SOME CHAPTERS OF THE STORY OF THE MEN OF WEAPONFIRTH WITH OTHER FRAGMENTS OF MANUSCRIPT AND DECORATION

BY WILLIAM MORRIS
THE STORY OF THE MEN OF WEAPON FIRTH

CHAP. 1. Brekkja slayeth Svart

A MAN dwelt at Hof in Wapen-firth who was
called Helgi: he was the son of Thorstein, the son
of Olvir, the son of Asgald, the son of Osen. Thor
Olvir was a Lord of Land in Norwae in the days
of Earl Hakon Grisgardsson. Thorstein the White
was the first of that kin who came out to Iceland;
he dwelt at Toft-meads out from Eric stead, while
Stamiburn, son of Ref, the Red, dwelt at Hof, who
failing in money because of his open-handedness, Thor
stein bought the lands of Hof from him, and dwelt
there sixty winters: he had to wife Ingiberg, daughter
of Hredgar the White. Then Thorgils, the son
of Thorstein and father of Bridd, Helgi took the
house of Thorstein. Thorkel and Hedin slew Thorghils, the father of Brodd Helgi, whereas Thorstein the White took the house again, and fostered Brodd Helgi his son's son. Helgi was big, strong and hardy, fair and manly. He was of few words in his young days, self-willed and unsparing from his youth up, ready-witted and wilful.

It is told of him, that on a day at Hof the next were at the milking-place, and with them was a certain bull of those fishmen, and there came another bull and gored this bull: but the lad Helgi was without and saw that their bull was put to the work, and gave place: so he took a shoe-spike, and bound it to the brea of the bull, who thereafter discomfited the other. From this hap was he called Brodd Helgi, and was peerless of prowess among all such as were.
growing up in that country-side

There was one Swart, who came out hither, and set up house in Weapenforth; next to whom dwell a man named Skidi, a lackeyman: Swart was a big man, and mighty of strength, a good man at arms and a most masterful man. Swart and Skidi wrangled over certain pastureage, the end of which was that Swart slew Skidi: Brodd helgi followed up the blood suit, and made Swart guilty therefor; and Brodd helgi was then twelve winters old. Thereafter Swart lay out on the heath called Butter-mere heath a little way from Sunnudale, and plundered the beasts of the Hof folk, and did them more damage than he needed.

So the shepherd at Hof came home one even, and went to the shut-bed room of old Thurstein whereas
he lay sightless, and Thorstein asked: "How has it gone today, fellow?"

As bad as may be, said the other, the best of the shepherds is gone and three others.

They will have gone to other folks' sheep, and will come back, said Thorstein.

"Nay nay, said the shepherd, they will never come back." Well, say what thou wilt to me, said Thorstein, but speak nought of it before Broddbelgi.

Now Broddbelgi asked the shepherd what had beitid that day: and he had even the same answer from him as Thorstein had had. Broddbelgi made as if he heard it not, and went to his bed that night; but when other men were asleep, he arose and took his shield and went out: they say of him that he took a flag-stone broad and thin and set the one end on
his breeches, and the other on to his breast; he had in
his hand a great pole-axe, long-shafted.
So he fared till he came to the sheep-house, and trampled the slot thence, for the snow was on the ground.
so came he on to Buturdæ: mere, heath up from Sunna-
dale. Swart came forth, and saw a man draw ing nigh him, and asked who he was, and Brodd-
hegi told of himself. So, quoth Swart,
Thou hast a mind to go find me, and thou
shalt not be baulked of thy errand: and thercath
he ran at him, and thrust at him with a great hal-
bard; but Brodd-hegi gave a turn of his shield,
and the stroke came on to the outermost of the shield,
and on to the flag-stone, and turned from it so
sharply, that Swart fell forward with the stroke,
and Brodd-hegi smote the leg from off him.
Then said $warr$: Now is proven the odds betwixt the good hap of thee, and of me, and thou wilt be my banesman: but a curse shall be upon thy race henceforward, that shall endure ever while the land is peopled.

