

HEIMSKRINGLA, THE SAGA OF KING OLAF TRYGGVASON:

Eyvind Kelda's Death.

When spring (A.D. 998) came King Olaf went out to Viken, and was on visits to his great farms. He sent notice over all Viken that he would call out an army in summer, and proceed to the north parts of the country. Then he went north to Agder; and when Easter was approaching he took the road to Rogaland with 300 (=360) men, and came on Easter evening north to Ogvaldsnes, in Kormt Island, where an Easter feast was prepared for him.

That same night came Eyvind Kelda to the island with a well-manned long-ship, of which the whole crew consisted of sorcerers and other dealers with evil spirits. Eyvind went from his ship to the land with his followers, and there they played many of their pranks of witchcraft. Eyvind clothed them with caps of darkness, and so thick a mist that the king and his men could see nothing of them; but when they came near to the house at Ogvaldsnes, it became clear day. Then it went differently from what Eyvind had intended: for now there came just such a darkness over him and his comrades in witchcraft as they had made before, so that they could see no more from their eyes than from the back of their heads but went round and round in a circle upon the island.

When the king's watchman saw them going about, without knowing what people these were, they told the king. Thereupon he rose up with his people, put on his clothes, and when he saw Eyvind with his men wandering about he ordered his men to arm, and examine what folk these were. The king's men discovered it was Eyvind, took him and all his company prisoners, and brought them to the king. Eyvind now told all he had done on his journey. Then the king ordered these all to be taken out to a skerry which was under water in flood tide, and there to be left bound. Eyvind and all with him left their lives on this rock, and the skerry is still called Skrattasker.