

ELIJAH KILLS THE GIANT

by

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Statue of Sir Elijah, London England.

Now in the days of old in Merry England there was a boy called Elijah. King Alfred the Great, the only British King to be called “Great” had died with the whole land lamenting his death. Alfred was indeed a great king who brought peace to the land after conquering the invading Danes and then making peace in turn with them. The Danes settled and intermarried with the Anglo-Saxons and there was great happiness and prosperity in England. (Angleland).

Elijah was the only son of Lady Kylie and Lord Francis, who had worked as an advisor to Alfred the Great. Now the great king was dead.

Elijah, around the blazing fire which warmed up the massive hall of their castle, listened to Francis speak to his mother, while Francis drank a fiery goblet of mead, with Kylie enjoying the same with some sweet meats that the servants had brought them before retiring at night.

“What now my love, now that Alfred the king has died?” asked Kylie of Lord Francis.

Francis sighed and a worried look came upon his countenance. He sighed again, “I fear my love - turmoil. Already there are rumours that the fierce and blood thirsty Vikings are on their way here to England after learning of Alfred’s death,” he replied.

“But surely, Alfred’s armies will deter them and fight them mightily?” Lady Kylie asked.



Lady Kylie.

“Nay my love. I fear the worse. King Edward the Elder of Wessex is not Alfred. Already the King of Mercia is moving to show his supremacy over all; civil war I am afraid. And the Vikings will know this and take advantage. A divided England cannot stand against those hordes that come across the sea, to plunder, pillage and murder.”

Kylie shuddered. She remembered when a girl, before the great king Alfred brought peace to the hollowed land, this sceptre isle, how it was, much the same with the Danes, before they were subdued by Alfred. There was great misery and the people suffered.

“Must be it like it as it was before Alfred?”she asked.

Lord Francis shook his head. He answered with a hesitancy, "I hope not my dear, but I am not confident that it will be peace as before."

Young Elijah listened with great interest. He did not understand the whole concept of what was and what could be. But he was an intelligent boy. He was now fourteen years of age and had grown strong after frolicking around the country side and sword playing with the children of other noblemen. He was a great horseman, but he was wise enough to know, that Might does not make Right and that sometimes, the small may overcome the great. His hair was flaxen, his eyes blue and was strong limbed. The village girls made giggling and crude remarks as he rode pass on his trusty stead named, "Dasher" eyeing with lust this healthy youth. Yet, Elijah was a good lad, obedient to his parents, loved his England, his King and its people. As son of a noble parents, Lord Francis and Lady Kylie, he knew that some day he would inherit the dukedom and would be responsible to those who tenanted his land. He would be a good Lord, he had promised to himself and to his God. He would be fair, helpful, never exploiting nor taking advantage of those beneath him. Morally he was incorruptible and had an ambition to become a Knight, to be known and be proclaimed throughout Christendom as - Sir Elijah.

Sadly what Lord Francis had feared came to pass. Knowing of the death of Alfred, the division of the English and the weakness of the land, the Viking hordes landed from their magnificent sea galleries and plundered the country. The people mourned and bemoaned that there was no Alfred to save them from the terror and hardship which now prevailed. Good folk were raided by the Vikings who butchered the men of the villages and took the women and children back to the cold lands of the north to be slaves. Would there be no one to save England from this nightmare? No Alfred the Great? No King Arthur of old?



Fierce Vikings raiding England.

Young Elijah pondered on this and as the armies of the Vikings warriors neared their castle he heard the wails and cries of his people. Nothing was stopping the Vikings. The worse and the most horrific of all the Viking kings and chiefs was King Rurik. Rurik was a giant of a man. Legends has it that he was over nine feet tall, whether this it true of not, we don't know. We do know that the 12th century writer Geoffrey of Monmouth stated that all feared him and there was never such a great warrior as Rurik. He was not only tall, but amazingly well built, in other words "powerful". Geoffrey wrote: "This man, King Rurik, led his men to Wessex where with his great army stood upon the plain opposed by the Saxon army of Lord Francis and both waited for each other to attack. Oh woe was the day."

