

# The sons of Ondott Sealbreath – 1

Long ago on the island of Ansagar lived Ondott Sealbreath and his wife Thordis. They had two sons called Frodi and Olaf. The two boys were also good friends and spent their childhood together exploring their island home and fishing in the creeks and on the shore. Ondott was a well respected peaceful man and his sons inherited his gentle ways.

When Frodi and Olaf grew up, Ansagar suffered some very cold, wet summers and all the crops failed every year. Everyone was starving. Ondott Sealbreath said to his people that they must leave the island and look for new homes elsewhere. He and his wife Thordis were too old to travel. They said they would stay behind and take their chances and perhaps find enough food to keep themselves alive.

The two sons sadly left their parents behind. Frodi took half the island folk with him and sailed West. Olaf took the other half and sailed East. Frodi and his people travelled for seven days and sailed through seven storms before they saw land again. They had reached the coast of Lyngero. As they came close to the shore, two boats sailed out towards them. In the front of the first boat was Asgrim Goosewing. He lifted his sword ready to start a battle but when he saw the poor state of Frodi and his people, he put his sword down again. When Asgrim Goosewing learned that Frodi was the son of Ondott Sealbreath, he welcomed him to his home. He introduced Frodi to his wife Hlif and his daughter Helga. It was not long before Frodi and Helga fell in love and were married.

Frodi and Helga lived with Asgrim and Hlif. During that time Frodi went with Asgrim on raids along the coast. He learned how to use the sword and became a brave warrior. At last Frodi decided he would like to see his parents again and set off with Helga and three boats of warriors to the East.

When Frodi approached Ansagar again, he could see a small boat coming out to meet him. In it was Vestmar the Snake Tongue. When he came along side, he told Frodi of how Halvard the Horrible had come to Ansagar and set up his home. When Frodi told Vestmar about his parents, Vestmar said that Halvard had captured two old people on the island and made them his slaves. He treated them badly and they were barely alive. On hearing this, Frodi became angry and sailed quickly to the shore.

# The sons of Ondott Sealbreath

## Age range

- Years 3/4 (SP4/5).
- Years 5/6 (SP6/7).

## Resources

Copies of the five worksheets.

## Using the worksheet

This saga is not a real one but it has been written in the style of a saga and the students may get a feel about Viking sagas by reading it. All the names in this saga are fictitious but the tradition is followed of using nicknames for many characters in the story. A saga is a story that might be based on a true event. It may be a mixture of facts and fiction. When the students read this saga, they can decide what might be fact, what is fiction and what the facts might be on which the fiction is based. A saga contains characters, relationships between characters, details of where the characters went and what they did, including battles.

## Younger students

You may ask the students to imagine being sat round a fire in a hut listening to the saga on a winter evening.

You may like to tell the saga to the pupils in stages, 1 to 5, and ask them questions on it. They can be asked if they can remember who is related to who and where people lived. They could draw pictures of the events described in the saga and set them in chronological order.

You could also ask some of the students to stand up and be the characters in the saga. For example, four students could represent Ondott's family then the sons move to opposite corners of the room where new characters are asked to stand with them.

## Outcomes

The students can:

- Appreciate that a saga is long and can be complicated.
- Understand that there may be facts as well as fiction in the saga.

## Older students

The students can read through the whole saga at one sitting and be asked for their views on its style. You may ask the students to imagine being sat round a fire in a hut listening to the saga on a winter evening then ask five students to read a section in turn. They could work out a simple family tree of the three families in the story and show how they are related. They could look at the characters in more detail. For example they could consider what motivated Vestmar the Snake Tongue to behave as he did. This saga could be used to encourage the students to write sagas of their own.

## Outcomes

The students can:

- Appreciate that a saga is long and can be complicated.
- Understand that there may be facts as well as fiction in the saga.
- Construct a simple family tree.
- Examine the motivation of some of the characters in the saga.
- Write a saga of their own.

## The sons of Ondott Sealbreath – 2

Halvard the Horrible saw Frodi's boats bearing down on his settlement. He raised his men and they rushed down onto the shore as Frodi's boats arrived. Frodi and his men jumped onto the sand and a battle began. Swords and axes whooshed through the air and the angry warriors shouted at each other as they fought. At first, Halvard's men pushed Frodi's warriors into the sea. Then Frodi's men pushed Halvard and his warriors onto the rocks, which were slippery with seaweed. Both groups of warriors fell over and tumbled on each other as they fought. Eventually Frodi and his men had backed Halvard and his warriors to the foot of a cliff. Sensing that they were cornered, Halvard told his men that they would all shout at once and charge at Frodi's warriors. They all roared at once but they never made their charge. The power of their sound dislodged some rocks on the cliff top. They began to fall and knocked other rocks out of the cliff face. In a moment Halvard and his men were buried and the fight was over.

Frodi went into the settlement straight away to look for his parents. In a little hut behind the main house Frodi found Ondott and Thordis. They had been badly beaten but were still alive. Frodi wanted to take them with him but they insisted that they wanted to stay in their island home. Frodi and Helga cared for them for many days and nursed them back to health. Good weather had returned to the island so Frodi's men sowed crops that Ondott and Thordis could harvest in the autumn.

Frodi and Helga bade farewell to Ondott and Thordis and set off with their men in search of Olaf. They took Vestmar the Snake Tongue with them. After three weeks, they came to the mouth of a river. There was a ruined village by some large white rocks. This reminded Helga of a story her father, Asgrim Goosewing, told. Many years ago he had lived at this village. He had a friend called Solmund the Angry. Solmund could not control his temper as a boy and when he became a man it got even worse. Eventually Asgrim Goosewing and Solmund the Angry had a fight. Asgrim won but decided to leave the village but Solmund vowed to get revenge on him. When Vestmar the Snake Tongue heard this, he slipped away and sailed up the river.

