pointed out, was in his library at his death.

When Morris printed this translation in the *Dark Blue*, he presented it as entirely his own work; but when he republished it with only a few changes together with five other sagas in *Three Northern Love Stories*, he stated on the title page that the renderings in this volume were the result of collaboration between Magnússon and himself, and made no special comment on the authorship of the translation of the *Frigjófa saga*. It is not known whether the rendering was originally produced by Morris alone and was later revised by Magnússon when it was republished in 1875, or whether the earlier translation also was the work of both men and the absence of Magnússon's name in the *Dark Blue* is entirely without significance. That Morris received aid from Magnússon in preparing the first version as well as the second seems, on the whole, very likely, for when we compare this translation with the Old Norse, we find that it is remarkably close and exact. Very few alterations, as I just stated, were made when the story was printed again in 1875, and in only three cases were actual mistranslations corrected; most of the changes simply introduce archaic words or forms, or

1. See below, p. 1000.

2. The following mistranslations in the *Dark Blue* are corrected in the *Three Northern Love Stories*: "Hall of the Gods" *(in the Dark Blue, I, 47, 11.18-19, 47, 1.33, and 56, 1.37; Collected Works, X, 54, 1.24, 55, 11.4-5, and 68, 11.10-11; and Fornaldar Sögur, II, 70, 11.20-21, 71, 1.6, and 86, 11.2-3); "Go, Thief, get thee some other harbour than in our guest hall" *(in the Dark Blue, I, 178, 11.19-20; Collected Works, X, 74, 11.12-13; and Fornaldar Sögur, II, 93, 11.5-6); and "...give him a goodly mantle, and be kind to him..." *(in the Dark Blue, I, 178, 1.36; Collected Works, X, 74, 1.31; and Fornaldar Sögur, II, 93, 11.23-24). Throughout the version in the *Dark Blue* Morris incorrectly designates Frithiof's home as "Bogní" instead of "Bogn."
offer slightly more exact renderings. It seems extremely improb-
able that Morris could have produced this very literal translation entirely unaided in 1871. Very likely Magnusson prepared the first draft as usual and Morris afterwards wrote out his own rendering on the basis of Magnusson's version, making a few minor errors which Magnusson may never have had a chance to correct or which he overlooked if he actually did revise the work.

As in the case of the ballad translations, there is of course a possibility that Morris produced this rendering without Magnusson's aid but was guided by some previous translation. The Fröðbjöf's saga had already been turned into English by George Stephens, his rendering of the saga appearing in 1839 in the same volume as his English version of Bishop Tegnér's poetical version of the tale. We know that Morris was familiar with this work, for H. Buxton Forman, speaking of another matter in his Books of William Morris, refers to a letter he received from Morris in the winter of 1873 "returning a copy of George Stevenson's Frithiof which I had borrowed for him ...." Morris may easily have seen

1. As examples of changes introducing more literal translations see the following passages: Dark Blue, I, 48, 11.35-36: Collected Works, X, 56, 1.20: and Fornaldar Bögrur, II, 72, 1.25; Dark Blue, I, 49, 11.3-4: Collected Works, X, 56, 1.32 - 57, 1.1: and Fornaldar Bögrur, II, 73, 11.8-11; and Dark Blue, I, 49, 1.13: Collected Works, X, 57, 1.10: and Fornaldar Bögrur, II, 73, 11.20-21.


3. Page 82. The name "Stevenson's" is evidently a mistake for "Stephens's."
this book as early as 1871. However, a comparison of Morris's translation with Stephens's shows that Morris was almost certainly not dependant upon the work of his predecessor in any way. In the first place, Stephens's rendering, as he himself states, is based mainly on the text in Björner's *Nordiska Kämpa Dater*, which, as I have already said, differs in many cases from the text Morris used. Furthermore - and this fact is much more important - several passages which are the same in the *Kämpa Dater* and in the Fornaldar Sögur are given entirely different interpretations by Morris and Stephens, sometimes Morris, sometimes Stephens, being the more exact. Finally, I should like to point out that none of the mis-translations which occur in Morris's version in the *Dark Blue* but were corrected in the *Three Northern Love Stories* are found in Stephens's rendering, or, as a matter of fact, in any of the Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and German translations.


2. As examples of such differences see the following passages:


4. For a list of these translations, see *Islandica*, V(1912).
Very likely Morris did not borrow Stephens's book because he wanted to use it as a guide in his rendering of the Icelandic saga, but because he wished to become acquainted with Tegnér's poem on the same subject. We know that Morris was familiar with this work, for in a note at the opening of his translation of the Frithiof's Saga in the Dark Blue he says, "This tale is the original of the Swedish Bishop Tegnér's 'Frithiof Saga,' a long modern poem, which has a great reputation, but bears little enough relation, either in spirit or matter, to its prototype."¹ It is almost certain that Morris was not so proficient in Swedish that he could read this long narrative poem in the original; there were of course many English renderings of the work available at this time, but inasmuch as we know that he borrowed Stephens's translation in the early seventies, it is fairly safe to assume that it was on the basis of this rendering that he formed the opinion expressed in this note.

Although no saga translations were published from the spring of 1871 to 1875, we know that Morris was extremely active during these years in turning Icelandic sagas into English. Almost all our information regarding this work, except for a few references in letters, comes from the illuminated manuscripts he used to produce for recreation at this time. I have already on several occasions referred to Morris's activity as an illuminator.² As I have stated before, he began this work as early as 1856, but did not complete any painted book until 1870; from that year until 1875 or

1. I, 42.
2. See above, pp. 9 and 109.
1876, however, he spent all his leisure time in writing out and decorating manuscripts, and produced during these years an astonishingly large number of such books. Many of them are copies of sagas he had rendered out of the Icelandic.

On the basis of one of these manuscripts we know that by the end of 1871 Morris had translated the Kormáks saga Ögmundasonar and had begun his English version of the Heimskringla. This manuscript, which is now in the private library of Sir Sydney Cockerell of Uambridge, England, and which I have had the privilege of examining, contains, in translation, the whole of the Kormáks saga, one page from the opening of the Heimskringla, eighteen stanzas of "Hafbur and Signy," and two pages of the Kriðbjöfssaga; according to a note by Sir Sydney Cockerell at the beginning of the book, the "paper on which everything in this volume is written bears a watermark dated 1870 and the date of the skript[ar] is not later than 1871." The last two selections in this book are not important

1. This manuscript, measuring 16 by 10 inches, is bound in three-quarters light green leather. On the front cover we find in gilt the following words: "The Story of Kormak the Son of Ogmund. Hafbur and Signy. And Fragments of Frithiof the Bold and Heimskringla." The back bears the words "MS. W. Morris." On the recto of the first of the two flyleaves we find the following note in the hand of Sir Sydney Cockerell:

"An unpublished translation by William Morris of the Saga of Kormak son of Ögmund, written out by him and given to me after his death by MRS Morris. It is uniform with a manuscript of the Frithiof Saga belonging (1898) to MRS C. Fairfax Murray, of which two waste leaves are bound at the end of this volume - the Frithiof MS was sold at Sotheby's 7 July 1919, with added decoration by Louise Lessore and gilding by Graily Hewitt.

