered: "I shall have to answer to my own share in the matter. But I spoke just as it occurred to me." ( )

Sveinn said: "Thy intention is surely good, my lord. And so it shall be, that I shall give up harrying, for I find that I am growing old, and my strength is failing with wet work and warring. I shall now go on my Autumn Viking-cruise, and I should like it to be not less glorious than was [my] Spring-cruise. But after that my viking-cruising shall be over."

The Earl answers: "It is hard to tell, comrade, which will come first, death or lasting fame."

After that the subject dropped. Earl Haraldr departed from the feast, going away with seemly gifts. Sveinn and he parted the best of friends.

#### CHAPTER 107.

#### THE HARRYING OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON.

(1) Soon after this Sveinn made ready for his viking-cruise; he had seven warships and all [of them] large.

Hakon/

Hakon, Earl Harald's son, accompanied Sveinn on the voyage.

First they held South to the Hebrides, and got little plunder there. Thence they sailed South round the coasts of Ireland, and harried there far and wide. They sailed right South to Dublin, and arrived there quite without warning, so that the inhabitants were not aware of them until they had got into the town. There they took much booty. There they made prisoners of the chief men in the town. The upshot of the affair was that they gave up the town into the hands of Sveinn and promised to pay him as much money as he thought fit to demand of them; and Sveinn was to quarter his men in the town and have rule over it. The men of Dublin swore oaths to him to keep these terms.

They went to their ships in the evening. But in the morning Sveinn was to go to the town and take off the gold, garrison the town, and take hostages from the townsmen.

Now it must be told what went on in the town that night. The chief men in the town held counsel together and discussed the ugly position into which they had fallen. They thought it hard that their town should come into the hands of the Orkney-men, and of all men that one in particular whom they knew to be the most unjust man in the British Isles. They agreed to play false with Sveinn if they could. They resolved to dig large pits in front of the gates of the town and in various other places where Sveinn and his men must pass, while men hid in the houses near by with weapons. They laid branches over the pits so that they would fall in as soon as a man's weight came upon them. Then they strewed straw over [them], so that the pits/

Andrew divided his hereditary estates between them. In the pits could not be seen. And so they awaited the morrow.

Summer next after Sveinn met his death they built a partition across the great drinking-hall that he had owned in Galtsay. Andrew Sveinn's son married Pritha, daughter of

Hulbeinn Lump, a CHAPTER 108. Bishop of the Orkney par.

THE DEATH OF SVEINN ASLEIF'S SON.

Next morning Sveinn and his men arose and armed themselves. Then they marched to the town.

And when they came inside the town-gates, the men of Dublin formed two lines, on either side of the gates, [and let them pass on] to the pits. Sveinn and his men did not see [this trap] and ran into the pits. In a trice the townsmen dashed before the town-gates, and some to the pits, and brought their weapons to bear on Sveinn and his men. It was difficult for them to defend themselves, and Sveinn lost his life there in the pit, and all who had entered the town [with him].

It was said that Sveinn died the last of all his fellows, and before [his death] said these words: "Be it known to all men, whether or no I die this day, that I belong to the Bodyguard of Saint Rognvaldr the Earl, and now I mean to put my trust in that place where he is with God." (1)

Sveinn's men went straight back to the ships and sailed away, and their voyage was without incident until they came to the Orkneys.

Now is Sveinn's story ended. And it is the judgment of men that he has been (2) the biggest man in every way in the British Isles, both in days present and days past, among men ~~who had no higher title of honour~~ <sup>who were not of higher rank</sup> than he. (3)

After the death of Sveinn, his sons Olafr and Andrew/

Andrew divided his hereditary estates between them. In the summer next after Sveinn met his death they built a partition across the great drinking-hall that he had owned in Gairsay. Andrew Sveinn's son married Fritha, daughter of Holbeinn Lump, sister to Bjarni, Bishop of the Orkney men. (6)

## CHAPTER 109.

OF EARL HARALDR AND HIS SONS.

Fl. Earl Haraldr now ruled the Orkneys and was the greatest of chiefs. He afterwards married Gormflath (Hvarfloð), daughter of Malcolm, Earl of Moray; their children were Thorfinnr, David and John, Gunnhildr, Herborga and Langlif.

