



# **An Icelandic Primer: With Grammar, Notes, and Glossary (Clarendon Press Series)**

*Henry Sweet*

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From the PREFACE.

The want of a short and easy introduction to the study of Icelandic has been felt for a long time—in fact, from the very beginning of that study in England. The Icelandic Reader, edited by Messrs. Vigfusson and Powell, in the Clarendon Press Series, is a most valuable book, which ought to be in the hands of every student; but it still leaves room for an elementary primer. As the engagements of the editors of the Reader would have made it impossible for them to undertake such a work for some years to come, they raised no objections to my proposal to undertake it myself. Meanwhile, I found the task was a more formidable one than I had anticipated, and accordingly, before definitely committing myself to it, I made one final attempt to induce Messrs. Vigfusson and Powell to take it off my hands; but they very kindly encouraged me to proceed with it; and as I myself thought that an Icelandic primer, on the lines of my Anglo-Saxon one, might perhaps be the means of inducing some students of Old English to take up Icelandic as well, I determined to go on....  
...In the grammar I have to acknowledge my great obligations to Noreen's Altisländische Grammatik, which is by far the best Icelandic grammar that has yet appeared—at least from that somewhat narrow point of view which ignores syntax, and concentrates itself on phonology and inflections.

The texts are intended to be as easy, interesting, and representative as possible. With such a language, and such a master of it as Snorri to choose from, this combination is not difficult to realise. The beginner is indeed to be envied who makes his first acquaintance with the splendid mythological tales of the North, told in an absolutely perfect style. As the death of Olaf Tryggvason is given in the Reader only from the longer recension of the Heimskringla, I have been able to give the shorter text, which is admirably suited for the purposes of this book....

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#### **Caleb Jones:**

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