As Helga finished her story, a fishing boat came along the coast. In it was Ingjald Greyhead. He came ashore and Frodi asked him if he knew what had happened to the people who had lived in the village.



Name:..... Form:.....

Based on **pages 14 and 15** of *Viking raiders and settlers*

## The sons of Ondott Sealbreath – 3

Ingjald Greyhead told them how Solmund the Angry had become friends with Ofieg Oxman, a huge man with the strength of ten oxen. Solmund and Ofieg had set off with a boat and ten men and sailed up the river. When they came to any rapids, everyone got out of the boat and Oxman carried it on his shoulders. With Solmund's anger and Oxman's strength the two were feared throughout the land. Eventually Solmund became king and took the people of the village to his new village high in the mountains. It was there that he met and married Aesa and they had a daughter called Sygny. Ingjald went on to say that a few years ago a traveller from the West had reached the kingdom and fallen in love with Sygny and married her. His name was Olaf.

When Frodi heard this news, he set sail up the river. There were no rapids now as the Oxman had been back to remove the rocks. This made it easier for everyone to travel to and from the kingdom. When Frodi and Helga and their men arrived at the kingdom, they stared at the large number of houses and the smoke from their fires rising straight up into the sky. Very soon they were disturbed by a thundering of feet behind them. They turned and saw the Oxman and ten of his huge sons. Frodi thought of fighting but Helga said they were no match for the giants and could only surrender. The Oxman imprisoned Frodi and Helga in a cave and took their men away to become slaves.

This was all the work of Vestmar the Snake Tongue. He had gone to Solmund the Angry and told him that Helga, the daughter of his enemy, was in his kingdom. Solmund had ordered that she should be captured and when this was done, he sent Vestmar to tell Asgrim Goosewing about his prisoner. Solmund hoped that Asgrim would come to the kingdom where Solmund would have his revenge.

Solmund, Aesa, Sygny and Olaf lived in the same house but Solmund did not tell his family about Frodi and Helga being taken prisoner. Olaf discovered the news when he talked to one of the new slaves who had been sent to him to help him make a sledge. The man was Thorbjorn Horsetail, who Olaf had known back on the island of Ansagar. When Olaf discovered that Frodi and Helga were held prisoner in a cave, he went on his own to find them.

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When Olaf reached the cave, he found that it was guarded by only one man. It was one of the sons of Oxman known as Eyvind Elkface. Olaf knew Elkface and went up and greeted him. Elkface, like his father Oxman, were servants to Solmund and his family so when Olaf sent him to bring food, Elkface simply obeyed orders and went. Olaf and Frodi were overjoyed to meet each other again and quickly exchanged news then Olaf led Frodi and Helga out of the cave and along a ledge. The ledge was about the width of two boots and ninety strides long. They had got about half way across when Oxman and Elkface came to the cave and saw them making their escape. The two giants picked up rocks the size of walrus heads and threw them across the canyon to where Olaf was leading away Frodi and Helga. The rocks hit the ledge and knocked chunks out of it. Suddenly Frodi and Helga were having to step out from one piece of ledge to the next as if crossing stepping stones in the sky. Olaf came to the end of the ledge where it joined a mountain footpath. He was safe. A moment later a rock hit the end of the ledge and knocked a gap in it five strides wide. Frodi and Helga could not get across it. They could only go back or try and climb up around the gap.

Frodi and Helga decided to climb but the rocks kept hurling into the cliff face around them. One smashed so close to them that it sent gravel and grit showering down on them. Frodi and Helga lost their grip and fell through the gap. Olaf reached out to try and catch them but his coat became caught on a branch and they fell away towards the valley floor. As they fell Oxman and Elkface cheered and Olaf screamed.

Two large, dark brown shapes swooped into view below the falling couple. Olaf wasn't sure but they looked like eagles. They grabbed Frodi and Helga and swooped low over the forest in the bottom of the valley and flew out along the river to the sea.

Olaf made his way back to the settlement by another path. He crept into his house and told Sygny what had happened. They decided that it was not safe for him to stay in the kingdom because Oxman would soon tell Solmund how Olaf had helped Frodi and Helga escape. Sygny decided to go with Olaf as she knew secret paths down the mountain side that Oxman and his family did not know. When they reached the river, they took a boat from the bank and sailed down towards the sea. On the shore they found Frodi and Helga smiling at them.

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The two brown shapes had indeed been eagles. Huge eagles from the Mountains of Vreydal. The birds had carried Frodi and Helga to the shore and left them. Frodi, Helga, Olaf and Sygny climbed on top of a large rock near the mouth of the river. They made a fire, cooked food and chatted and laughed.

Out at sea a line of ships came over the horizon. It was Asgrim Goosewing and his army. Up in the kingdom of Solmund the Angry men were gathering swords, axes and shields and making their way to their boats. In Solmund's army were a gang of men known as berserkers. They made themselves so angry that they bit their shields as they waited to fight. They travelled all the way down the river biting their shields and waving their swords. In an hour the ships of Asgrim Goosewing lined up across the mouth of the river and the boats of Solmund the Angry faced them.

Asgrim came to the front of his ship and it edged further forwards than the rest. Solmund came to the front of his boat and this too edged forwards towards Asgrim's boat. The two men raised their swords and shields. The berserkers bit hard into their shields and whimpered with rage. They could hardly wait to fight. Oxman and his sons picked up boulders on the shore. Asgrim and Solmund stared hard at each other then heard noises coming from the large rock. They looked up to see their daughters and their husbands looking back at them. Both men threw their swords into the water. There was to be no battle, no revenge. The sons of Ondott Sealbreath had brought peace between the two men and from that day Ondott was no longer known as Sealbreath but as the Father of the Peace Makers.