1188. When Bishop William the Second was dead, Bjarni, son of Kolbeinn Lump, was consecrated Bishop after him; and he was the greatest of chiefs, and a near friend of Earl Harald's. Bishop Bjarni had many family connections in the Isles.

1162x1184. The sons of Eirikr Stay-trickster were Haraldr the Younger and Magnus Mangi and Rognvaldr. These brothers went East to Norway to see King Magnus Erling's son, and he gave Haraldr the title of "Earl", and half the Isles, just as his mother's father Saint Rognvaldr the Earl had held them. Earl Haraldr the Younger sailed out West, and with him Sigurthr Minim, son of Ivarr Blemish. Ivar's mother was the daughter of Havarthr Gunni's son; this Ivarr fell

1179. at Kalvskindsageren with Erlingr Crick-neck. Sigurthr Minim was young, handsome, and a great dandy. Magnus Mangi remained with the king and fell with him at Sogn. (1)

1184.  
Jan. 15.

They/

1198.

They made land first in Shetland, and sailed thence to Caithness, and so went up into Scotland to see William, King of Scots. Earl Haraldr begged William to give him the half of Caithness which Earl Rognvaldr had had. This the king granted him. Thence Earl Haraldr went over and down to Caithness, and mustered a force there. Then came to him Lifolfr Bald-pate his kinsman by marriage; he had with him a large company of men of rank who were his kinsmen. Lifolf's wife was Ragnhildr, sister to the Earl. The latter was called Earl Haraldr "the Younger", and Earl Maddadh's son, "the Elder". Lifolfr was the man of most weight among all the Earl's followers.

They sent envoys out to the Orkneys to Earl Haraldr the Elder, and asked him to give up half of the Isles as the King had granted them to Earl Haraldr the Younger. But when this message was brought before the Earl, he flatly refused on any terms to partition his realm. Lifolfr Bald-pate was among the envoys, (2) and the Earl abused him roundly before he departed.

After this Earl Haraldr the Elder mustered forces and got a large following. Earl Haraldr the Younger and his followers were in Caithness, and had gathered a fair number there. When they heard that Earl Haraldr the Elder was raising forces, they again sent Lifolfr North over the Pentland Firth to get information about the army. He ran in from the East to South Ronaldsay, and there climbed up a hill; and he found there three watchmen of Earl Haraldr the Elder, and two they slew, but one they took with them for information. Then Lifolfr saw the Earl's army also, and/

and he had many ships, and most of them large.

Lifolfr then turned back down the hill to his ship and told his fellows what he had learned. He said that Earl Haraldr had a host so large that it would be hopeless to try conclusions with them. - "But my advice is," says Lifolfr, "that we sail this very day North to Thurso, (3) and we must gather a large army there today. "But if you wish to cross swords with Earl Haraldr, then "it is a very risky matter, however you set about it."

Then said Sigurthr Minim: "An unlucky voyage has the Earl's kinsman made over the Pentland Firth if he has left his heart behind him." - And he added that it was a sorry look-out if every man became chicken-hearted as soon as he saw the host of Haraldr the Elder.

Lifolfr answered: "'Tis hard to tell, Sigurthr, "where every man will carry his heart when there is need "of it. At such time as I run away from Haraldr the "Younger, I reckon that you noble fellows will be hard "put to it to stick it out."

But nothing came of their sailing to Thurso. And a little later they saw Earl Harald's fleet sailing out from South Ronaldsay. Then they made ready for battle.

Em. Earl Haraldr [the Elder] went ashore and  
[drew up] his army; he had much the larger force.  
Em. Sigurthr Minim and Lifolfr [drew up] the army of the  
younger Earl.

Sigurthr Minim was in a scarlet-red kirtle, and he tucked the skirts under his belt [at the front]. Some remarked/

remarked that he ought to do the same at the back. He said he would not tuck it up, - "for I shall not be going backwards to-day."

They took each of them his wing of the army. And when they had drawn up their forces, the battle began, and it was a stern one. In the army of Earl Haraldr the Elder were the hardiest of men, who were many of them men of stubborn mettle and exceedingly well armed, as were the kinsmen of the Bishop and many other chiefs in the Earl's host.

