

# **EILER AND HELVIG: A DANISH LEGEND**

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Eiler and Helvig: a Danish legend by Mrs. George Lenox-Conyngham

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**MRS. GEORGE LENOX-CONYNGHAM**

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# EILER AND HELVIG;

A Danish Legend.

BY

MRS. GEORGE LENOX-CONYNGHAM.



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## EILER AND HELVIG;

### A DANISH LEGEND.

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(The following Poem is founded upon one of Thorpe's Yule-tide Stories,  
"Glob and Alger," contained in Bohn's Antiquarian Library.)

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ERE Jutland's States united to obey  
A single Monarch's undivided sway,  
Each its own separate petty King possessed,  
And Salling's Alger was of these the best.  
In prosperous peace he ruled his people long;  
Nor wronging others nor sustaining wrong;  
Till o'er a neighbouring island came to reign  
A lawless Chief, whose only thought was gain.  
The more he won he strove to win the more;—  
Glob was the inharmonious name he bore;—  
Reckless of justice and of human life,  
He breathed most freely amidst blood and strife;

Aggressive warfare was his prime delight;  
A corpse-strewed battle-field his favourite sight.  
His father's land of Thy sufficed him not:  
Scorning his own hereditary lot,  
He vanquished Fuurland's King and seized his throne;  
While Fuurland's stripling heir escaped alone,  
Outcast, outlawed, pursued from place to place,  
With human bloodhounds ever on his trace,  
A helpless, houseless fugitive to roam.  
Then generous Alger, proffering him a home,  
Gave refuge to the hunted youth, and rest,  
And bade him to his board a daily guest.  
Vainly did Glob demand, with many a threat,  
The boy's surrender. Vainly did he set  
A price upon his princely head. Secure  
In faith no risk could daunt, no bribe allure,  
Eiler remained in safety and repose,  
Beyond the malice of his father's foes;  
And Glob appeared at last content to cease  
His fruitless efforts, leaving him in peace:



Though not ere he had tried, with empty boast,  
A landing to effect on Salling's coast,  
And suffered a repulse. Thenceforth his mind  
Seemed changed; his hostile projects seemed consigned  
To oblivion; he professed unfeigned desire  
The King of Salling's friendship to acquire.  
Alger distrusted him, and wisely planned  
With his allies, the Magnates of the land,  
That when his beacon-turret gave alarm,  
All, to a man, for self-defence should arm.

King Alger had a daughter, fair and good  
Beyond the wont of noblest womanhood.  
In this world's work her portion was to spread  
Gladness around her. Care and grief and dread,  
Lulled by the soothing influence of her smile,  
Forgetful of the present slumbered, while  
The spirit-touching music of her voice  
Inspired the mourner almost to rejoice.

She loved all living things, and they loved her ;  
She held as 't were an Angel's gift to stir  
The healing waters of good-will that lie  
In every nature. Earth and air and sky  
Seemed peopled with her friends. The gay Flower-King,  
At her approach, would rapturously fling  
His wealth of sweets and blooms around her head ;  
And on the grass, just yielding to her tread,  
The kindly Trolls\* would oft disport themselves  
About her footsteps ; while the joyous Elves,  
Who bathe in sunbeams, revelled in the light  
Of her clear eyes, as pure and scarce less bright.  
Once, as she loitered by a river's side,  
And watched its peaceful waters calmly glide  
To seek their ocean home, the Neck† arose,  
And thus in mournful song poured forth his woes :—

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\* Scandinavian dwarfs ; generally good-natured and well-disposed towards the human race.

† A musical water Spirit, peculiarly solicitous concerning his chance of salvation. If discouraged on this point, he weeps long and bitterly ; but

“ Daughter of Earth, as Angels fair !  
Heaven's secrets thou may'st surely scan :  
Then tell me whether I may share  
The glorious destiny of Man.  
Oh ! say not that salvation's lost—  
For ever lost—to mine and me ;  
Nor to be won, at any cost,  
The boon of immortality.

Say not that we are doomed to melt,  
And mingle with the foamy stream ;  
To pass and be unseen—unfelt—  
Like scattered mist or vanished dream.  
Is it in vain that thus I long  
To tune my harp, and raise my voice  
To join the glad thanksgiving song  
Of those who round God's throne rejoice !

---

if comforted with the hope of eventual redemption, he plays on his golden harp (and, I believe, sings) most sweetly until sunset. He is less frequently met with in Denmark than on the great rivers of Norway and Sweden.