So then Broddhelgi smote him his death-blow. Now wakeneth old Thaustern at home at Hof, and goeth from his own bed and cometh to Broddhelgi, and lo, it was cold: so he waketh up the house-circles, and biddeth them go seek Broddhelgi. So they, when they came out, tracked him all the way, and found him where $warr$ lay dead: so they covered up $warr$'s body, and had away with them all that was worth taking.

Broddhelgi was wide famed, and much praised of all folk for this deed that he had wrought.
Chap. 11: Brodhegelv wedded Halla.

In those days Thórstein dwelt at Hof, and Brodhegelv grew up with him, their dwelt at Crosswick the Outer a man named Lyting, who was the son of Óláfrson of Asbiorn the son of Olaf Longneck; he was a wise man, and wealthy enough: he had to wife Thórdís, daughter of Hermóðrson of Arnfinn: they had two sons who came into this story, one named Geitir, and the other Blángr; Lyting had daughters also Halla, and Rannveig, who was wedded in Klifshagi of Aðalrís to a man named Ólav.

Now these brethren, the sons of Lyting, were much of an age with Brodhegelv, and there was great friendship between them, and Brodhegelv wedded...
Halla the sister of those brethren: their daughter was Thórdís Todd, whom Helgi Askinnson wedded. 
Bjarni was the younger of their sons and Styrm the elder. Bjarni was fostered by Geitir at Crosswick. 
Blénar was mighty of strength, but haled somewhat in his gait. Geitir wedded Hallrætt, daughter of Thórhundr, a kinswoman of the sons of Drauplaufgi.
Such good friendship there was between Broddhelyn and Geitir, that they met nigh every day, and men talked much of how great their friendship was.
In those days dwelt a man in Bannadale Thormod by name who was called Stíck-bleak: he was son of Steinbiorn Kaftar, and brother of Reyn of Reyestead, and Eal of Ealstead. The children of Eald were: Thorarin, Hallbiorn Thrush, and
Hallfrid, whom Thorkel son of Geitir had to wife. The sons of Thormod were Thorstein, and Eyvind, and the sons of Rolf Stein and Heidar: all these were Thingmen of Geitir: he was a very wise man.

Brodhelgi and Halla were of good accord together. Óstric was fostered in Areforth with Thorvald's Skin.

Brodhelgi was a wealthy man.

Chap III. Of Brodhelgi and Geitir and the Eastmen.

On a summer, saith the tale, came a ship out to Weaponforth; the skipper thereof was a man named Thorleif, and by named the Christened; he had a house at Crosswick in Reydarforth, and was stepson of Aðbin Stockhead.
another skipper there was, named Hrafn. None of
him, wealthy, and well furnished of good things.
A ring, a man of few words and wellincl'd.

It is told that he had a gold ring, which he bore
ever on his arm, and a chest that he kept of tur-
under his bed, and which men deemed full of
gold and silver.

Thalif feared home to his house at Croswick,
but the Eastmen guested about. Brodd-heilgi rode
to the ship and bade the skipper abide with him,
but the Eastman said he would not go thither:
For I am told of thee that thou art proud and
grazing, whereas I am lowly and of measure,
so that we shall not go well together.
Brodd-heilgi would buy good things of him, for
he was a very shrewd man; but Hrafn said he
would not sell his goods on credit. Breddhelgi answered: Thou hast brought my journey to a
seamly end forsooth, refused my building, and gain
sage my market.
Geirr also came to the ship, and found the
skipper, and said that he had done unwise
in mocking the noblest man of the country-side.
The Eastman answered: Well, I was minded
to guest at some borders or other: evil those
take me, saith he.
Geirr was slow to answer, but at last it came
about that he took the skipper home; the crew
guested elsewhere, and the ship was laid up.
A storehouse was gotten for the Eastman to store
up his goods in, and he sold, some small coorses.
But when Winternights were come, Egils sons
had an autumn feast, and both Broddhelgi and Geitir were there; Broddhelgi went first and sat innermost, for he was a very proud man. It was no little talked of that Broddhelgi and Geitir would talk together so thick and fast that none other got speech or pleasure of them. So the feast came to an end and each went to his own home.