After the battle had gone on for a time, Sigurthr Minim fell; and he had fought sturdily and well. Lifolfr was the most outstanding of all men in attack. The Caithness men say<sup>(4)</sup> that he broke three times through the ranks of Earl Haraldr the Elder; but yet at last he fell in that battle in high renown.<sup>(5)</sup>

When they had both fallen, Lifolfr and Sigurthr Minim, the army of the younger Earl broke into flight. Earl Haraldr the Younger was killed beside some peat-trenches. That very night, where his blood had fallen, there was seen a great light. They<sup>(6)</sup> call the Earl a very Saint, and there is now a church where he fell; and he was buried there in the Ness. And countless miracles were shown forth of God through his merit which testify continually that he wished [to go] over to the Orkneys to his kinsmen, Earl Magnus and Earl Rognvaldr.

After the battle Earl Haraldr took all Caithness under him, and sailed immediately out to the Orkneys to boast of a great victory.

## CHAPTER 110.

OF THE ORKNEY - MEN.1198.  
FL.

William King of Scots learned that Earl Haraldr (the Younger) had been killed, and also that Earl Haraldr Maddadh's son had laid all Caithness under him without asking his leave. At this the King of Scots was highly indignant, and sent men to the Hebrides to Rognvaldr Guthroth's son, King of the Hebrides; Guthroth's mother was Ingibjorg, daughter of Earl Hakon Paul's son. King Rognvaldr was then the greatest warrior in the British Isles. Three winters he had been out in warships, and never once came under sooty rafter.

As soon as Rognvaldr got this message he raised an army from all over the Hebrides and from Cantyre; he had also a large force from Ireland.

Then he sailed North to Caithness and subdued the whole land and remained there for a time.

Earl Haraldr was living in the Orkneys, and paid no heed to the King's movements.

But as winter drew on, King Rognvaldr made ready to sail home to his realm in the Hebrides. He set up over Caithness on his departure (1) three stewards; one was Mani Olaf's son, the second ~~Ra~~fn the Lawyer, [and] the third was called Hlifolfr the Old. ( )

Soon after King Rognvaldr set sail for the Hebrides, Earl Haraldr sent a man over to Caithness, telling him that he would be doing him a favour if he could get one of the stewards done to death - or all three [of them for/

for that matter].

This man took a passage across the Pentland Firth. There he proceeded until he came to **Rafn** the Lawyer; and Hrafn asked where he was going.

He had not much to say on [that matter].

Said **Rafn**: "I see it in thy face that Earl "Haraldr has sent thee over here to the Ness for some evil "purpose; but I have not the heart to have thee slain, "for thou art my kinsman."

Upon this they parted, and he went off to Hlifolfr; and the upshot of their meeting was that he made an end of Hlifolfr.

Then he escaped out to the Orkneys to Earl Haraldr and told him what he had done.

## CHAPTER 111.

### HARALDR TORTURES THE BISHOP.

Earl Haraldr now made preparations for an expedition out of the Orkneys; and when he was ready for sea, he sailed first North<sup>(1)</sup> to Thurso and disembarked there.

The Bishop<sup>(2)</sup> was in the <sup>fortress</sup> ~~castle~~<sup>(3)</sup> at Scrabster. And when they got sight of Earl Harald's army, those Caithness men saw that he had so large a host that they could not withstand it. They also got word that the Earl was in such a bad temper that there was no saying whom he would spare.

Then the Bishop gave his opinion, and said: "If "he/

"he and I meet and come to an agreement, then he will give  
"peace to you."

It was done as the Bishop commanded. The Earl's  
army rushed from the ships up to the ~~castle~~ <sup>fortress</sup>. The Bishop  
walked towards the Earl and greeted him graciously. But  
the result of their meeting was that Earl Haraldr had the  
Bishop seized and his tongue cut out, and then had them  
thrust a knife into his eyes and blind him.

Bishop John called on the holy maid Triduana  
during his torture, and then when they let him go he went  
to a slope of rising ground. On the slope was a woman,  
and the Bishop begged her to help him. She saw that blood  
was flowing from his face, and said: "Be thou still, my  
"lord, for gladly will I help thee." The Bishop was  
carried to the place where rests Saint Triduana. There  
the Bishop was healed both in his speech and his sight. (4)

Earl Haraldr then went up to the ~~castle~~ <sup>fortress</sup>, and they  
at once surrendered it to the Earl. He there and then  
punished the men very severely, and laid heavy fines on  
those men whom he thought to have had the biggest hand in  
the treasonous doings against him. And then, whether they  
liked it or not, he made every man in Caithness pay homage  
to him upon oath.

