

= Guttorm of Norway =

Guttorm Sigurdsson (Old Norse : Guthormr Sigurðarson ; 1199 ? 11 August 1204) was the King of Norway from January to August 1204 , during the Norwegian civil war era . As a grandson of King Sverre , he was proclaimed king by the Birkebeiner party when he was just four years old . Although obviously not in control of the events surrounding him , Guttorm 's accession to the throne under the effective regency of Haakon the Crazy led to renewed conflict between the Birkebeiner and the Bagler parties , the latter supported militarily by Valdemar II of Denmark .

Guttorm 's reign ended abruptly when the child king suddenly became ill and died . Rumours among the Birkebeiner held that Guttorm 's illness and death had been caused by Haakon the Crazy 's future wife Christina Nilsdatter , a claim considered dubious by modern historians . Low @-@ intensity civil war followed Guttorm 's death , until a settlement was reached in 1207 , temporarily dividing the kingdom . Despite his status as king , Guttorm is not included in the official Norwegian regnal list .

= = Background = =

Guttorm was an illegitimate son of Sigurd Lavard and thus a grandson of King Sverre . The identity of his mother is unknown . Sigurd predeceased his father , Sverre , who died in 1202 and was succeeded by his younger son Haakon Sverresson . Haakon reigned until his own death on 1 January 1204 . Haakon had pursued a policy of peace and reunification between the Birkebeiner and Bagler during his short reign , but following his death relations between the parties collapsed and a new phase of the Norwegian civil wars began . Parts of the Birkebeiner were disgruntled by Haakon 's policy of reconciliation with the Bagler , which may have led to his death , following which the balance of power within the Birkebeiner switched immediately to the faction around Haakon the Crazy .

The day after Haakon 's death , the Birkebeiner designated Guttorm as king at a meeting of the hird , in consultation with Bishop Martin of Bergen . Sverre 's nephew Haakon the Crazy was simultaneously appointed regent as leader of the hird and the army . According to the B?glunga s?gur (Bagler sagas) , the young king then took a sword and mounted it to Haakon 's side , and handed him a shield . He further gave Haakon the title of earl , with consent from all the chieftains , and had Haakon sit next to him at his throne . Haakon 's unusually strong position was thus symbolised by his sitting at the same level as the king , and not on a lower seat as would have been customary for an earl . Another of Sverre 's nephews , Peter Støyper , together with Einar Kongsmåg , husband of Sverre 's daughter Cecilia , were appointed as Guttorm 's guardians .

= = Revolt and death = =

The appointment of the warlike and power @-@ hungry Haakon the Crazy (called " the mad dog " by the Bagler) to key positions contributed to conflicts within the Birkebeiner , and a worsening of relations with the Bagler . Haakon 's elevation led the Bagler to believe that there was not much hope of peace with the Birkebeiner . The Bagler therefore travelled to Denmark and united around Erling Stonewall , an alleged son of former king Magnus Erlingsson , whom elements of the party had attempted to proclaim as king in 1203 . Their revolt was actively supported by Valdemar II of Denmark , who sought to regain the ancient Danish overlordship of Viken , in Norway .

Valdemar arrived in Viken in June with more than 300 ships , and Erling performed a trial by ordeal before the king in Tønsberg . In turn , the Danish king gave 35 ships to Erling , and together with Philip Simonsson (another Bagler rival) , he swore allegiance to Valdemar . Although Philip 's claim to the throne was supported by both Valdemar and the church , in the end , the Bagler proclaimed Erling as king and Philip as earl at Haugating and Borgarting (things of the southeastern parts of Norway) , and the Bagler quickly gained control of Viken . Guttorm was in turn proclaimed king (konungstekja) by the Birkebeiner at Øyrating in Trondheim in the spring or early summer . While Haakon the Crazy was in the process of gathering an army to fight the Bagler , likely at a second

purely military assembly at Øyrating , Guttorm suddenly became ill and died on 11 August . He was buried at the Nidaros Cathedral in Trondheim .

In the longer version of the *Bǫglunga sǫgur* , it is insinuated that Guttorm 's illness and death were caused by Swedish @-@ born Christina Nilsdatter , who married Haakon the Crazy shortly after Guttorm 's death . Modern historians consider this claim to be dubious , derived from rumours spread by the Birkebeiner in connection with the sudden death of Haakon Sverresson some months earlier . The same source claims that Haakon was poisoned , allegedly by Sverre 's widow Margaret , Christina 's aunt . Haakon the Crazy 's bid to succeed Guttorm as king foundered because he was not trusted and had made powerful opponents . Guttorm 's death was followed by low @-@ intensity civil war between his successor Inge Bårdsson and the Bagler , until a settlement was reached between Inge , Haakon and the new Bagler pretender Philip Simonsson in 1207 , which for some years divided the kingdom .