

PREFACE

The First International Saga Conference was held in Edinburgh from 21 to 29 August 1971 under the aegis of the Department of Educational Studies and the Department of English Language of the University of Edinburgh. A list of those who accepted invitations to attend is given at the end of this volume.

The central theme of the Conference was "The Icelandic Sagas and Western Literary Tradition". Besides the papers included in the present volume the following were read at the Conference:

- T.M.Andersson. The discovery of darkness in Norse narrative.
- A.L.Binns. Knýtlinga Saga and northern English history in the eleventh century.
- E.J.Cowan. Orkneyinga Saga and Scottish history.
- Bjarni Einarsson. The Vínheiðr episode in Egils Saga and the battle of Brunanburh.
- Hermann Pálsson. Paradigms of love in medieval Icelandic fiction.
- Victoria Yartzeva and A. Desnitskaya. Observations on the language of the sagas.

A general meeting to discuss the future of saga studies was held on the last day of the Conference. Peter Foote took the chair and John Simpson kindly kept a record of the discussion. His minutes are found at the end of this book.

The outstanding social events were a reception by Flugfélag Islands (Icelandair), where members gratefully enjoyed traditional Icelandic hospitality, and a reception by the University of Edinburgh with Professor Angus McIntosh as host.

The Proceedings found here were first edited by Hermann Pálsson and Desmond Slay, and then finally prepared for duplication and read in proof by Peter Foote. It should be noted that the Editors have not attempted to impose the same conventions throughout the volume, though it is hoped that they are consistent within each paper.

Heartfelt thanks are due to Richard Perkins, Department of Scandinavian Studies, University College London, and Assistant Secretary of the Viking Society for Northern Research, who also read the complete typescript in a proof stage. We are finally in boundless debt to our typists, Mrs Katja Tims and Mrs Rosemary D'Souza. The fact that they did not find this the most interesting book they have ever copied in no way diminished their industry and care.

Peter Foote
on behalf of
the Editors