"The paper on which everything in this volume is written bears a watermark dated 1870 and the date of the skript[ar] is not later than 1871."

The pages bearing the writing are divided into two columns. Each sheet is numbered only once. "The Story of Kormak the Son of
for the purposes of this study, for we know from other sources that Morris had translated "Haftur og Signy" and the Friðþjófs saga by the end of 1871 and both renderings in their entirety have been published; the first two selections, however, are of special interest.

Morris's translation of the Kormáke saga was never printed; in fact, it is only through this illuminated manuscript and a few waste leaves that we know that he prepared a rendering of this tale. The basis for his version must have been the Kormáke saga sive Kormaki Ógsmundi filii vita, published in Copenhagen in 1832, for this was the only text printed at this time. His translation covers the whole of the saga, but does not include any of the "Fragmenta carminum" found at the end of this edition. I have compared the rendering with the original, and find that it is accurate and similar in style to Morris's other saga translations.

(Continuation of note 1, page 180) Ógsmund" runs from page 1 to the top of the first column on the verso of page 21. Page 22 is blank. On the recto of page 23 we find Chapter I and part of Chapter II of the Heimskringla; the verso of this sheet is left blank. On page 24 Morris has written out part of his translation of "Haftur og Signy"; the writing covers the recto, and ends in the middle of the first column on the verso. On pages 25 and 26 we find a fragment of Morris's rendering of the Friðþjófs saga. The passage opens with the words "forked beam, and ran into the prow" from Chapter VI; it runs from the top of the first column on the recto of page 25 to the bottom of the second column on the verso of page 26, ending with the following two lines of Vífa III in Chapter IX:

"That Biorn and I
Betwixt us have borne...."

At the bottom of the inside of the back cover is written the note "Bound by Douglas Cockerell," and below this is stamped "19098."

1. See below, page 182, note 2.
It is likewise very interesting to learn that Morris had begun his rendering of the *Heimskringla* as early as 1871, as the illuminated page of the opening of the *Ynglinga saga* included in Cockerell's manuscript indicates. This very lengthy work, which he was not to complete until more than twenty-five years later, seems to have occupied his attention throughout this period; in a letter dated February 11, 1873, he writes, "My translations go on apace, but I am doing nothing original....I certainly enjoy some of the work I do very much, and one of these days my *Heimskringla* will be an important work." Other illuminated fragments of the *Heimskringla* rendering also exist. In the private library of the late Sir Emery Walker of Hammersmith, London, there is an illuminated manuscript which contains various short selections, among them nineteen pages of the opening of the *Heimskringla*, covering "The Preface of Snorri Sturluson" and almost twenty-five chapters of the *Ynglinga saga*; those pages that bear a watermark are dated 1870, and the script is similar to that in Cockerell's manuscript, so that very likely these leaves also were written out in 1871. At the time of her death Miss May Morris had in her posses-


2. This manuscript measures 16½ by 10½ inches. It is bound in three-quarters brown leather. The front cover bears the following words in gilt: "Fragments translated written Out and Decorated by William Morris from *Lancelot du Lac* The Saga of Howard the Halt the *Heimskringla* etc." On the inside of the front cover there is pasted a slip of paper bearing the words "From the Library of Emery Walker No. III The Terrace Hammersmith."

There are five flyleaves. The pages bearing the writing are divided into two columns. The translation of the "*Lancelot du Lac*" runs from page 1 to the bottom of the first column on the recto of page 9. In this part of the manuscript each sheet is numbered only once. Pages 9 and 10 are blank. The rendering of
sion two vellum leaves which bear no title but contain part of chapter XXI, the whole of Chapter XXII, and the opening of Chapter XXIII of Morris's translation of the Haralds saga hárfragr. There is writing on both sides of the pages, and the leaves are numbered 35, 36, 37, and 38; evidently they were originally part of an illuminated manuscript of the whole of the Haralds saga hárfragr. The script used here is larger than in the other two Heimskringla manuscripts, and is somewhat different in character; probably these leaves were prepared at a later date.

Although his work on the Heimskringla must have occupied much

(Continuation of note 2 on page 182): the Hávarðar saga begins on page 11, and extends to the top of the first column on the recto of page 19; in other words, it covers 10¾ pages, with two columns on a page and with 40 lines in a full column. The next page is left blank. From this point on, the pages are numbered on both sides in the regular way, and the numbering begins anew. The translation of the Heimskringla comes next, running from page 1 to the bottom of the first column on page 19. The next page contains a portion of the Kormak saga rendering. Then are inserted a few pages covered with decorations but no writing. Finally, there is a vellum leaf containing part of the Hubáiyát of Omar Kháyyám.

At the bottom of the inside of the back cover we find the date "1902."

Throughout the manuscript, those pages that bear a watermark are dated 1870.

1. These pages measure 9¾ by 8½ inches. For a reproduction of two of them, see below, pp. 968 and 970.
of his attention during the years 1871 to 1873, he nevertheless found time for several other saga-renderings. We learn from a letter written December 8, 1873, that by that time he had read the *Viguundar* saga, the *Heðins saga ok Högna*, the *Hrōa báttr heimska*, and the *Dorsteins báttr stargakdóga*; in the letter just mentioned, Morris describes the material he intended to include in the volume of translations which he was then planning to publish but which did not appear until 1875 under the title *Three Northern Love Stories*, and says,

It [the book] stands thus now as I intended at first: the Story of Gunnlaug the Worm-tongue, printed in the Fortnightly some years back; the Story of Frithiof the Bold, printed before in the Dark Blue; the story of Viglund the Fair, never before printed: these 'three Northern Love Stories' will give the name to the book, but to thicken it out I add three more short tales; Hrol the Fool, Hogni and Hedin, and Thóra st Staff-smitten; the first of these three a pretty edition of a 'sharper' story and the same as a tale in the Arabian Nights. The second a terrible story; a very well told, but late version of a dark and strange legend of remote times. The third simple, and not without generosity, smelling strong of the soil of Iceland, like the Gunnlaug.¹

Moreover, an illuminated manuscript shows us that three months later—namely, by the end of February, 1874—he had translated three more fairly long sagas, the *Hænsa-Poría saga*, the *Sandamanna saga*, and the *Hávarðar saga Ísfirðings*. His rendering of these three tales is written out and decorated in a very beautiful manuscript of 244 pages, which is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, England; Morris did not date the work, but a note at the end, evidently in the hand of Sir Sydney Cockerell, points out that a letter to Mr. C. Fairfax Murray shows that this book was finished in February 1874.¹ The sheets that are watermarked all bear the

date 1870. None of these translations were published until 1891, when all three appeared in the first volume of the Saga Library.

