CLASSICS LIBRARY · STORY MAP

The Early Kings of Norway

Thomas Carlyle · *1875 · original English (Project Gutenberg #1932)*

Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,—essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory. So Carlyle begins, with Harald Haarfagr. For grades 9–12. Quote the history, not only a later list of kings. This is a short Carlyle, not the huge Frederick already in this wave.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION

How did Norway come to have kings, and how should a school read Carlyle's short Early Kings as a history of a people and of Harald Hairfair's making of a realm, not as a mere list of hard names?

"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"

Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

Carlyle, in his own English (PG #1932), opens Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr, with a Norway of many jarls, kinglets over little territories, often striving to live on human neighborhood, and often failing even with their Fylke Things. About the year 860, that world will begin to change toward a king. Teach the making of a realm, and the later kings as far as you assign, for grades 9–12. Quote Carlyle, including "Year of Grace," "jarls," and "Fylke Things." This short work is not the twenty-one-volume Frederick, and not The French Revolution; keep the three Carlyle books in this library distinct.

KEY CHARACTERS

The jarls of early Norway
Kinglets over little territories, with Folk Things, before there were kings; the world of the first sentence

Harald Haarfagr (Hairfair)
The first chapter's maker of a realm; teach the cost as well as the feat, not as a mascot

The later kings, as Carlyle names them
To be taught chapter by chapter, honestly, not all at once from one map

Thomas Carlyle
The historian of this short work, already the author, in this library, of two much longer histories

A LAND OF JARLS, ABOUT THE YEAR OF GRACE 860

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

Grades 9–12
Read the full text free at classicslaunch.org.

01

A Short Carlyle, Not Frederick

THE FILE AS A WHOLE

Project Gutenberg #1932, The Early Kings of Norway, complete as hosted. It is a short history, for grades 9–12, not the huge Frederick already mapped in this wave, and not The French Revolution.

- Quote the history, not only a table if one stands first.
- Keep Carlyle's names: Harald Haarfagr (Hairfair), and the later kings as he spells them.
- Do not invent saga-quotations that are not in this file; this is Carlyle's English history.
- 9–12.

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

02

No Kings, Only Jarls

CHAPTER I, THE OPENING

Until about 860 there were no kings, nothing but numerous jarls, essentially kinglets, each over a little territory, generally striving to be on some terms of human neighborhood, but often reduced to worse, even with Folk Things and small combinations of those things.

- The first sentence is exact, including "Year of Grace 860," "jarls," and "kinglets."
- The Fylke Things (Folk Things, little parish parliaments) are in the next clause; keep the name.
- This is the world Harald will try to bind.
- 9–12.

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

03

Harald Hairfair, and a Realm

CHAPTER I

The first chapter is the making of a king's Norway. Teach the cost as well as the feat, as Carlyle gives them, with gravity, not as a romance of hair and victory only.

- Keep Haarfagr / Hairfair as Carlyle uses them in the passage you quote.
- Gravity about the wars that make a realm. No spectacle.
- Do not flatten Harald into a later national mascot.
- Finish the chapter if you start it.

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

04

The Later Kings, as Assigned

THE REST OF THE SHORT BOOK

Later chapters will name later kings. Teach whichever you assign as itself; do not pretend one map has taught every reign.

- Name the chapter you are in.
- 9–12.
- This is still Carlyle, not a saga text (those have their own maps already in the library).
- Quote him.

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

05

This English

THE EDITION

Carlyle's original English, complete, short enough to finish. The opening jarls are the right first quotation.

- PG #1932.
- Not a later textbook summary.
- Keep "Year of Grace."
- Gravity throughout.

> *"Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory; generally striving each to be on some terms of"*
>
> Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr

From Jarls to a King | Little Territories | A Folk Thing | The Cost of a Realm | A Short Carlyle

What to watch for as you read

GRADES 9–12

1. Carlyle's Early Kings of Norway (PG #1932) opens Chapter I, Harald Haarfagr: "Till about the Year of Grace 860 there were no kings in Norway, nothing but numerous jarls,--essentially kinglets, each presiding over a kind of republican or parliamentary little territory." Keep "Year of Grace," "jarls," and later "Fylke Things." For grades 9–12.
2. This is a short Carlyle, not the twenty-one-volume Frederick, and not The French Revolution. Keep the three books distinct.
3. Teach the making of a realm, and the cost, with gravity, not as a romance or a later national mascot. This is Carlyle's English, not a saga text (the sagas have their own maps).
4. Do not pretend one map has taught every later reign. Name the chapter you assign.
5. Quote Carlyle; do not tidy his punctuation.

Quotations are verbatim from the original English (Project Gutenberg #1932), Project Gutenberg #1932, the public-domain text hosted at classicslaunch.org/works/early-kings-of-norway/. Citations give book and chapter (or canto and line) so every line can be checked.