

= Olvir Rosta =

Olvir Rosta (Old Norse : Ölvir Rósta , and Ölvir Þorljótsson) , also known as Aulver Rosta , is a character within the mediaeval Orkneyinga saga , who is purported to have lived during the early 12th century . His Old Norse byname , rósta , means " brawl " , " riot " . His name , and byname , appear variously in English secondary sources .

Ölvir appears in the saga as the son of Þorljót , and Steinnvör ' the Stout ' . The mother of Steinnvör is Frakökk , who has been described as one of the great villains of the entire saga . One of Frakökk 's sisters , Helga , is the concubine of Earl Hákon Pálsson . Part of the saga relates of how the Earldom of Orkney is for a time jointly run by half @-@ brothers ? Haraldr Hákonsson and Páll Hákonsson , who are both sons of Earl Hákon . With the death of Earl Haraldr , son of Helga , Frakökk 's family falls out of favour , and are forced to leave Orkney . In time , Frakökk conspire with the father of Earl Rögnvaldr , and agrees to a plan to take the Orkney by force and split it with Earl Rögnvaldr . She and Ölvir eventually make their way to the Suðreyjar , and may their return in a bid to win half of the earldom . However , their small fleet of ships are defeated in battle against Earl Páll . The saga also tells of how Ölvir kills an Orkney chieftain who fought against him during the sea @-@ battle ? by burning the man to death within his house . The chieftain 's vengeful son later tracks down Ölvir and Frakökk , at their own home in Sutherland . After a short battle behind their homestead , Ölvir 's men are routed and Frakökk is burned to death within her house ; Ölvir flees from the scene , making for the Suðreyjar , and is not heard from again .

Ölvir has also been associated with several places in Sutherland , some of which may bear his name . It has been proposed that Ölvir Rosta may be an ancestor of either one of two Scottish clans from the Outer Hebridean island of Lewis . In 1962 a runestone was uncovered in the Inner Hebrides which bore the name Ölvir . It has been suggested that the men mentioned on this stone were family relations of Ölvir .

= = Background = =

Ölvir Rósta , is a character in the mediaeval Orkneyinga saga . His name in Old Norse is Ölvir rósta . The 17th @-@ century Icelandic historian Þormóður Torfason , who wrote Latin histories which covered events the Northern Isles and north @-@ east of Scotland , rendered Ölvir 's name as Aulver Rosta . Ölvir 's byname , rósta , means " brawl " , " riot " . Both his name and byname are represented various ways in English secondary sources . The saga describes him as " the tallest of men , and strong in limb , exceedingly overbearing , and a great fighter " .

The Orkneyinga saga states that Ölvir was the son of Þorljót , from Rekavík . The 19th @-@ century historian Joseph Anderson was of the opinion that Rekavík likely refers to Rackwick on the island of Hoy , Orkney ; or possibly , but less likely , to Rackwick on the island of Westray , Orkney . The saga states that Ölvir 's mother was Þorljót 's wife , Steinnvör ' the Stout ' . Ölvir 's parents had several other children in the saga : sons Magnús , Ormr , Moddan , Eindriði ; and daughter Auðhildr . Steinnvör 's mother is given as Frakökk ; her father was Frakökk 's husband , Ljótr ' Villain ' , from Sutherland . The saga states that Frakökk was a daughter of Moddan , a wealthy and noble farmer from i Dali , " Dale " . According to 21st @-@ century historian Gareth Williams , this probably refers to a dale within the " Dales of Caithness " . The 21st @-@ century historian Barbara Crawford stated that the Dales of Caithness refer to " that part of Caithness which includes the river valleys running down towards the Pentland Firth " . The saga records that another daughter of Moddan 's was Helga , who was the concubine of the Orcadian earl , Hákon Pálsson , and the mother of the earl 's son , Earl Haraldr Hákonsson . According to the saga , Frakökk 's brothers included : Engus ' the Generous ' ; and Earl Óttarr , from Thurso , who is described as " a man worthy of honour " . The saga declares that the descendants of Moddan " were high @-@ born and thought a lot of themselves " , and Williams suggested that they could be related to a powerful dynasty in the Irish Sea zone that included an Óttarr who seized control of the Kingdom of Dublin in 1142 . Williams noted that Frakökk appears as one of the great villains of the Orkneyinga saga . Williams noted that while some of Moddan 's descendants had legitimate claims for the earldom , Frakökk did not ?

however , she made a claim on behalf of her descendants , specifically Ölvir .