The last of these three tales, the Þávarþar saga, it should

1. This manuscript, measuring 10 by 7 1/2 inches, is bound in three-quarters light brown leather. The front cover bears the title "The Story of Hen Thorir The Story of the Banded-Men The Story of Haward the Halt Translated and Engrossed by William Morris." On the back are the words "Icelandic Stories." On the inside of the front cover is pasted a slip bearing the statement "Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge. Presented by Lady Burne-Jones 1909." The two flyleaves at the beginning are blank.

"The Story of Hen Thorir" begins on page 1 and extends to page 56. Page 57 is left blank. "The Story of the Banded-Men" runs from page 58 to page 131. Page 132 is blank. "The Story of Haward the Halt" begins on page 133 and ends in the middle of page 240. Pages 241, 242, 243, and 244 contain "A gloss in rhyme on the story of Haward, by William Morris." Morris seems to have originally intended to form a separate book out of the last of these three sagas, "The Story of Haward the Halt," for in this tale the page numbering originally began with "1"; when the work was incorporated in the larger manuscript, the pages were renumbered, but the last page of the "Gloss," which should be page 244, has only the original number 112.

On the first of the two flyleaves at the end we find the following note in ink:

"The three Stories in this book were translated from the Icelandic by William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon. They were written out, and all the illuminated letters were designed and painted, by William Morris, about the year 1873. He then gave the book to me, and I now give it to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, in memory of him.


Underneath is written in pencil, apparently in the hand of Sir Sydney Cockerell. "A letter to Mr. C. Fairfax Murray shows that this book was finished in February 1874."

2. See below, p. 352. I should also like to point out that other illuminated manuscripts of two of these tales still exist, but these books do not throw any further light on the date of the translations. At the time of her death Miss May Morris possessed a copy of "The Story of the Banded-Men," in which the whole saga is written out but only a very small part of the illuminating is completed. The Sir Emery Walker manuscript which I have already mentioned (see above, n. 2) contains a little over sixteen pages of "The Story of Howard the Halt," covering almost nine chapters of the tale. Neither manuscript is dated; in the first one the paper is marked 1869 and in the other it is stamped 1870.
be noted, was one of the Scandinavian works which Magnússon and G. E. J. Powell had intended to publish in an English form before Magnússon began collaborating with Morris. As I have already pointed out, Magnússon wrote out a rendering of this tale and handed it over to Powell for revision in 1863, but the latter never completed his share of the work so that it could be printed; even as late as 1869 and 1870 references in letters show that they were still planning to publish it. Probably Magnússon by that time realized that it was useless to wait longer for Powell, and so put his literal translation in the hands of Morris.

The story of Haward became one of Morris's favorites among the shorter Icelandic tales; he once wrote to Theodore Watts-Dunton, in a letter which evidently accompanied a presentation copy of Volume One of The Saga Library, "Seriously I hope you will like it. The Howard Saga. I think the best short saga after G . . . . and the other 2 are very good." In the Fitzwilliam Museum illuminated manuscript of "The Story of Hen Thorir," "The Story of the Banded-Men," and "The Story of Haward the Halt," we find at the end "A gloss in rhyme on the story of Haward, by William Morris." In this gloss, which consists of fifty-eight lines in heroic couplets, Morris briefly retells the main events of the tale; the comments that he makes on the characters and their deeds in the course of this poetical summary show that he was deeply moved by this old story of wrong made

3. These two sentences are taken from an excerpt given in a description of five Morris letters in English Literature of the 19th & 20th Centuries. No. 511 (London: Maggs Brothers, 1928), p. 263, item 1515.
right even in the face of overwhelming odds, and reveal that he sincerely sympathized with old Haward in his troubles and weakness. Note, for example, the following passage towards the end, in which he compares the change in Haward's fortunes to a beautiful dream:

A dream methinks all this by someone told,
Of many griefs in all defeat grown old;
A dream of lying down unloved, alone,
Feeble, unbeautiful, but by mocking known,
And waking up a famous man and fair,
Well-loved, most mighty, bold all deeds to dare;
Happy to bring the hardest thing to pass;
Nought left save longing of the wretch one was:
Of lying down most loth to wake again,
And waking up to wonder what was pain -
A dream of wrong in one night swept away
And Baldur's kingdom come with break of day.¹

Another Icelandic work which Morris seems to have translated by the end of 1874 is the Haldors báttr snorrasonar. Three pages of an illuminated manuscript of his rendering of this story, called by him "The Tale of Haldor," are now in the private library of Sir Sydney Cockerell; as is pointed out in a note on the inside of the front cover of the book in which these pages are bound, this selection is written out in the same script as that used in the Fitzwilliam Museum manuscript just discussed. There are two "þættir" concerning this Haldor, one dealing with Haldor and Einar Þambarskelfir, the other with Haldor and King Harald Harðráði; it is the first of these that Morris translated. He wrote out only about forty lines

¹. In quoting this passage I have departed from the manuscript in capitalizing the first word in ll. 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9 and in inserting a comma after "told" in l. 1 and a period after "day" in l. 12.

². These pages are bound in a book measuring 8½ by 8 inches. The main part of the book consists of the beginning of a catalogue of Morris's library; this catalogue, a note in Cockerell's hand on the inside of the front cover points out, was "probably made about 1890." For an account of a more complete catalogue of Morris's books, see below, pp. 345-346.

³. See Jónsson's Den Oldnorske og Óldislandske Litteraturs Historie, 11, 541 and Islandica, 1(1908), 42.
in the illuminated manuscript, and so it is difficult to determine which text of this "pattr" he was following in his rendering; however, even this short passage shows that he certainly did not use the version in Volume III of the \textit{Flateyjarbók} and that very likely he did not base his English version on the text in the \textit{Saga Olafs Tryggvasonar} published in 1689, but it does not indicate whether he followed the version in Volume III of \textit{Formmanna Sögur} or that in Volume I of \textit{Flateyjarbók}. All these books, it should be noted, were in his library at his death. This translation was never published, and is not mentioned in any of the studies of Morris. I should also like to point out that Morris's knowledge of Old Norse literature must have been very extensive, since he read and translated such minor and very slightly known tales as this one and the last three included in \textit{Three Northern Love Stories}; probably he read this account of Haldor because this man was the son of Snorri the Priest, with whom Morris had become acquainted in the \textit{Eyrbyggja saga} at an early date.

Another illuminated manuscript which was likewise probably produced in the early 1870's contains about one-fourth of Morris's rendering of the \textit{Véanfirðinga saga}. This translation, like that of the

1. According to \textit{Islandica}, I(1908), 42, there were four texts of this "pattr" available in 1874: \textit{Saga Olafs Tryggvasonar} (Skafaholt, 1689), II, 315-321; \textit{Formmanna Sögur} (Copenhagen, 1825-1837), III, 152-174; \textit{Flateyjarbók} (Christiania, 1865-1868), I, 506-511; and \textit{ibid.}, III, 428-451.

2. The following passages in this version, for example, differ from the corresponding passages in the three other texts, and in these cases Morris followed the others: III, 428, 11.26-28, 33-34, and 36; and 429, 11.10-11.