After that he took over all the estates which had  
belonged to the stewards, who had [now] fled to the King  
of Scots. Earl Haraldr then took up house in Caithness  
with a large following.

## CHAPTER 112.

OF THE STEWARDS.

1201.  
Winter.  
Fl.

Now the story turns to the stewards. They resolved to go up into Scotland, a company of six, and they came to the King that winter ~~at~~ Advent. They were able to tell him the whole story of what had happened in Caithness upon Earl Harald's expedition.

Decr.2.

At this news the King was thoroughly indignant, and declared that he would pay double compensation to those who had lost property of their own. The first day they were with the King of Scots, he had given to each of them twenty-five ells<sup>(1)</sup> of cloth and an English mark in ready money. They spent Christmas with the King of Scots in high favour.

Christmas.

1202.  
Jan.

But immediately after Christmas the King of Scots sends a summons to all the chiefs in his realm and gathered a mighty host from all parts of the land, and marched that army over and down to Caithness against Earl Haraldr. The King of Scots had a huge army, and he marches till he comes to Eysteinsdalr, [which lies] where Caithness and Sutherland meet.<sup>(2)</sup> The tents of the King of Scots' army [stretched] the whole length of the dale, and that is a long way.

Em.

Earl Haraldr was in Caithness when he got word of this. He at once mustered forces, and it is said<sup>(3)</sup> that he raised 6000 men and yet had not enough to make a resistance against the King of Scots. So he sent envoys to the King of Scots to try to come to terms with him.

When/

When this message was brought before the King, he said that it was no use asking for peace unless he got every fourth penny<sup>(4)</sup> that was in the length and breadth of Caithness.

When this message was brought before Earl Haraldr, he called the inhabitants<sup>(5)</sup> and other chiefs into conference, and asked their advice. But as they saw no way out of their difficulties, they accepted the terms offered, whereby the men of Caithness paid a fourth part of their property to the King of Scots, with the exception of those men who had gone to seek the King that winter. Earl Haraldr went out to the Orkneys, and he was to have all Caithness, as he had had before Earl Haraldr the Younger got it from the King of Scots.

During those hostilities was blinded Thorfinnr, son of Earl Haraldr; he had been taken as a hostage by the King of Scots.<sup>(6)</sup>

After the settlement of peace the King went up into Scotland. Earl Haraldr was now sole ruler in the Orkneys.

1194.

In the latter days of Earl Haraldr<sup>(7)</sup> his son-in-law Olafr and John Hallkel's son gathered a band of men from the Orkneys and went East to Norway against King Sverrir; they chose as their King, Sigurthr, son of King Magnus Erling's son. Many men of good family from the Orkneys threw in their lot with this army; it was one of the strongest of fighting bands. They were nicknamed the "Island-Beardies", and, for a time, the "Gold-Shanks".

1195.  
Apr. 3.

They fought at Florevaag against King Sverrir and were defeated. There fell both John and Olafr and their King as/

as well, and most of their men.

After that King Sverrir openly treated Earl Haraldr as an enemy and said it was his doing that the band of men had been got together. So it came about that Earl Haraldr sailed from the West, and Bishop Bjarni with him. The Earl put himself in King Sverrir's hands and let him settle the affair between them. King Sverrir then took over from Earl Haraldr all Shetland with its skatts and dues; and the Orkney Earls have not held it since.

- (1138). Earl Haraldr was five years old when he was given the title of "Earl". He was Earl twenty years while he and Saint Rognvaldr the Earl ruled jointly over the Orkneys.
- (1158). After the death of Earl Rognvaldr, Haraldr was forty-eight years Earl in the Orkneys. He died in the second year of the reign of King Ingi Barth's son. (8)

After Earl Haraldr his sons John and David took [over] his realm. His son Henry has (9) Ross in Scotland.

The following have been the most powerful of the Orkney Earls, according to the statements of those men who have ~~written~~ <sup>composed</sup> their Sagas: (10) Sigurthr Eysteinn's son is there named; Earl Thorfinnr Sigurth's son; Earl Haraldr Maddadh's son.

1214. The brothers John and David ruled the lands jointly after their father, until David died of sickness in the year in which Hakon Madcap died in Norway. After that John took the title of "Earl" over all the Orkneys.