Williams was of the opinion that the power base of Moddan , and his son Earl Óttarr , was in Caithness and Sutherland , not in Orkney . The saga states that Frakökk held lands , which according to Williams , were located near the modern town of Helmsdale , Sutherland . Williams noted that the saga specifically states that Frakökk 's husband was from Sutherland. and in consequence , Williams considered that these lands probably passed to her through her marriage . The size of these lands is unknown . Crawford suggested that they covered most of Sutherland : that after the Frakökk 's death , and the departure of Ölvir , the lands were inherited by her relative Eiríkr ' Stay @-@ brail ' (see illustrated family tree) , and in turn by his son , before passing into the possession of the de Moravia family . In Williams ' opinion , Crawford may have exaggerated the extent of these lands somewhat . Williams observed that another base of power for Frakökk and Ölvir may have been the Suðreyjar (" Southern Islands ") ? which can include both the Hebrides , and the Isle of Man . The saga states at one point , Frakökk and Ölvir travelled to the Suðreyjar to gather ships and men ; later the Suðreyjar are the destination of Ölvir in his last appearance in the saga . Williams noted that the Suðreyjar appear many times in the sagas as a target for raids , and conquests , for Orcadian earls ; as well as being the source for attacks on the earldom itself . Williams also noted that it is possible that saga 's association of Frakökk and Ölvir with the Suðreyjar may be a red @-@ herring . He stated that " if there was an Orcadian tradition of the Suðreyjar as a haunt of ne ? er @-@ do @-@ wells , this would provide an alternative explanation for the references within Orkneyinga saga , including those to do with Moddan 's family " . Even so , Williams considered that the saga seems to imply that the family had dynastic connections with important individuals of the Suðreyjar , including ' Óláfr ' Titbit ' , King of Mann and the Isles .

= = Orkneyinga saga = =

The main source for the life of Ölvir is the Orkneyinga saga , which was compiled sometime around 1200 by an unknown Icelander . The saga is thought to have been based upon poetry , oral tradition , and other written material . The original version ended with the death of Sveinn Ásleifarson (who is portrayed as an enemy of Ölvir and Frakökk) . The saga is considered to become more accurate as events approach the writer 's own time . In the late 14th century , the saga was revised and edited and included in the Icelandic Flateyrbók . The saga can be summed up as an account of the lives of many of the earls of Orkney , from the 9th to 13th centuries . According to research fellow Ian Beuermann , the saga is useful not for the specific events it describes , but rather for the ability to learn of " the ideas shaping the texts during the periods of composition or revision " . For example , it is possible that even one of the main characters of the saga , Sveinn Ásleifarson , never existed ; or at least it is quite possible that the historical Sveinn was different from the saga 's portrayal of him . Another source which mentions Ölvir is Þormóður Torfason 's 17th @-@ century history of Orkney , which follows the Orkneyinga saga .

= = Frakökk , and Helga , forced out of Orkney by Earl Páll = =

The Orkneyinga saga relates how after the death of Earl Hákon Pálsson , his sons , Haraldr Hákonsson , and Páll Hákonsson , divided the earldom between themselves . However , the half @-@ brothers soon began to disagree with one another , and their vassals divided into competing factions . The saga relates how one day Frakökk , and her sister Helga (mother of Earl Haraldr) , were sewing a snow @-@ white garment embroidered with gold . This garment was enchanted , and the two sisters had intended it for Earl Haraldr 's half @-@ brother , Earl Páll . Unfortunately for the sisters , Earl Haraldr noticed the beautiful garment and , despite their protestations , put the garment on and soon after died . The saga states that Earl Páll immediately took control of his deceased half @-@ brother 's possessions , and that he was highly suspicious of the two sisters . In consequence , Frakökk and Helga were no longer welcome in the earldom , and they left for Caithness , and from there move to Sutherland where Frakökk had an estate . In time , several of Frakökk 's descendants were brought up in Sutherland ? including her daughter , Steinnvör ' the

Stout ' , and grandson , Ölvir .