3. On p.316, col.1, 11.20-21, this edition has "Dotter Hakonar Jarls," but the texts in \textit{Formmanna Sögur} and in \textit{Flateyjarbók}, I, have "dötir Hakonar jalls illa" and "dotter Hakonar jalls illa" and Morris has "daughter of Earl Hakon the Evil."

4. His use of the form "Haldor" points to the \textit{Formmanna Sögur}, for this edition spells the name with one "i" but the \textit{Flateyjarbók}, I, 506-511, has "Halldorr."
Halldórs báttir, was never published, and is not mentioned in any of the Morris studies. The manuscript is now in the private library of the late Sir Emery Walker of Hammersmith, England. The rendering, as usual, is very literal, with an archaic coloring. Evidently the translation was based on the text in Nordiske Oldskrifter, the only version printed at that time. The Porrsteins báttir stangarhögs, which we have already seen that Morris had read by the end of 1873, is a continuation of this saga; very likely he had translated the saga proper also by that time.

Finally, I should like to point out that three other saga translations that we know Morris prepared - namely, his renderings of the Heiðarvíga saga, of the Egils saga Skallagrímssonar, and of the Norna-Gests báttir - may have been produced during the period 1871 to 1876. The first of these works was not published by Morris until 1892, when it appeared in the second volume of The Saga Library. The other two Morris himself never printed, but manu-

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1. This manuscript, measuring 7½ by 9½ inches, is bound in three-quarters dark brown leather. The front cover bears the following title, in gilt letters: "Some Chapters of the Story of the Men of Weaponfirth with other Fragments of Manuscript and Decoration by William Morris." On the inside of the front cover is pasted a slip with the words "From the Library of Emery Walker No. III The Terrace Hammersmith." The five flyleaves are blank.

"The Story of the Men of Weaponfirth" runs from page 1 to the bottom of page 18, with 16 lines on each page. Next come 3 blank pages, and then are inserted 3 small vellum leaves on which Morris has written out a fragment of a Latin poem. This piece is followed by 4 more blank pages, and then another page is inserted, this one bearing short English and Latin sentences, evidently written out as trials. Then come a few other fragments, and finally 3 more blank leaves. At the bottom of the back cover is imprinted the date "1902." None of the pages in the book have dated watermarks.

2. V, 1-32.


4. See below, pages 356-357.
scripts of parts of both these translations are extant, and one of these manuscript renderings, comprising forty chapters of the Egils saga, Miss Morris published in 1936 in her William Morris: Artist Writer Socialist. All of these translations are undated, but, as I stated above, there is reason to believe that they were prepared in the early 1870's. In the first place, various allusions to Norse customs that Morris introduced in his poem "Anthony," which, as I shall show later, he seems to have written shortly after 1870, indicate, though they by no means definitely prove, that he was familiar at that time with the Heiðarvíga saga and the Egils saga. Moreover, as I shall make clear in chapter IV, the verse form Morris uses for his English versions of the "visur" in The Story of the Heath-Slayings points to its being an early work. Finally, it should be noted that, as we shall see in the next chapter, Morris did no translation work from the late 1870's until

1. See May Morris, William Morris, I, 470 and II, 611.

2. I, 564-636. These forty chapters constitute about one-third of the whole saga. At his death in 1896 Morris possessed two editions of the Egils saga - namely, Egils-saga, Atv agiill Skallagrími vita (Copenhagen, 1809) and Sagan af Agil Skallagríms saga, ed. Einar Pórhólar (Reykjavík, 1856); see below, page 1001. The differences between the two are few and very unimportant, but they seem to indicate that in the main, at least, Morris was following the 1809 edition. Compare, for example, the following words or passages in this text with the corresponding passages in Morris's translation and in the 1809 edition: p.1, 1.15 ("Hrafnistu"), 1.7 ("Íbann tíma f landinu"), 1.15 ("Olvir"), p.2, 1.18 ("Olvir"), p.29 ("þórr"), and p.5, 11.2 and 51 ("Olvir"). Note, however, that in the heading of chapter II, Morris uses "Aulvir," as the 1809 edition does.

3. See below, pages 223, 225, and 227, and accompanying notes. I should also like to point out here that according to Dr. Einarsen (in his "Eiríkr Magnússon and his Saga-Translations," p.21), Magnússon and Powell had planned to produce an English version of this saga also, but just as in the case of the rendering of the Hávarðar saga, although Magnússon supplied Powell with a literal draft, the latter never completed his revision of Magnússon's work so that it could be published. The fact that Magnússon had prepared a translation of the Egils saga before he met Morris makes it likely that he handed this rendering over to Morris and that Morris began working on this saga at an early date.
1890, and when he resumed his translating at that time, he seems to have devoted all his attention to finishing or revising renderings he had begun in the 1870's; with the exception of the Story of the Heath-Slayings, all the translations he printed in The Saga Library are works we definitely know he had prepared or at least begun in the period 1868 to 1876. None of this evidence is of course conclusive, but it all indicates that these saga-renderings were produced in the period now under discussion.

1. I should like to point out here that there is reason to believe that Morris translated still other sagas, although here again we do not know whether, if he did read them, he did so now or in the period 1889 to 1896, when he resumed his translation work after a lapse of some twelve years. In the Catalogue of a Portion of the Valuable Collection of Manuscripts, Early Printed Books, &c. of the late William Morris, of Kelmscott House, Hammersmith, which will be sold by auction, by Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge on Monday, the 5th of December, 1898, and five following days, Item 848 on page 84 is described as follows:

"Saga. Islendinga Sögur útgivne eptir gamle Haandskrifter af det kongelige nordiske Oldskrift-selskab (some MS. slips of translations and notes by Wm. Morris in vol. II), 2 vol. green morocco gilt, y. e.

Kobenhavn, 1843-47"

Morris's copy of this collection of sagas is mentioned twice in the Book-Auction Records, I, Pt. I (1902-1903), 281 and II (1904-1905), 288; in Volume I the following account of it is given: "Islandinga[gí] Sögur, the second volume containing throughout marginal translations and notes by Morris, and 15 foolscap leaves of paper containing translations in the hands of Eirikr Magnunsson and Morris, mor., 2 v., 1843."

According to the reference in Volume II of the Book-Auction Records - the latest mention of the work that I have been able to find --, these two volumes were sold March 22, 1905 to "Cockerell." I have unfortunately not been able to locate this purchaser; Sir Sydney Cockerell has informed me that it was not he who bought the set, and has told me that he knows nothing about it.

