

= Magnus II of Norway =

Magnus Haraldsson (Old Norse : Magnús Haraldsson ; c . 1048 ? 28 April 1069) was King of Norway from 1066 to 1069 , jointly with his brother Olaf Kyrre from 1067 . He was not included in official Norwegian regnal lists until modern times , but has since been counted as Magnus II .

A son of King Harald Hardrada , Magnus was in 1058 appointed nominal leader of an expedition into the Irish Sea while still only a child . He appears to have assisted Welsh ruler Gruffydd ap Llywelyn and Ælfgar , Earl of Mercia in their struggles against the English , although his primary objective may have been to assert control over Orkney . He later accompanied his father in Harald 's campaign against Denmark in 1062 , and was appointed regent and made king before Harald 's fatal invasion of England in 1066 . Magnus briefly ruled Norway alone thereafter , until his younger brother Olaf returned from England in 1067 .

Magnus co @-@ ruled with Olaf following his brother 's return to Norway , but less than three years into his reign , Magnus became ill and died . His kingship has been downplayed in later history in part due to this . Magnus had only one child , Haakon Toresfostre who was king briefly after Olaf , but who also died young , and without issue .

= = Early life = =

= = = Background = = =

Magnus was born in 1048 or 1049 . He was the first of two sons of King Harald Hardrada , by his consort Tora Torbergsdatter . There are no known skaldic poems written about Magnus , and he appears only briefly in the Norse sagas . The author of Ágrip af Nóregskonungasögum describes him in passing as " a most handsome man . " While not mentioned anywhere in the sagas , Magnus appears in contemporary British sources around the year 1058 as the leader of a Norwegian expedition in the Irish Sea .

= = = Expedition to the West = = =

In 1058 , Magnus headed an expedition into the Irish Sea that sought to extend Norwegian authority in the region , the Norwegians siding with a faction that opposed the Norse @-@ Gaelic king Echmarcach mac Ragnaill . The expedition also appears to have supported a branch of the Norse @-@ Gaelic dynasty of Ivar that opposed Irish king Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó . Magnus commanded a fleet that , in addition to Norway , recruited men from Orkney , the Hebrides , and Dublin . His forces were later active in Wales and perhaps in England , and English chronicler John of Worcester associates the Norwegian fleet (along with the Welsh ruler Gruffydd ap Llywelyn) , with returning the exiled Ælfgar , Earl of Mercia to power . The Irish Annals of Tigernach goes further in claiming that Magnus 's goal was to seize power in England , but this is not supported by Welsh and English sources which also includes the Annales Cambriae and the Anglo @-@ Saxon Chronicle .

Magnus 's campaign may have been part of his father 's plans for an invasion of England , as control over the Kingdom of the Isles would have provided him with more troops . Historian Kelly DeVries has moreover proposed that Harald may have wanted to test the situation in England before a possible invasion , only to find that he could not be at war with Denmark and England at the same time . The expedition of Magnus never made significant landfall in England , but for English king Edward the Confessor it probably signalled renewed Norwegian ambitions from Harald Hardrada , who considered himself Edward 's rightful heir . At the same time , the rise in power of Godwin , Earl of Wessex and his sons , in particular Harold Godwinson , had also started representing a threat to Harald 's claim .

On the other hand , historian Alex Woolf has suggested that the expedition originally may only have been intended for Orkney , and that in search for plunder it was followed by an expedition into the

Irish Sea that by mere luck presented Magnus with the opportunity of raiding with Earl Ælfgar . The exact year that Thorfinn Sigurdsson , Earl of Orkney died is not recorded anywhere , other than that it is stated in the Orkneyinga saga that it was in the later days of Harald Hardrada . Thus , it may be that his death provoked Magnus 's expedition , and that the expedition was the occasion on which Paul and Erlend Thorfinnsson , Thorfinn 's successors as earls , submitted to Harald . Woolf has also proposed that Magnus may have played some part in the war in Scotland in 1057 ? 1058 , perhaps supporting Máel Coluim mac Donnchada against Lulach .

= = Kingship and death = =

Magnus accompanied his father in Harald 's campaign against Denmark in 1062 . On his way to Denmark , Harald 's fleet clashed with the fleet of Danish king Sweyn Estridsson in a major naval battle at Niså that resulted in Norwegian victory . In 1066 , after concluding peace with Sweyn Estridsson , Harald set out on his campaign of conquering England from Harold Godwinson . Before departing , he appointed Magnus as regent and king of Norway in his absence , and had his younger son Olaf accompany him on the expedition . After initial success in the Battle of Fulford , Harald was defeated and killed by Harold Godwinson in the Battle of Stamford Bridge . Olaf survived and returned to Norway with the remaining troops in early 1067 , and was proclaimed king and co @-@ ruler with his brother Magnus .

Although it was intended for Magnus and Olaf to rule the kingdom jointly without division , in practice Olaf ruled over Viken (the south @-@ eastern part of Norway) , while Magnus controlled the Uplands and Trøndelag (the middle parts of Norway) along with Western Norway and Northern Norway . Despite of this division , there are no signs of hostility between the brothers , and their relationship appears to have been peaceful .

Having reigned for less than three years , Magnus became ill and died in Nidaros (Trondheim) on 28 April 1069 . The sagas posit that Magnus died of ringworm , but modern scholars have proposed that he instead may have died of ergotism (poisoning by the *Claviceps purpurea* fungus) . Snorri Sturluson writes briefly in the Saga of Harald Hardrade that Magnus was " an amiable king and bewailed by the people . "

Magnus 's kingship has been downplayed in later history partly due to his short tenure , and because most of it was together with his brother . The subsequently long reign of Olaf also contributed to overshadow Magnus 's reign , combined with the fact that the later Norwegian royal dynasties only descended (or claimed descent) from Olaf .

The king known today as Magnus VI of Norway (the first Norwegian king known to use regnal numbers) originally used the regnal number IV for himself in contemporary Latin letters , leaving out Magnus Haraldsson . As the numbering system has seen changes in modern times , Magnus Haraldsson is today included as Magnus II .

= = Family = =

Magnus had a son , Haakon Toresfostre , who was probably born the same year that Magnus died . Haakon went on to claim what he considered his part of the kingdom (after his father) in 1093 when his uncle Olaf Kyrre died , and shared the kingdom with his cousin Magnus Barefoot (son of Olaf Kyrre) . Similar to the reign of his father , Haakon 's reign also ended abruptly after a short time as he died young in 1095 .

= = Ancestry = =