STORIES AND BALLADS OF THE FAR PAST

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Stories and ballads of the far past by N. Kershaw

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N. KERSHAW

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STORIES AND BALLADS OF THE FAR PAST

TRANSLATED FROM THE NORSE
(ICELANDIC AND FAROESE)
WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

BY

N. KERSHAW

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1921

Preface

VERY few of the *Fornaldar Sögur Northrlanda* have hitherto been translated into English. The *Völsungasaga* is of course well known, but with this exception the 'Stories of Icelanders,' and the 'Stories of the Kings of Norway' are probably the only sagas familiar to the majority of English readers. Of the four sagas contained in this volume only one—the *Thâttr of Sörli*—has appeared in English before, though the poetry which they contain has frequently been translated, from the time of Hickes's *Thesaurus* (1705). So far as I am aware no version of any of the Faroese ballads has appeared in English. Out of the great number which were collected during the 18th and 19th centuries I have chosen a few which deal with the same stories as the sagas translated here; and for purposes of comparison I have added a short extract from one of the Icelandic *Rímur*, as well as a Danish ballad and part of the Shetland *Hildina*.

In accordance with general custom in works of this kind I have discarded the use of accents, unfamiliar symbols, etc., except in a few Norse words which can hardly be anglicised.

My thanks are due to the Syndics of the Cambridge University Press for undertaking the publi-

cation of this book, and to the staff for their unfailing courtesy.

To Professor Thuren of Christiania I am indebted for kindly allowing me to print the melodies from his son's *Folkesangen paa Færøerne*. I have also to thank many friends in St Andrews and Cambridge for help which they have kindly given to me in various ways, including Professor Lawson, Dr Maitland Anderson and the staffs of the two University Libraries, and Mr B. Dickins. Especially I wish to thank Professor Chadwick to whom I am indebted for constant help and advice throughout the book.

N. K.

2 *November*, 1920.

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