Volume Two of Islendinga Sögur contains the following sagas:

Harðar Saga úr ímkelssonar ok Geir's, Haensa-Póris, Sagan af Hrafní ok Gunnlaugi Ormsmúski, Saga af viga-Styr Ok Heiðarvígum, Kjalnesinga-Saga, and Víðbaetir: þattir af Jókli Ólafsýni, Harðar Saga Úr ímkelssonar (Brot), Gró ok Talaðaetir úr Sögubroti af Viga-Styr ok Heiðarvígum, and úr ískamál ok írygðamál. The second, third, and fourth of these sagas Morris translated and published, in each case basing his rendering on the text in this volume (see above, pp. 52, 184-185, and below, pp. 354 and 357); if the description in the Book-Auction Records is correct and there are marginal translations and notes throughout the volume, Morris must have turned the other sagas into English also, although these renderings were never printed and nothing whatsoever is known about them.
Although Morris translated so many sagas in the early 1870's, he published only one small volume of Icelandic tales during these years; this was *Three Northern Love Stories, and other Tales*, which appeared in June, 1875. The first two sagas which he included here, "The Story of Gunnlaug the Worm-Tongue and Raven the Skald" and "The Story of Frithiof the Bold," he had already printed in periodicals, as I have pointed out before; both these tales he and Magnússon now carefully revised before republishing them in book form. I have already commented in detail upon these two translations. The third tale of love is "The Story of Viglund the Fair," a rendering of the *Viglunadar saga*, a late fictitious narrative. Morris almost certainly based his translation of this work on the text in *Nordiske Oldskrifter*. However, the melody which he introduced in Chapter Eleven for the song that Ketilrid sings when she thinks that Viglund has drowned is not found in this edition or in the only other text available in 1873; this tune he evidently inserted because, as he notes in his Journal of his first visit to Iceland in 1871, he had heard it played on an Icelandic violin at one of the farms at which

1. See Forman, *Books of Morris*, p. 82. As I have already pointed out, these tales had been translated by the end of 1873 (see above, p. 184).
2. See above, p. 52 and p. 175.
4. According to *Islandica*, I (1908), 105-106, there were two editions of this saga available in 1873: Nøkkrer Mæg-Frooder Søgu-Bætter Islandinga, pp. 15-33 and 187-188 and *Nordiske Oldskrifter*, XXVII, 47-92. A comparison of the following passages in *Nordiske Oldskrifter* with the corresponding passages in the other edition and in Morris's translation shows definitely that Morris was following the text in *Nordiske Oldskrifter*: XXVII, 47, 11.3, 10, 12-13, 15, and 19-20 and 48, 11.5-6 and 9-11. This book was in Morris's library at his death (see below, p. 1000).
he stayed on this trip. These three tales of love, "The Story of Sunnlaug," "The Story of Frithiof," and "The Story of Viglund," make up more than three-fourths of the book; the remainder consists of three very short tales or "ðættir." "The Tale of Hogni and Hedinn" is a translation of Sórla þáttr, or Hæðins saga ok Hógrna; Morris seems to have used the text given in Fornaldar Sögur Nordrlanda. "The Tale of Hófr the Fool" is an English rendering of Æða þáttr heimska; the two texts of this story existing in 1873, one of which is found in Fornmanna Sögur and the other in the Flateyjarbók, differ so very slightly that it is impossible to determine with certainty which one served as the basis of Morris's work, but it seems that he followed the former. The last story is "The Tale of Thorstein Staff-Smitten," a translation of Þorsteinz þáttr stængarhögs, which is a continuation of the vǫfnfirðinga saga; the text given in Norsiske Oldskrifter of this "þáttr" was the only

1. See Collected works, VIII, 151.

2. According to Islandica, V(1912), 41, there were four editions of this work available to Morris in 1873: Saga Olafs tryggvasonar (Skalaholt, 1689), II, 49-53; Sagan af Asidini og Hógrna. - Historia duorum regum Hæðini et Hugonis, ex antiqua Lingua Norvegica. Per Dr. Ionam Gudmundi in Latinum translatata [Upsala, 1697]; Fornaldar Sögur, I, 389-407; and Flateyjarbók, I, 275-283. The second of these four editions I have not had an opportunity to examine; however, since it was not in Morris's library at his death and is an extremely rare work, it is very unlikely that he used it. A comparison of the other three texts with Morris's translation shows that Morris almost certainly did not base his rendering on the 1689 edition and very likely did follow the text in the Flateyjarbók. Compare, for example, the following passages in Fornaldar Sögur with the corresponding passages in the other two editions and in Morris's translation: I, 394, 11.14 and 22; 395, 11.2, 4, 13, 17, and 22; 397, 11.4 and 16; 399, 1.27; and 400, 1.2. All of these works except the 1697 edition were in Morris's library at his death (see below, pp. 1000 and 1002).

3. According to Islandica, III(1910), 72, there were two editions available in 1873: Fornmanna Sögur, V, 252-266 and Flateyjarbók, II, 73-80. It is impossible to determine definitely which text Morris used, but it seems somewhat more likely that he followed the version in Fornmanna Sögur. Compare, for example, the following passages in Fornmanna Sögur with the corresponding passages in the Flateyjarbók and in Morris's translation: V, 258, 1.13 and 261, 1.23. Both editions were in Morris's library at his death (see below, pp. 1000 and 1002).
one published by 1873. In the case of the last four sagas, 2
Morris's renderings are the only English versions ever printed.

At the beginning of this collection of six short Icelandic
tales we find a very brief Preface with comments on the general
nature of each story, and also a chronological table of the main
events in "The Story of Gunnlaug." At the close of the book are
two notes; in one of them Morris presents a two-page translation
of the story of Hogni and Hedinn as it appears in chapter L of
the "Skáldskaparmál," thus giving his readers an opportunity to
compare this short account with the much more detailed version
given in the jörla þáttr, which he had translated in the text.
There are also at the end two indexes of characters and places
mentioned in these six sagas.

The book met with almost unqualified approval in the contem­
porary reviews. All the critics were loud in their praises of
the accuracy and general style of the rendering, and freely rec­
ommended the volume to their readers. As was to be expected,
most of the reviewers, recognizing the superior merits of "The
Story of Gunnlaug," placed this tale far above any of the other
sagas in the book, and hailed it as one of the treasures of
the world's literature. One critic even devoted his whole
article to this saga, merely mentioning the names of the
other five tales. Edmund Gosse, whose review is by far

2. See Islandica, I(1908), 106 and 117; III(1910), 32;
V(1912), 41; and XXIV(1935), 72 and 75.
3. See, for example, the Saturday Review, XL(1875), 90.
4. See the Spectator, XLVIII²(1875), 1068-1069.
the most scholarly and acute, says of this story,

"The Story of Frithiof" also was warmly praised, but "The Story of Viglund" was generally described as being distinctly inferior to the first two "love stories." Mr. Gosse even went so far as to say, "With all deference to Mr. Magnússon's learning and Mr. Morris's taste, we feel doubtful whether they were justified in occupying so much time and space with a saga so late and so poor as this."  

However, both Gosse and one of the other critics took pains to point out that the songs in this story were particularly beautiful; Gosse wrote, "The 'Viglundarsaga' is understood to be inelegant and unclassical in language....The best parts of the work are the passages in verse, which bear marks of an earlier and a far more gifted hand....We would take this opportunity of pointing out how especially beautiful are Mr. Morris's versions of these short poems." The other three tales in the book were dismissed by the reviewers with only a few words. It is of course not surprising that this collection of stories, unlike the other two saga translations that Morris and Magnússon had published in book form, was highly praised by the critics, for these six short tales, especially the first three, in view of the fact that the characters and action portrayed in them were much

1. Academy, VIII (1875), 54.
2. Ibid., VIII, 54-55.
3. Ibid., VIII, 55. See also the Athenæum, No. 2490 (July 17, 1875), 75.
closer to modern life, were much more easily understood by the
nineteenth century Englishman than the Völsunga saga or the Grétta
saga.