= = = Alliance with Earl Rögnvaldr against Earl Páll = = =

The saga relates of how , during an earlier time , Kali Kolsson assisted Haraldr Gille in being recognised as an illegitimate son of the deceased Norwegian king , Magnús ' Barefoot ' . In consequence , the reigning king , Sigurðr Magnússon , was Haraldr Gille 's half @-@ brother . The Norwegian king , appointed Kali as an earl of one half of Orkney , and also had Kali 's name changed to Rögnvaldr (after a prominent earl from the past) . On the death of Sigurðr , his son , Magnús Sigurðarson , succeeded to the kingdom . When Haraldr Gille learned of Sigurðr 's death he gathered his supporters and successfully underwent an ordeal to prove his paternity , and was accepted as king of one half of the kingdom . For three years the joint @-@ kings maintained an uneasy peace with one another , but on the fourth year hostilities finally broke out . A battle was fought where the vastly outnumbered Haraldr Gille was defeated ; in consequence he fled to the protection of the King of Denmark . The following Yule @-@ tide , Haraldr Gille returned to Norway , captured Magnús and maimed him . Haraldr Gille then became king of the entire kingdom . That spring , in recognition for Rögnvaldr 's assistance , the king renewed the grant of islands and the title of earl to Rögnvaldr . James Gray , who summarised the events depicted within the saga , dated the death of Sigurðr Magnússon to the year 1126 ; he dated the capture and mutilation of Magnús Sigurðarson to 1135 .

According to the saga , sometime after Haraldr Gille 's victory over Magnús Sigurðarson , Earl Rögnvaldr 's father , Kolr , sent messengers to Earl Páll , demanding that Earl Páll hand over the lands which the Norwegian king had granted to Earl Rögnvaldr . When Earl Páll refused this , Kolr 's messengers proceeded to Caithness , where Frakökk lived . The messengers related to Frakökk of Kolr 's proposal ? that if she and Ölvir were to defeat Earl Páll , half of the earldom would be theirs . Frakökk agreed to the plan , saying that she would attack in mid @-@ summer ; she promised that during upcoming winter she would gather forces from her kinsmen , friends , and connections in Scotland and the Suðreyjar for the task . The next winter Earl Rögnvaldr and two of his chiefs , Sölmundr and Jón , gathered a force of men and about five or six ships for their expedition . The following summer their forces sailed from Norway to Shetland , where they were well received by the local bondsmen . Meanwhile , Frakökk and Ölvir assembled a small fleet of twelve ships in the Suðreyjar ? although the saga describes the ships as small and poorly manned . At the middle of summer , Frakökk and Ölvir sailed for Orkney to fulfil their pledge of wresting the earldom from Earl Páll .

= = = Sea @-@ battle against Earl Páll = = =

According to the Orkneyinga saga , when Earl Páll herd of Earl Rögnvaldr 's arrival in Shetland , he held council and decided to immediately gather forces and attack Earl Rögnvaldr before he could be reinforced by the incoming men he knew were coming from the Suðreyjar . That night Earl Páll was joined by five chieftains , with four ships ? this brings his total forces to five ships . The fleet sailed to Rousay , where they arrive at sunset . During the night the force is further strengthened by arriving men . In the morning , as the fleet is about to set out for Shetland to meet Earl Rögnvaldr , about ten or twelve ships were spotted coming from the Pentland Firth . Earl Páll and his men were certain these ships were those of Frakökk and Ölvir ; in consequence , the earl ordered the fleet to intercept . The saga states that when Ölvir 's ships were east of Tankerness , they then sailed west from Mulls Head , Deerness . By this time , Earl Páll was further strengthened by a chieftain from Tankerness . The earl then ordered his ships to be bound together , and for a bondi to gather stones for the upcoming battle . When the earl and his troops have fully prepared themselves , the saga states that Ölvir 's forces made their attack .

