

Summary

Ulvbygden – a suggested interpretation

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Ulvbygden is the name, as yet uninterpreted, of a settled area (*bygd*) within Almunge parish in Uppland, some 30 km east of Uppsala. Judging from its oldest known written form, *Ulsūm* (dative plural), which is found in several 14th-century records, the earliest Old Swedish nominative form may be assumed to have been **Ulsar* or **Ulsir*. Lars Hellberg suggested in 1967 that the name originally referred to a village, within the area, that has since disappeared. The present author believes that **Ulsar*, *-ir*, which would later provide the name for the area as a whole, is based on a river name OSw. **Ūls(a)*. This he regards as formed with an *-s* suffix from an Old Scandinavian counterpart of the adjective *ul* ‘tainted, musty, rancid; foul-smelling’, known from Swedish and Norwegian dialects.