During the period of Morris's life which we are now con-
sidering, when Morris was devoting himself almost entirely to
Scandinavian studies, he became so intensely interested in Ice-
land and its literature that he determined to make a tour of the
country even though he realized that such a trip would be accom-
panied by severe hardships and real dangers. Early in July, 1871,
Morris left England for Iceland in the company of Eiríkr Magnú-
son, C.J.Faulkner, and W.H.Evans. The party first sighted land at
Berufjörður in the southeast, and then sailed along the south-
ern coast to Reykjavík. After spending a few days in the capital
city, they set out to the southeast for the purpose of visiting
Bergthorsknoll and Lithend; then they headed north and
proceeded through wild, rugged territory up to the northern coast;
at Hnausar they turned south, riding back to Reykjavík along the
western shore of Iceland, through the district richest in saga-asso-
ciations. Morris and his friends returned to England early in Sep-
tember.

Even this extended trip, however, did not completely satisfy
Morris's longing for the land which was the main scene of the sagas
he loved so well, and he soon began planning for a second visit.
Two years later, in February, 1873, he wrote to a friend, "Iceland
gapes for me still this summer: I grudge very much being away from
the two or three people I care for so long as I must be, but if I
can only get away in some sort of hope and heart I know it will be the making of me...." In July of that year he set sail again for Iceland, accompanied this time only by C.J. Faulkner. Morris and his friend landed at Reykjavík, made a brief visit again to the Njál district, and then set off in a northeasterly direction through the heart of Iceland; at Dettifoss, far up in the north-eastern corner of the island, they turned west, and when they reached the Blandá they began travelling south, passing between Longjökull and Arnarfellsjökull on their way back to Reykjavík. On this second journey they visited very few saga-steads, most of their time being spent in wild, uninhabited country. They returned to England early in September.

During both his trips Morris kept a diary. The first one he rewrote when he came home, turning it into a finished, literary account of his experiences and impressions; the second diary he never revised. Neither the journal of the first journey nor the diary of the second was published during Morris's lifetime, but they were both printed by Miss May Morris in 1911 in Volume VIII of the Collected Works. Both accounts— but particularly the first one—are very well written and are extremely interesting; they have a special importance for the present study because of the light they throw on the extent of Morris's acquaintance with saga-traditions at this time.


2. Morris gave the copy which he made of the first diary to Lady Burne-Jones; in 1922 her son and daughter, Sir Philip Burne-Jones and Mrs. Mackail, presented the book to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, where it is now deposited.
Thus, very frequently in his description of the places that he and his friends visited, Morris shows in a striking manner that he knew the sagas very thoroughly and that he clearly remembered incidents and even details mentioned in these narratives. For example, when he is writing of their journey in the northeastern part of Iceland near Midfirth and is telling of their approach to Midfirth Neck, he notes, "Just as we turn out of the valley on to the neck, we come on a knoll, the site of Swala-stead, where Vali of the Bandamanna Saga was murdered...." A few pages later, when he is describing the district around Ramfirth, he refers to Thorodd-stead as "the dwelling-place and death-place of Thorbiorn Oxmain, who slew Atli Grettir's brother and was slain by Grettir in his turn." In his account of their ride past the head of Swanfirth, he says,"...we rode down the other side of the firth till we came to Vadil's-head where Arnkel the Priest, the good man of Eyrbyggia, is buried;... down here also Thorolf Lamefoot, Arnkel's father was burned and so partly got rid of." Of Swordfirth he writes,

Then we all rode away together passing by a little creek that Thorlacius pointed out to us as Sword-firth (Vigrafjörr) the scene of that queer fight in Eyrbyggia where Freystein Rascal is killed, and often mentioned in that Saga: I remembered what a much bigger place I had always thought of for that place, where the very skerry in the middle is named after the fight, and called Fight-skerry.

2. Ibid., VIII, 102.
3. Ibid., VIII, 118.
4. Ibid., VIII, 124-125. For further passages revealing Morris's intimate knowledge of the sagas see ibid., VIII, 62, 11.17-21; 85, 11.29-31; 135, 11.23-24; 194, 11.1-2; and 196, 11.24-25.
He even remembers the family relationship of various characters: he refers in one passage to Ásgeirsdóttir as "the home of Ásgeir Madpate, father of Hrefna and uncle of Grettir's father," and in his account of Burgfirth he reminds his readers that "Egil lived at Borg, and his son Thorstein, father of Helga the Fair...." 

Moreover, he not only reveals an intimate familiarity with the more famous sagas, which we already know that he had read, but he also shows that he was acquainted with some of the less important tales, which we should hardly expect him to have studied. Thus, when he and his friends are travelling in the northwestern part of Iceland, on their way from Grímstunga to Hnausar, Morris writes,

The hero and "landnáms-man" of the vale is Ingimund the Old and most of the steads Thorstein shows us have reference to him; at the first we come to Ás [where] lived Hrolleifr, the rascal he protected, and who slew him; ... Thorstein points out a sandy spit running into the river which is the traditional place of the deadly wounding of Ingimund...

As Miss Morris points out in a footnote, these incidents are described in the Vatnsdalasaga. It is still more surprising to discover a few pages later that he is familiar with the Finnboga saga ramma: he describes Borg as "the place of the Saga of Finnbogi the Strong; in its present condition rather a poor characterless story; but with one touching part in it where the wife of Finnbogi dies of grief for the slaying of her favourite son by a scoundrel."

Undoubtedly the two tours increased Morris's knowledge of the

1. Collected works, VIII, 96.
2. Ibid., VIII, 154.
3. Ibid., VIII, 90-91.
4. Ibid., VIII, 90, note 1.
5. Ibid., VIII, 94.
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saga-traditions considerably. On several occasions we are told that the guides supplemented the stories in the sagas by local traditions. For example, in describing Swala-steed, to which I have already referred, Morris says, "Víðalin told us of it that many stories were current of it and of Swala's witchcraft, and repeated a rhyme that says how the day will come when the big house of Swala-stead shall be lower than the cot of Víðidalstongue."

A few pages later he says that when they were riding at the head of Hvammfirth, an old parson at whose home they had made a brief stop pointed out the places of interest in that locality:

Then we went out and he showed us above the house Auð's Thing- stead and doom-ring, and close by the temple of those days; though Auð herself was a Christian, and would have herself buried on the foreshore between high and low watermark, that she might not lie wholly in a heathen land: they show you a big stone on the beach that they call her gravestone: but 'tis covered now by the tide.