Although the saga states that the forces of Ölvir were superior in numbers to those of Earl Páll , it also notes that Ölvir 's ships were smaller . Ölvir brought his own ship up next to the earl 's , where the fighting was the fiercest . One of the earl 's chieftains , Ólafr Hrólfsson , attacked Ölvir 's smallest

ships , and cleared three of them in a short time . Ölvir urged his men forward and was the first to board Earl Páll 's own ship . When he spotted Earl Páll , Ölvir threw a spear at him , and although it was blocked by a shield , the force of the blow knocked the earl onto the deck . With the fall of Earl Páll , a great shout goes up ; but just at that moment , one of the earl 's best men , Sveinn ' Breastrope ' , hurled a large stone at Ölvir , hitting him square in the chest and knocked him overboard . Although Ölvir 's men dragged him from the water , it was unclear to the battlers whether he lived or not . Ölvir 's disheartened men were driven off the earl 's ship , and began to withdraw . Ölvir eventually recovered his wits , but was unable to rally his troops ? the battle was lost . Earl Páll pursued Ölvir 's fleeing fleet into the Pentland Firth , before giving up the chase . Five of Ölvir 's ships were left behind , and were captured and manned by the forces loyal to Earl Páll . The earl is later further strengthened by two longships , and his forces swells to twelve ships . The next day , Earl Páll sailed to Shetland , where he destroyed Earl Rögnvaldr 's fleet . Although , Earl Rögnvaldr 's forces remained on Shetland itself , Earl Páll successfully held onto the earldom . Gray stated that these battles were fought in the year 1136 .

= = = Burning of Óláfr Hrólfsson = = =

The Orkneyinga saga states that three days before Yule , Ölvir , and his band of men , arrived in Duncansby . Williams stated that the farm of Duncansby , located near the Dales of Caithness , was then in hands of an Orkney chieftain , Óláfr Hrólfsson . Joshua Prescott stated that Óláfr appears to have been Earl Páll 's main supporter in Caithness ; according to Williams , Óláfr appears to have held these lands directly from the Earls of Orkney , rather than as a family possession . The saga relates of how at Duncansby , Ölvir and his party surprised Óláfr within his own house . They then set fire to the house , and burn Óláfr to death within . Ölvir and his men took all the movable property they could get their hands on , before leaving the scene . When Earl Páll heard of what has happened , he takes @-@ in the slain chieftain 's son , Sveinn Ólafsson . With the death of his father , Sveinn Ólafsson becomes known as Sveinn Ásleifarson ? after his mother . Such house @-@ burnings ? in which individuals are burnt to death , or slain as they flee the fire ? are found throughout the sagas as a part of blood feuds . The saga states that some time later , Sveinn , who has spent time in the Suðreyjar and Atholl , returned to Orkney . On his way , Sveinn he stopped at Thurso , where his accomplice , Ljótólfr , negotiated a truce between Sveinn and Frakökk 's brother , Earl Óttarr . The earl paid Sveinn compensation for the death of Óláfr , and promised his friendship . In return , Sveinn promised to aid Earl Óttarr 's relative , Erlendr Haraldsson , in a possible bid for the earldom of Orkney .