Was Rurik, nine feet tall? Well who knows? Perhaps he was one of the Nephilims that the bible mentions (Numbers 13:33) who were of "great stature" and the sons of Anak, a people who become known mysteriously in history as the Anakies - the people from the stars.

And so it was. Nothing stopped the on-coming and terrible Vikings until they reached Elijah's home castle. Francis adorned his mantle of chain mail preparing for battle. His long sword was forged by the best black-smiths. He had used it often in the attempt to stop and defeat the Vikings and while he fought well as did his men, the Vikings kept on coming. Now it was the moment. Lose this battle and England would be lost. It was up to Lord Francis. King Edward was cowering in his castle near London and made no attempt to stop the hordes that was destroying his lands and kingdom.

It was Lord Francis who could save England - but if he lost? Then all was lost!

King Rurik's army was ready to attack. Rurik with long flowing black hair and a short black beard with his fierce countenance put fear in all who saw him. He awaited the arrival of Lord Francis and his army of knights, soldiers and yeoman who were the last bastion of security for the land before all hell broke loose.

Lord Francis donned his full war gear. Kylie ran to him, tears in her eyes, watched by Elijah "Take this my Lord," begged Lady Kylie, "My cross. Place it around your neck and may the Lord God have mercy upon us all. God speed."

"Great is the sadness of our land. I shall need all the help I and my army though small and brave can get.

"The enemy increases every day. Upon one battle all our liberties depend. God today, stand friendly for we are lovers of peace, but since the affairs of men still rest uncertain it may be the last time we speak together. This I know not. Therefore our

everlasting farewell take. For ever and ever, farewell, dear Kylie. If we do meet again, why, we shall smile. If not, why then, this parting was well made. For ever and for ever farewell Kylie," Francis turned to Elijah, "farewell my son."

Without hesitation, Lord Francis stomped out of the castle and marched to his band of men, who cheered themselves hoarse when they saw their Lord. Francis walked to the head of the army, facing the much too numerous enemy. All was silent; all waiting. A great hush fell over the field of battle. Lord Francis in front of his men, with King Rurik just twenty yards apart in front of his men, waiting, waiting.

Elijah ran to the top of the castle's rampart to look down upon the scene. He could not believe his eyes. The English army was out numbered ten to one; formidable odds. Rurik's army were well seasoned warriors and well armed. It was to be an uneven battle. Elijah left the ramparts and ran outside of the castle and stood with Lord Francis, who looked down at him.

"Elijah, Elijah this is not for you. You are only a boy; go, leave this battle to me and my men."

"But father you will not prevail. I know this, I know it in my bones...." he tugged at Francis. Francis, now perplexed began to lose patience, but while he had begun to do so King Rurik walked forward. The English in the front row when they saw him do so, were much afraid.

"Lord Francis,' Bellowed the huge man before him, "let there be no more bloodshed. Rather send me your best warrior to fight me, Rurik and if I shall win I shall have all your lands and England. If your warrior wins, then my men shall depart and we shall be no more and leave you in peace. This I promise before all."

"Done." said Lord Francis. "It shall be you and I who shall determine the fate of all." Elijah witnessed the offer with great interest. Great as Lord Francis was with sword Elijah knew he could not overcome the greatness in battle of Rurik. But Elijah was just not a normal lad. He had grown wise and like those of great humility and righteousness he knew virtue would overcome evilness.

Francis turned to Elijah to chastise him, "Why have you come down?" He asked wearily. "I know you have come down to witness the battle."

Elijah answered as though divinely inspired, "Let no man's heart fail because of Rurik. I shall go and fight this man before us."

Francis smiled, "You are but a youth, this man has been a warrior since his youth."

"Father, when I was younger you had me keep a watch over your stock in the pastures. When a fox or wolf came and took a lamb from the flock I went after him

and killed him and delivered the sheep out of his mouth. This heathen before us shall be like them seeing he has defied the armies of England, our enchanted land.

“The Lord who delivered me from the attacks of the wolves, shall deliver me from this Viking.”

Lord Francis was not a coward nor was he relinquishing his responsibility, but he believed that something divine was taking place and that he felt compelled to honour Elijah’s desires.