Moreover, in many cases Morris's visits to the scenes of the sagas seem to have changed his conception of tales he already knew and to have helped him to understand the characters and their actions more fully. Thus, when he is describing the horrible aspect of the mountains as they are passing Skialdbreið on their outward journey in 1871, he writes that "...just over this gap is the site of the fabulous or doubtful Thorisdale of the Grettis-Saga; and certainly the

1. Collected works, VIII, 97.
2. Ibid., VIII, 111. See also ibid., VIII, 141, 11.2-5.
ight of it threw a new light on the way in which the story-teller meant his tale to be looked on. ¹ Much later in the Journal he says of Fagraskógarfjall, one of the haunts of Grettir, in the Mires, "It was such a savage dreadful place, that it gave quite a new turn in my mind to the whole story, and transfigured Grettir into an awful and monstrous being, like one of the early giants of the world."²

It is clear from remarks that Morris made in the accounts of both trips that he was deeply moved by his visits to the scenes of the sagas. As he describes the approach to Thingvellir he writes, "My heart beats, so please you, as we near the brow of the pass, and all the infinite wonder, which came upon me when I came up on the deck of the Diana to see Iceland for the first time, comes on me again now, for this is the heart of Iceland that we are going to see: nor was the reality of the sight unworthy...."³ A few lines later, as he draws closer to the place, he remarks, "Once again that thin thread of insight and imagination, which comes so seldom to us, and is such a joy when it comes, did not fail me at this first sight of the greatest marvel and most storied place of Iceland."⁴ When he is writing of his second visit to Lithend in 1873, he states,

It was the same melancholy sort of day as yesterday and all looked somewhat drearier than before, two years ago on a bright evening, and it was not till I got back from the howe and wandered by myself about the said site of Gunnar's hall and looked out thence over

¹ Collected Works, VIII, 77.
² Ibid., VIII, 149.
³ Ibid., VIII, 166.
⁴ Ibid., VIII, 168.
the great grey plain that I could answer to the echoes of the beau-
tiful story - but then at all events I did not fail.

A short time after he had returned to England, at the close of his
second tour, he wrote to a friend,

The journey has deepened the impression I had of Iceland and
increased my love for it. The glorious simplicity of the terrible
and tragic, but beautiful land, with its well-remembered stories of
brave men, killed all querulous feeling in me, and has made all the
dear faces of wife and children and love and friends dearer than ever
to me....surely I have gained a great deal, and it was no idle whim
that drew me there, but a true instinct for what I needed.

Morris's intense interest in everything Scandinavian during the
years 1870 to 1876 - an interest which, as we have seen, led him to
translate a number of Icelandic sagas and several Northern ballads
and induced him to make two trips to Iceland- is reflected also in
several original poems which he wrote at this time. All but one of
these, Sigurd the Volsung, are minor works or fragments; I shall dis-
cuss these shorter poems first, for all of them seem to have been
composed at an earlier date than the Sigurd.

Three of these short pieces - "Iceland First Seen," "Gunnar's
Howe above the House at Lithend," and an unnamed fragment dealing
with Gunnar and Njal- were directly inspired by his visits to Ice-
land. All three are undated, but although two of them were not pub-
lished until 1891, when they appeared in Poems by the Way, and the
third was first printed by Miss May Morris in 1936 in her William
Morris: Artist Writer Socialist, the subject matter of these poems

2. Mackail, William Morris, I, 295. For further references to
Iceland in letters of Morris, see Collected Works, XI, xvii, 11. 30-
31; XII, vii, 11. 27-29, xi, 11. 5-6 , and xvi, 1. 14; XVIII, xxxv,
11. 20-21; and XXIII, xvii, 11. 5-14.
makes it almost certain that they were written in the early 1870's. 2

In "Iceland First Seen," a short piece consisting of six seven-line stanzas in anapestic hexameters rhyming ababacc, Morris represents himself as asking, as he catches his first glimpse of the bleak, mountainous country, what it is he has come to see in this desolate land, and he answers that it is Iceland's glorious past which has drawn him thither; he goes on to say that even when Balder returns to the earth and all sorrow and pain come to an end, it will be pleasant to dream of the days of old, when men lived nobly and courageously, although faced with inevitable defeat and ruin. According to his Journal of his first visit to Iceland, he obtained his first glimpse of the country when the "Diana" sailed into Berufjörður on July 13, 1871 to land some passengers at the trading-station of Djúpivogur; no places are mentioned in the poem, but the description of the scene given in the opening stanza agrees with the account of Berufjörður in the Journal, so that this must have been the spot which inspired him to write these lines.

The second poem occasioned directly by his visit to Iceland, "Gunnar's Howe above the House at Lithend," is rather brief, consisting of only twenty hexameter lines. Here Morris describes his feelings as he stands at dusk one day, while the moon is shining feebly in the Northern summer sky, before the mound in which lies the famous Gunnar of the Njáls saga; he laments that noble

1. In the case of the third poem Miss Morris notes that the handwriting likewise places it in this period; she says it is "written in the fine script of the seventies...." (in her William Morris, I, 462).

2. Collected Works, IX, 125-126.

3. Ibid., VIII, 19-20.

4. Ibid., IX, 179.
deeds of the past can be so quickly forgotten that a man can now stand in this spot with unbated breath,
As I name him that Gunnar of old, who erst in the hay-making tide
Felt all the land fragrant and fresh, as amidst of the edges he died.
Too swiftly fame fadeth away, if ye tremble not lest once again
The grey mound should open and show him glad-eyed without grudging or pain.
Little labour methinks to behold him but the tale-teller laboured in vain.

Little labour for ears that may hearken to hear his death-conquering song,
Till the heart swells to think of the gladness undying that overcame wrong.

In these lines Morris is obviously referring to the account given in Chapter LXXVII of the Njáls saga of how one night shortly after his death Gunnar's mound opened and Skarphedinn and Högni, Gunnar's son, saw and heard Gunnar singing within. Morris records in the Journal of his first trip to Iceland in 1871 that he visited Lithend on July 21st, and says that he saw Gunnar's mound first in the early evening and again, the same day, just before midnight. It was almost certainly this second visit that provided the setting for his poem; in his Journal he writes of it as follows: "... it must have been about eleven at night as we passed the howe again: the moon was in the western sky, a little thin crescent, not shining at all as yet, though the days are visibly drawing in, and the little valley was in a sort of twilight now: so to camp and into our tents away from the heavy dew: the wind

1. Collected Works, IX, 179.
north-west and sky quite cloudless." According to his account of his second journey to Iceland, he saw Lithend again in the summer of 1873 on his way from Reykjavik to Steppafir. On the outgoing trip the party passed by without stopping, but when Morris and his friends returned, they halted for a rest at that farm and Morris revisited Gunnar's Howe; he says, however, that the day was dreary and that he did not at all feel moved by the associations of the spot as he had been two years before. Undoubtedly it was the visit in July, 1871, that inspired the poem under consideration, and very likely Morris wrote the piece at this time or shortly thereafter.