= = = Defeat of Ölvir , and the burning of Frakökk = = =

The saga states that some time later , Sveinn approached Earl Rögnvaldr , and asked the earl for men and ships to take vengeance upon Ölvir and Frakökk who were involved in the burning of his father . The earl consented to this request , and gave Sveinn two ships . Sveinn travelled south to Borgarfiörd , and then west to the trading place of Dúfeyrar . According to Anderson , Borgarfiörd may refer to the Moray Firth ; and Dúfeyrar likely refers to the shore in the parish of Duffus , on the coast of Moray . The saga states that from Dúfeyrar , Sveinn travelled to Ekkialsbakki , and from there went to Atholl , where he met Earl Maddaðr . Anderson stated that Ekkialsbakki , in this case , likely refers to the coast on the Moray Firth , next to Atholl ; The 19th @-@ century historian William Forbes Skene agreed with this , specifically locating it to Findhorn , where ships could enter an estuary and follow a route into Atholl . However , Hermann Pálsson and Paul Geoffrey Edwards , in their 1981 translation of the saga , identified the town of Banff with Dúfeyrar , and the River Oykel with Ekkialsbakki .

The saga then relates how the Earl Maddaðr gave Sveinn guides , and how Sveinn travelled through the interior of the country ? over mountains , and through woods , away from inhabited areas ? until he came upon Strath Helmsdale , near where Ölvir and Frakökk lived . Williams stated that since the saga records that Sveinn approached the area by land , the site of Ölvir and Frakökk

's estate was probably located somewhere in the dale of Helmsdale ? not where the modern village is situated on the coast . Williams also noted that this area was quite remote from Orkney , and that it may have been outside of the control of the earldom . The saga states that Ölvir and Frakökk had spies on the lookout ; however , because of the route taken by Sveinn , they were unaware of his presence until Svienn occupied a certain slope behind their homestead . The saga states that Ölvir and sixty of his men confronted Sveinn , although Þormóður Torfason 's account of the incident gives forty . After a short clash , the saga states that , Ölvir 's men soon gave way , and many were killed in the ensuing rout . Ölvir survived the clash , and fled up Helmsdale river . Meanwhile , Sveinn and his men continued on towards the houses . The area was plundered , and the houses were burnt to the ground with their inmates still inside ? and in this way Frakökk perished . The saga states that Sveinn and his men committed many ravages in Sutherland before returning home . Upon reaching the river , Ölvir fled through the mountains , and is last heard making for the Suðreyjar ; he is not mentioned again within the Orkneyinga saga . Later on within the saga , another of Frakökk 's grandsons , Þórbjörn ' Clerk ' , who is a brother @-@ in @-@ law and close friend of Sveinn , has two of Sveinn 's men killed for their part in the burning .

While the saga records that Frakökk was killed to avenge the burning of Óláfr , recently scholars Angelo Forte , Richard Oram , and Frederick Pedersen , stated that her fate was actually sealed by her support of Erlendr Haraldsson 's bid for the earldom , over the claim of Haraldr Maddaðarson . Haraldr was the son of Earl Maddaðr , and Margrét Hákonardóttir (married in about 1134) . Margrét was a niece of Frakökk , and Earl Maddaðr was possibly a cousin of the David I. The union between Earl Maddaðr and Margrét benefited the Scottish Crown by increasing Scottish influence in the north at the expense of Norwegian influence . Also , in the 1120s and 1130s , David I had faced challenges to his authority . A large part of the support for these challengers came from Moray and Ross ? these lands were directly between the northern lands of Caithness and Orkney , and David 's strength to the south . According to the Forte , Oram , and Pedersen , the prospect of having the son of one his northern supporters as the earl of Caithness was too good for the king to pass up ? especially since Haraldr was still a minor , and would thus be under the direction of an appointed tutor . As it turned out , the installation of Haraldr as an earl of Orkney and Caithness was a triumph for the Scottish Crown : in the 1140s , Sutherland and Caithness were further integrated into the kingdom , and the Norwegian influence in Orkney was neutralised .

