

= Augvald =

The name " Ofstad " or " af Awaldzstadom " comes from Augvald ( Old Norse : Ogvaldr ) was a semi @-@ legendary Norwegian petty king portrayed in the legendary Norse sagas . If considered historical , reconstructed estimates based on saga information would have Augvald living some time in the 7th century AD . His kingdom was said to have been based in Jøsursheid , somewhere in the interior of south @-@ western Norway . After a number of naval battles he succeeded in conquering the islands off the western coast of Rogaland . He subsequently moved his kingdom 's seat to the north @-@ east of Karmøy , the largest of those islands and adjacent to the strategically important Karmsund strait , to a site later given the name Avaldsnes , after the king . Augvald 's kingdom further expanded to incorporate parts of what is today south @-@ western Hordaland .

Augvald had several daughters , including two who notably fought alongside him as so @-@ called shield @-@ maidens , or female warriors . He owned and worshipped a sacred cow , which he always kept with him , believing he owed his victories to the cow and the power of its milk . Augvald was killed during a battle with his rival Ferking , the native king of western Karmøy , with whom his story is interlinked .

= = Name = =

Augvald 's name ( originally Ogvaldr ) has been interpreted in several different ways , although usually taken to mean " he who is held in awe , " derived from the West @-@ Nordic agi meaning holy unrest and tremor . Other interpretations include " the ruler of the coast " , with ogð meaning stretch of coastline , or " the ruler of the island " , with ogn meaning dangerous waters / island , which would imply that the king 's name might originally have been either Ogðvaldr or Ognvaldr . It has also been suggested that Augvald was probably an epithet gained in adulthood rather than a given name , and there has been speculation that Augvald was actually Harald Agdekonge . Some historians have alternatively suggested that Augvald could have been a title , possibly shared by many , rather than the name of a single individual , but the saga 's account of Augvald may still have centred on one particularly notable individual .

= = Background = =

The sagas do not say when Augvald lived , but an early suggestion by Torfæus placed Augvald in the 3rd century AD . Modern estimates have been made based on two of his reported descendants , Geirmund and Håvard Heljarskinn , who are said to have settled Iceland as " old men " when Harald Fairhair consolidated his power in Norway . According to an estimate by Marit Synnøve Veia based on generation @-@ cycles of 30 years ( though she notes 25 years might be more accurate ) , Augvald would have lived in the Migration Period , with slightly varied interpretations around 580 ? 630 , around 600 or in the early 7th century . Arnfrid Opedal has considered a shorter generation @-@ cycle of 20 years , which would place Augvald 90 years later , at the end of the 7th century .

To justify their right to rule , Norse royal families , among other things , traced their bloodlines back to divine creatures . As a member of the West @-@ Nordic royal families , Augvald traced his ancestry back to the ancient giant Fornjót ( likely another name for Ymir ) . According to the sagas , Augvald was the son of Rognvald , in turn the son of Rugalf , son of Gard Agdi , son of Nórr ? a direct descendant of Fornjót . Augvald originally had his throne at " Roga " in " Jøsursheid " . Historian P. A. Munch located the name Jøsursheid in Kvitesid in western Telemark , and thus placed Augvald 's kingdom in the mountains between Rogaland and Telemark , concluding that the kingdom had stretched to western Telemark . Per Hernæs has on the other hand identified Jøsursheid as an old name for the moorland within Jøsenfjorden in Hjelmeland , although he questions whether conditions in the area could have allowed for the rise of a great chieftain such as Augvald .

Described as battle @-@ hungry , Augvald carried out raids into foreign territory , gaining great wealth and honour as a result . After a series of successful naval battles , he went on to conquer the

land of the Holmrygr ( " island @-@ Rugi " ) people , based on the islands off the western coast of Rogaland . He banished the former chieftains from the newly conquered land , and set up his new base at the most favourable location on Karmøy , the largest island in Rogaland . The site he chose was later named Avaldsnes , after Augvald . Based on archaeological findings , it is believed that the ambitions of the increasingly powerful Norwegian chieftains of the time were influenced by the Merovingian Franks , and especially Dagobert and his empire . As a builder of dynasties , Augvald has also been compared to Clovis .

Convinced that his cow was responsible for his victories , Augvald worshipped it and always kept it by his side . He also believed that the cow 's milk provided special strength and vitality . According to some accounts , the cow 's name was Audhumla ( after Auðumbla ) , and it wore a golden collar around its neck .

Augvald had several daughters , including two who were female warriors , known as shield @-@ maidens ( Norwegian : skjöldmøyer ) , and who fought alongside their father in all his battles . Augvald 's ( unnamed ) queen also gave birth to a son , Jøsur , when Augvald was away hunting with his men . Jøsur was raised by Augvald 's earl Gunnvald on Stord .

= = Rivalry with Ferking and death = =

Augvald had set up his base in the north @-@ eastern part of Karmøy , but the western part of the island was still ruled by another king , Ferking . The two were not enemies at first , but that changed after Augvald and his men attended a midwinter sacrificial banquet in Ferkingstad . What started as a friendly visit turned sour , and Augvald returned home with his men , leaving his daughters held captive at Ferkingstad .

Ferking apparently could not tolerate Augvald 's overlordship of Karmøy , and he went north with his army , meeting Augvald and his army at Skeie , near Avaldsnes . In the resulting battle there many fatalities , but no clear victor . The conclusive battle took place at the Field of Stava ( Stavasletta ) , near Ferkingstad . Ferking and his men hid between two gorges , waiting for Augvald to appear . In the fierce battle that followed Augvald and his cow were among the many who lost their lives . When his two daughters saw that Augvald was dead , they jumped into a river and drowned .

According to Snorri Sturluson , Augvald was killed by a man named Varin , although the Flateyjarbok says it was someone called Dixin . The Saga of Half & His Heroes names Augvald 's killer as " Hækling 's men " , which possibly only refers to caped men .

= = Aftermath = =

According to historical sources , Augvald and his cow were taken from the battlefield and buried at Avaldsnes . In his Saga of Olav Tryggvason , Oddr Snorrason writes that Tryggvason excavated two mounds on Karmøy , revealing the bones of a man in one and those of a cow in the other . Local legends contradict Augvald 's burial at Avaldsnes , stating instead that he was buried in Ferkingstad , on the south side of the 12th @-@ century churchyard . A large memorial stone , still standing , was raised outside the churchyard in memory of Augvald .

In the generations following Augvald 's death two royal dynasties appear to fight over the same region , the " Vikar dynasty " of Agder and Rogaland , and the " Jøsur dynasty " of Hordaland and Rogaland . If Augvald was indeed Harald Agdekonge , as suggested by some modern historians , Vikar and Jøsur could have been two warring brothers . In any event , Augvald 's son Jøsur became king of Rogaland after his father 's death , and reconquered parts of Hordaland . He was in turn succeeded by his son Hjør , who was buried in Rogaland . Hjør 's son , Hjørleiv the Womanizer , was king of Hordaland and Rogaland , and mounted expeditions to Bjarmaland and Denmark . He eventually also captured a kingdom in Zealand , in Denmark . Hjørleiv 's son Half appears as the protagonist in the Saga of Half & His Heroes .

= = Family tree = =

The following tables show the most common rendering of the family tree attributed to Augvald in the various sagas , including his ancestors and descendants .

= = = Historical fiction = = =

Utvik , Aadne ( 1995 ) . Augvalds saga og Avaldsnes . Haugesund : Worum's Forlag . ISBN 8299367018 .