In the winter was there holden a play of many men at a stead called Hagi a little way from Hof, and Broddhelgi was there. Geitir pressed the Eastman much to go to this meeting, saying that he would find many of his debtors there, so they went thither, and he babbled much about his debts.

But when the play was done, and men were
arrayed to depart. Breedhegi sat in the hall, talking to his Thingmen. Therewith came a man into the hall who told them that Hrafn the Eastman was slain, and of the slayer none knew. So Breedhegi went, and spake as deeming ill of the deed that had been done.

The burial of Hrafn was seemly done after the manner of those days.

There was a man named Torfi, who dwelt at Gudmundstead, a big man and mighty of strength, who was a friend of Breedhegi and Geitir: he was missing all that day whereon the Eastman was slain; and it was some men's talk about the death of Hrafn, that he had been led into a pitfall, and destroyed thereby.
The word passed between Broddhegi and Geitir, that either of them should have half of Strafnis goods, and that they should not divide them before the spring thing was over: so Geitir took the wares to him in the spring, and stored them in his outbox.

Thorleif the Christians arrayed his ship in the spring for the outward voyage, and was all ready by the Spring Thing. But when the time thereof was come then faced men to the Thing in Sunnadal, and both Broddhegi and Geitir went, and at many steads were there but few men at home. So when the Thing was far spent, on a morning early Thorleif waketh up his shipmates, and they leap into their boats, and row to Crosswick; neither go they up,
and unto Geitir's bower, and unlock it and bear away all the goods that were Itrafnis, and flit them to their ship. Halla Lytings daughter was there, and meddled nought with them.

Now fareth Broddhelgi home from the Thing with Geitir; but before they came home it was told them that Thorleif had taken away all Itrafnis's goods, and would flit them away out of the land. Broddhelgi looked thus at it, that Thorleif had done unlawsfully and would have to give the goods up if they came on him. So they fare out to the cheapingship in many craft and small; and when they had made their greeting, Broddhelgi bade Thorleif give up the goods. Thorleif said he knew but little of laws, but that he deemed...
Brodhhelgi answered: We are not minded to have come a bootless errand.

Answered Thoralfi: We will all fight about it before thou shalt have a penny.

Hear ye, said Brodhhelgi, what this man of no worth is saying; we shall surely find a time to make you smart for it.

Then Geitir took up the word and spake:
I deem it ill-counselled to fall on them in our small craft: and we wot not but there may come foul weather, and they may drive ashore; and then may we do with them as seemeth us good.

This was well thought of, by all, and that counsel they took: the Leinnir
they put back to land, and Broddhelgi fared home with Geitir and abode with him certain nights. Thorleif got a wind straightway, and had a fair voyage, and brought the heirs the goods that Haral had owned; and they thanked him much thereafter, and gave him their share of the ship: and so they parted good friends.

Chap. IV Of ill will between Broddhelgi and Geitir.

BRODDHELGI was somewhat heavy of heart that summer, and longed much for the coming of Thorleifs. At every assembly of folk Broddhelgi and Geitir met, and talked over the losing of the money: and Broddhelgi asked what was become of the chest which Haral had owned. But Geitir said he knew not whether...
Thorleif had taken it out with the other money, or
that perchance the Eastman had it with him.
I deem rather, said Broddhelgi, that thou know
est all about it.

Said Geitir: Where is that ring which he had
on his arm when he was slain?

I saw not, said Broddhelgi: but this I saw,
that he had it not in the grace with him.

And so at every meeting of men when they came
together, Helga asked after the chest, and Geitir
after the ring, and they fell out about it: and
so it came to pass that each thought the other
stood somewhat in his way, and they began to be
cold one to another.

But the next summer came a ship out to Rey-
dar: first owned of Thorleif the Christened, and