= = = = Locations associated with Ölvir , Frakökk , and Sveinn = = = =

Several writers have noted a place which is said to be the location of the burning . The CANMORE website states that a supposed castle in which Frakökk was burned may be located at grid reference NC8728 , near Kinbrace , within the parish of Kildonan . In 1769 , Thomas Pennant noted the episode of the burning , and stated that certain ruins at Kinbrace were called " Cairn Shuin " ; and that these were the remnants of the homestead that Sveinn burnt . Rev. Sage , in his account of the parish in the (Old) Statistical Account of Scotland , noted the ruins mentioned by Pennant ; he called them " Cairn @-@ Suin " , and translated this to " Old Cairns " . Sage , however noted Þormóður Torfason 's account of the burning , and suggested that a possibly more accurate etymology is " Suenes Field " . Pennant stated that " though the ruins are great , yet no man can tell of what kind they were ; that is , whether round like Pictish houses , or not " . According to the CANMORE website , Pennant may have been referring to any of the chambered cairns in the area . The site of the supposed castle was visited by the Ordnance Survey in 1961 , but no evidence of it was found . In the mid @-@ 19th century , Alexander Pope noted " Carn Suin " , and stated that nearby there were certain ruins called " Shu Carn Aulver " . Pope also stated that to the south @-@ west of this location there was a part of Helmsdale river called " Avin Aulver " . Another location he connected with Ölvir was a hill , in the forest of " Sletie " , called " Craggan Aulver " .

= = Speculation of Scottish descendants = =

According to Williams , it is possible that after Sveinn defeated Ölvir and Frakökk , Ölvir may have

fled to kinsmen of his in the Suðreyjar . Williams suggested that the blood feud between the families may be a reason for Sveinn 's military activities in the Hebrides and the Isle of Mann , afterwards ; although Sveinn had other interests in the area , since he is stated to have married the widow of a Manx king . In the late 19th century , antiquary F.W.L. Thomas speculated that the memory of Ölvir may have been preserved in the Hebrides . Thomas stated that within the mythological history of the Outer Hebridean island of Lewis , the island clan of Macaulays were said to be the descendants of a man named Amhlaebh , who was one of the twelve sons , or near relations , of a man named Oliver , among whom Lewis was divided . This Oliver was said to have been the eldest son of the Norse king who was given the Isles and Highlands by a son of Kenneth MacAlpin , for his assistance in driving his own brother from Scotland . Thomas speculated that Oliver could represent Ölvir Rósta ; meaning that he was the progenitor of the Macaulays .

It has also been suggested that Ölvir may be an ancestor of the MacLeods . Until quite recently , it was commonly believed by historians that the eponymous ancestor of the MacLeods , Leod , was the son of Olaf the Black , King of Mann and the Isles . In the late 20th century , William Matheson proposed that the MacLeods descended in the male line from Ölvir Rósta , rather than Olaf the Black . Matheson proposed that , within several Gaelic pedigrees which record ancestors of Leod , the great @-@ grandfather of Leod has Gaelic names which very likely represent the Old Norse name Ölvir . These Gaelic names are considered to equate to other Gaelic names found within the early bardic poetry of the MacLeods . About a century before , Thomas had noted the similarity in these names , when discussing Ölvir , but he did not pursue a specific link between Ölvir and the MacLeods . Matheson speculated that Leod 's great @-@ grandfather would have flourished at roughly the same time as when Ölvir is said to have fled to the Suðreyjar . Matheson noted that Leod 's name is derived from the Old Norse name Ljótr : a name which Matheson considered to be rare in Scandinavia and Iceland , and even more so in Scotland . In consequence , he considered it significant that Ölvir 's maternal grandfather (Ljótr ' Villain ') also had this name . When comparing the relevant Gaelic pedigrees , Matheson noted that they were inconsistent in the generations preceding Leod 's great @-@ grandfather . In lieu of this , Matheson proposed that these inconsistencies may show that the Leod 's great @-@ grandfather was a newcomer to the Hebrides , like Ölvir .