The third poem on Iceland, as I have already stated, is only a fragment. After expressing his longing for the days of old when men lived bravely and nobly and even in defeat gained fair fame, Morris says he will try to sing of these past days while waiting for their return, and he then abruptly begins to describe the site of Gunnar's home at Lithend, with Fleetlithe to the north and Eyjafell to the east, pointing out to his imaginary companion the path of green on the hill where Gunnar lived and died and telling his friend that it is impossible from this spot to see Bergthorsknoll, where Njal and Sharphedinn lie at rest. At this point the poem ends.

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2. See ibid., VIII, 198 and 207.
4. The printed text has "Skarphedinn" for "Skarphedinn"; this mistake is evidently due to a misreading of the manuscript, for it is difficult to believe that Morris himself could have made such an error.
The fragment that we have gives little indication of what Morris originally intended to do in this piece; it is possible that he had planned to retell briefly the story of Gunnar and Njáll, using the actions of these men to exemplify the way of life that he had praised at the opening of the poem. Both this piece and the one discussed just before it reveal the deep impression that the Njáls saga, which he first read in Dasent’s translation, had made on Morris; undoubtedly his visits to the scenes of the tale had made the story even more vivid. For the metrical form of the poem Morris chose seven-line stanzas rhyming ababacc, each line containing seven accents; in this use of fourteen-syllable lines, as Miss Morris points out, Morris foreshadows the choice of metre he was to make for his Sigurd the Volsung.

Three other poems which were printed for the first time in Poems by the Way in 1891 were the result of Morris’s Scandinavian studies. Only one of these, “The Raven and the King’s Daughter,” can be definitely placed in the period 1871 to 1876, the manuscript of this work being dated August, 1872, but the other two also, “Of the Wooing of Hallbiorn the Strong” and “The King of Denmark’s

1. See above, page 43.
3. These three poems are “The Raven and the King’s Daughter” (in Collected Works, IX, 127-131), “Of the Wooing of Hallbiorn the Strong” (ibid., IX, 95-102), and “The King of Denmark’s Sons” (ibid., IX, 140-145).
4. See ibid., IX, xxxv.
Sons," for reasons which I shall state in a moment, were very likely composed in the early 1870's, and are usually assigned to those years by critics.

All three of these poems are written in the ballad style, and are furnished with a double refrain. Two of them deal definitely with Scandinavian material; and the third also, "The Raven and the King's Daughter," although its subject matter cannot be traced directly to Norse sources, seems to have been influenced by the author's Scandinavian studies. Very likely, as I just stated, Morris wrote all three poems during the period now under consideration, when his mind was full of Scandinavian matters and he was translating Danish, Swedish, and Icelandic ballads. Of course, the use of the ballad form with the double refrain cannot be ascribed definitely and solely to the influence of his study of the Scandinavian folk songs, for Morris was also well acquainted with the English and Scottish ballads; however, double refrains are much more usual in the Norse ballads than in the English and Scottish ones, and, besides, some of the refrains Morris introduced distinctly recall Scandinavian refrains, whereas none of them are at all closely paralleled in the English and Scottish ballads, so that

1. See, for example, Collected Works, IX, xxxv.

2. Only one, "The King of Denmark's Sons," is printed, like a ballad, in stanzas; in the other two the double refrain is printed at the beginning and end of each section, but otherwise the lines are printed without any stanzaic division, just as on a page of octosyllabic couplets.
it seems very likely that these three ballad-imitations were, in form at least, the direct result of Morris's interest in Scandinavian folk songs in the years 1870 to 1876.

"The Raven and the King's Daughter" tells of a princess who has been shut up by her father in a tower and who seeks information about her lover Olaf from a raven. On its first visit the bird relates that it has seen Olaf sailing to battle in the company of Steingrim, and it says that he was then singing a song, promising to return and win his love. For this information the girl gives the raven a ring. A short time later the bird comes back to tell the princess that Olaf distinguished himself in the battle, and that he is now lying asleep on his ship; it adds that before the fight Steingrim promised to unite Olaf with his love. The next day at daybreak Steingrim brings Olaf, dead, to the bed of the princess, and she dies at once.

The names "Olaf" and "Steingrim" indicate that this story deals with Scandinavian characters, but so far as I know, the poem is not a translation of any Norse ballad and is not based on any immediate Scandinavian source. However, although the story as a whole is apparently Morris's own, he seems to have drawn some of its details at least from the Scandinavian and English

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1. In the case of the ballad translations I discussed above, Morris stated at the head of each poem that it was a rendering; the absence of such a statement in the case of the three pieces I am now discussing is a fairly reliable indication that they are not translations.
ballads. For example, in several of these folk songs, as in Morris's poem, birds are represented as carrying messages or news; in regard to Morris's selection of a raven for this purpose in his tale, it is interesting to note that in the English and Scottish ballads the birds which play the part of messengers are described as hawks, parrots, starlings, magpies, popinjays, nightingales, larks, cocks, or simply as birds, but never, it seems, as ravens, whereas in the Scandinavian folk songs they are regularly given the name "ravens." Moreover, the account at the close of Morris's poem of the death of the princess upon the lifeless body of her lover is paralleled, roughly at least, in a great many ballads. Finally, the refrain which Morris uses in this ballad-imitation,

Fair summer is on many a shield
Fair sing the swans 'twixt firth and field,

may very likely have been suggested to him by the refrains in the


2. I should like to point out that in one Scandinavian ballad we actually do meet with an imprisoned girl who seeks aid by means of a raven; the rest of the story is entirely different from Morris's poem, but this ballad is the only one of the Scandinavian and English folk songs, to the best of my knowledge, in which these two incidents are combined. For versions of this ballad see Danmarks Folkeviser, ed. Grundtvig, II, 199-201; Svenska Folk-Visor, edd. Geijer and Afzelius, II, 195-200; and Islenzk Fornkvægli, edd. Grundtvig and Sigurðsson, I, 38-52.


Icelandic ballads "Vallara kvæði" and "Draumkvæði," for in the the first of these the refrain is

- skín á skildi -
- sol og sumarið fríða -

and in the second it runs

um sumarlánga tið:
min líljan fríði,
fagurð sýngur svanrinn.

Both these ballads are printed in Grundtvig and Sigurðsson's Íslensk Fornkvæði, 1 with which we have already seen that Morris was acquainted.

"Of the Wooing of Hallbiorn the Strong" bears the subtitle "A Story From the Land Settling Book of Iceland, Chapter XXX." 2 In this poem Morris follows fairly closely the story told in the Landnámabók of Hallbiorn's visit to Odd of Tongue, his marriage to Odd's daughter, Hallgerd, the slaying of Hallgerd by Hallbiorn because of her refusal to accompany him home in the spring, the death of Hallbiorn at the hands of Snæbiorn, and the end of Snæbiorn on Gumbiorn's skerries. As is to be expected, Morris makes the tale somewhat longer and fuller, adding descriptive details, dialogue, and a little sentiment; but he does not depart from the main facts of his original, and the ballad style in which he writes the poem helps him to preserve much of the terseness, restraint,

1. I, 110 and III, 55.
2. See above, page 150.
3. Collected Works, IX, 95-102. The exact reference to the Landnámabók is Part II, Chapter XXX.