Lord Francis ordered armour to be given to Elijah, a bronze helmet and coat of chain mail. And Elijah girded his sword over his armour and he tried in vain to walk for he was not used to it all. Then Elijah said to his father, “I cannot go with these. For I am not used to them.” And to the surprise of Francis, he took them off. He then took his staff in his hand and chose five smooth stones from the nearby stream and put them in his bag. He took from his pocket a sling and drew near to Rurik.

And Rurik drew near to Elijah. When he saw Elijah he laughed mightily for he was but a youth, ruddy and comely in appearance. He asked of Elijah, “Am I a dog that you come armed with sticks?” And then Rurik cursed Elijah and Lord Francis for he was insulted that they would send such a lad against him, the greatest of all warriors. He then turned his attention back to Elijah and said fiercely for all to hear, “Come to me and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and to the beasts of the field.”

Elijah wise beyond his years replied, “You come with me with a sword and with a spear and a javelin, but I come to you in the name in the Lord of Hosts and in the name of St George of England whom you have defiled.

“This day you will be delivered into my hand and I will strike you down and it will be your body given to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth. This assembly may know that you have been given into our hands.”

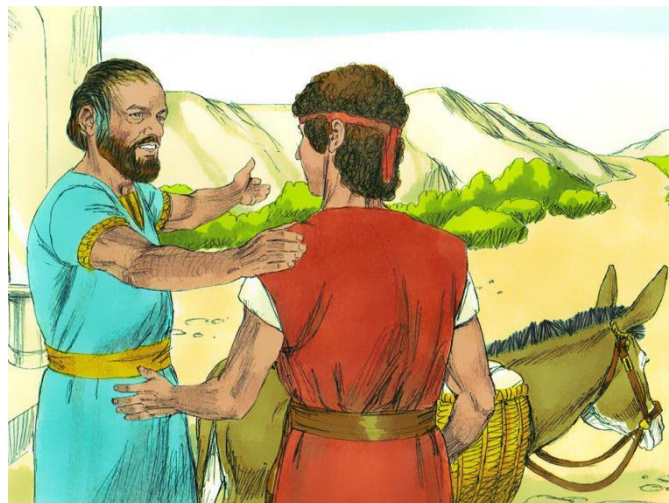
Then Rurik arose and came and drew near to meet Elijah. Elijah ran quickly toward the battle line to meet Rurik, putting his hand into his bag as he did so. Elijah took out a stone and slung it and struck Rurik on his forehead. The stone sank deep into his forehead and he fell on his face to the ground.



Elijah killing Rurik

So Elijah prevailed over Rurik with a sling and a stone and struck him dead. There was no sword in the hand of Elijah. Then Elijah ran and stood over Rurik and took Rurik's own sword and finished him off. When the Vikings saw that their champion was dead, they fled. The men of England rose with a shout and chased the Vikings as far as the seas where the Vikings fled in their boats, back to their lands in the north, never to return.

Lord Francis was overcome with emotion, he said to Count Abner, the Commander of the army, "What do you think of this stripling youth?"



Lord Francis congratulating Elijah.

"What type of youth is this Elijah?" Abner asked in awe.

"This day he has become a man and no longer a youth. This day shall forever be known as St Elijah's Day. Proclaim this Abner throughout the land. Send heralds to every part of the Kingdom, for we have overcome and goodness has prevailed. All honour to good, brave and kind Elijah," said Francis.

Thus was the story of Elijah who saved England not by might or fierce threats or doings, but ingenuity and wisdom.

On that day as Lord Francis declared, he became a man and as a result, Lord Francis made him Sir Elijah, Knight of the Realm. Lady Kylie and Lord Francis and the people rejoiced merrily for long days after the victory over their enemy. Sir Elijah grew to be a mighty warrior in his own right, but humble and just. He lived a long life and is buried with the many saints at Glastonbury, England, where it is said, he rests until England needs him again. That day is now.



Glastonbury today, where our hero lies waiting for England and his people to call.

THE END



The crest which was handed down to descendants of Sir Elijah.