Later , historian W.D.H. Sellar noted Matheson 's proposed link between the MacLeods and Ölvir , but commented that the evidence Matheson used was entirely circumstantial . Sellar was of the opinion that Ölvir was not such a rare name as Matheson had previously thought . Sellar also noted that the genealogy and family of Ölvir , recorded in the Orkneyinga saga , has no similarity with the line recorded in the Gaelic genealogies concerning the ancestry of Leod . Matheson 's association of Ölvir to the Macleods was also attacked by clan historian Alick Morrison . Morrison commented that the name Ljotr was also not as rare as Matheson had proposed . Morrison noted that , in the previous century , Thomas had considered another saga character to be an eponymous ancestor of the MacLeods ? this character was Ljótólf (mentioned earlier in the article) , who would have lived on Lewis about a century before Leod 's time . In fact , Morrison did not consider Ölvir 's name ? and the singled @-@ out Gaelic names ? to be anything but other forms of Óláfr . However , Óláfr and Ölvir are considered by others to be quite different names , with separate origins . Morrison , and Sellar , also noted that the bynames of Ölvir , and Leod 's great @-@ grandfather , do not appear to match up ? in three of the relevant Gaelic pedigrees , the byname of Leod 's great @-@ grandfather appears as snoice , snaige , and snáithe . Thomas considered these bynames to mean " hewer " ; although , both Matheson and Sellar disagreed with this translation . Morrison considered these to equate to snaith , " white " ; ' however , Sellar noted that Morrison gave no further explanation for this assertion . Sellar , himself , proposed that the byname may be not be Gaelic , but Norse in origin . He suggested that it may refer to some sort of deformity to the man 's nose ; another suggestion forwarded to him was that it may refer to a cleft palate . Later , A.P. MacLeod noted that the Gaelic snatha ? which has a secondary meaning of " grief " , and " trouble " ? may be a nominative form of the genitive snaithe , and thus may equate to Ölvir 's byname .

= = Hebridean runes : possible family connections = =

In 1962 , on the Inner Hebridean island of Iona , close to Reilig Odhrain grid reference NM22SE10 , a fragment of a carved stone bearing the runic inscription of a man named Ölvir was found . It is one of only three examples of rune @-@ stones found in the west of Scotland . The fragment is about half the size of the original stone , which would have measured 1 @.@ 11 by 0 @.@ 77 metres (3 @.@ 6 by 2 @.@ 5 ft) . The stone is decorated with a crude knotted cross ; the runes are located on the side , along the border . At the end of the inscription there are a few runes missing , due to the corner having been broken off . The full inscription translates into English : " Kali , son of Ölvir , laid this stone over Fugl his brother " . These three men do not appear in any other sources , and it is unknown who they were . In the 1980s , Norwegian runologist Aslak Liestøl proposed that the stone is evidence that the two brothers were Scandinavian speakers , who were members of a leading family in the district , who had the social status to be buried near Reilig Odhrain . The runic inscriptions , and artwork , suggests that the stone dates to the late 10th century , or 11th century .

Liestøl suggested that the three men were somehow related to Ölvir . Liestøl noted that three names were those of characters in the Orkneyinga saga , which all had connections with the Hebrides . Kali was the original name of Earl Rögnvaldr , whom Ölvir fought for . The earl was named after his grandfather , Kali Sæbjörnarnson , who according to the saga , accompanied Magnús ' Barefoot ' to the Hebrides , and died there of wounds he received on Anglesey . According to Liestøl , the name Fugl , in a West Norse context , is only found on this inscription and of a minor character in the saga . This character was the son of Ljótólfr , from Lewis , who negotiated a truce between Sveinn Ásleifarson and Earl Óttarr . In 1922 , historian Alan Orr Anderson noted that the mediaeval Chronicle of Man records that Fogolt , sheriff of Man , died in 1183 , and Anderson stated that it is possible that Ljótólfr 's son was the mentioned sheriff . Concerning the name Ljótólfr , Liestøl also noted that the saga names Ölvir 's father Þorljót , and his maternal @-@ grandfather Ljótr . He concluded that the men mentioned on the stone likely lived around the year 1000 , about four to six generations before their namesakes in the saga . In consequence , Liestøl suggested that Kali Sæbjörnarnson would have been a contemporary of the children of the rune @-@ stone 's Kali Ölvisson . The stone , among many others , is housed in the museum at Iona Abbey .