

**THE OLD NORSE  
ELEMENT IN SWEDISH  
ROMANTICISM**

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The Old Norse element in Swedish romanticism by Adolph Burnett Benson

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# THE OLD NORSE ELEMENT IN SWEDISH ROMANTICISM

BY

ADOLPH BURNETT BENSON

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SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
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CALVIN THOMAS.

NEW YORK, October, 1914

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TO  
MY MOTHER  
WHOSE SACRIFICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT  
HAS MADE MY EDUCATION POSSIBLE



## PREFACE

Enthusiasm for the Norse saga during the Swedish Romantic period was not confined to the members of the so-called Gothic School. The interest in the Viking age spread also to other groups of poets as well as to some individuals who, like Stagnelius, were not identified with any school. As we shall see, however, they were all, in the ordinary, broad sense, Romantic. This review, therefore, purports to deal with a number of heterogeneous writers, often belonging to entirely different literary confessions, but all bound together, for us, by a bond of common interest in Scandinavian antiquity.

The purpose of this study is fourfold: (1) to show clearly that a genuine interest in Scandinavian antiquity was present from the beginning in both the new literary tendencies of the time, (2) to characterize this interest, (3) to collect and examine all the important literary monuments from 1810 to about 1825 that make use of Scandinavian saga, and (4) to record conservative opposition to Norse mythology in Sweden during that period.

The well-known literary chiefs, Tegnér, Geijer, and Ling, will be treated only incidentally in this study, in connection with specific problems. The present investigation intends to emphasize the work of the minor "Goths" and of such other Romantics as are not ordinarily mentioned in connection with the Old Norse element. Among the latter are the Fosforists.

An appendix has been added, containing brief biographical data of the most important writers connected with Swedish Romanticism.

Lastly, I wish to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed in any way to make this investigation possible.

To Professor Calvin Thomas, first of all, I owe a deep debt for substantial encouragement and for ever-ready assistance, especially in connection with the final proof-reading.

To Professor Robert Herndon Fife, Jr., of Wesleyan University, who introduced me to the study of Romanticism; to the late Professor Rudolf Tombo, Jr., to Professor Louis Auguste Loiseaux, and especially to Professor Arthur F. J. Remy, I owe more than a pupil's debt to a teacher.

To George Frederick Hummel, A.M., of Brooklyn, N. Y., I am indebted for a valuable suggestion in connection with the Introduction; Professor Fletcher Briggs of the Iowa State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts has furnished a useful hint; Fröken Elna Bengtson of Borås, Sweden, has provided a list of books for my bibliography; and Andrew Thomas Weaver, A.M., of Northwestern Academy, Hannah Senior Nicholson, B.A., and Marion E. Morton, B.A., recently of the Hanover (New Hampshire) High School, have assisted in correcting the manuscript.

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A. B. B.

July, 1914.

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