

# Nornagests Rima

178

Taken down by A. P. Berggeen

Eitt er frø - ðið um Nor - na gest, Lat - tær rá - ða  
rað - ge - rð i van - da. Ti li - kum gó - ðum gekk hann næst.  
Ox - ar tolv voru leid - dir á torg, og so fram á  
fri - ðu borg. Gra - ni bar gul - lið af hei - ði.

## THE FAROESE BALLAD OF NORNAGEST

1. A Ballad there is of Nornagest,  
Refrain:--*Be ready with a plan in trouble!*--  
In manly virtues among the best.  
Refrain:--*Every lad should do so!*
2. Twelve oxen were led to the market square,  
And onward thence to a castle fair.
3. The King he thought to hew them to earth,  
And with courage and joy did he sally forth.
4. The King he struck such a mighty blow  
That the blood from the wounds did swiftly flow.
5. All the oxen fell down dead,  
And the axe sank deep that he brandished.
6. All men praised his princely blow:  
The blood from the wounds did swiftly flow.
7. A man there came with crutches twain:  
With these he steadied himself amain.
8. The King to the man full mildly spoke:--  
"O why, and O why, dost thou praise not my stroke?"
9. "O Sire, thou struckest full manfully;  
But I saw a finer stroke in days gone by.
10. "Of Sigurth's deeds hast thou heard the worth,--  
The mightiest champion of men on earth!

11. "Leaf and grove did tremble and quake  
When Sigurth clove in sunder the snake.
12. "This may you tell of Sigurth the bold:--  
'He was mightiest of all men in days of old.'
13. "This can I tell of Sigurth's fame:--  
'I know no hero with eyes so keen.'
14. "Leaf and grove did tremble and shake  
When Sigurth clove in sunder the snake.
15. "A noble man was Högni, I ween,  
Full well did I know his ugly mien.
16. "Rich, brave and gentle was Gunnar enow,  
Wise too, and Gunnhild was like him, I trow.
17. "Wise too, and Gunnhild was like him, I trow.  
Of heroes like him are there all too few.
18. "My father he had a homestead fair:  
Herds of cattle were pastured there.
19. "And horses I tended as I sat in the wood.--  
And blithest my heart when the weather was good!
20. "One and all in their saddles they ride,  
Childe Sigurth, and Högni, and Gunnar beside.
22. "Over the mire-pit rode all and one.--  
I was a lad, and I looked thereon.
23. "First sprang Gunnar's horse forthright.  
Gunnar measured his leap aright.
24. "Högni's horse sprang after then.  
Fast stuck Grani in the fen.
25. "The last to spring was Sigurth's steed.  
Sigurth had given him so heavy a feed!
26. "Grani floundered in the fen:  
His saddle girth brake in pieces twain.
27. "Down from their saddles each did glide,--  
Childe Sigurth, and Högni, and Gunnar beside.
28. "They dragged at the noble steed amain;  
But Sigurth pulled hardest the bridle rein.

29. "Oft have I leapt o'er the pit aright  
By day and eke in the murky night.
30. "O Guest, a service of thee I pray:--  
Wash from my courser the mire away.
31. "The saddle buckle which broke 'neath me--  
The same, O Guest, will I give to thee.'
32. "Forth they rode to a river then.  
No-one was there to look to the men.
33. "I washed his poitrail and breast for him,  
His thigh, his leg, and each long limb.
34. "The noble courser I made full clean.  
Then Sigurth took me for his horse-swain.
35. "So rode we forth to Fafnir's lair.  
Like the sun's own beams did the gold shine there.
36. "From Sigurth's steed did I draw a hair,  
Of wondrous length and beyond compare.
37. "The hair in the tail of Grani hung,  
--Well-nigh a foot and a fathom long.
38. "Well-nigh a foot and a fathom in height.  
And it shone and gleamed like silver so bright.
39. "In days gone by, full far have I strayed,  
Nor found I my candle and span of days."
40. The King he gave him pole and boat,  
And directed the old man on his road.
41. "In the Land of the Franks is a lake broad and wide  
Where thy candle and span of days do bide."
42. Long and long dived the courteous man  
Before he came his candle upon.
43. Kōrnar the priest baptised him anon.  
When the candle burnt out his life was done.
44. When the light in the lanthorn had burnt away,  
Refrain:--*Be ready with a plan in trouble!*--  
Then ended too his own life's day.  
Refrain:--*Every lad should do so!*