

Summary

Järlåsa, Järle and Järle

By Lennart Elmevik

The emphasis in this short study is on clarifying the origins of the parish name *Järlåsa* in Uppland, first recorded, in 1291, as (*in*) *Jarlasum*. The name may be assumed originally to have denoted the centrally situated village now known as *Kyrkbyn* ‘the church village’. *Järlåsa* has most commonly been interpreted as a compound of the Old Swedish man’s name *Jarle*, later *Jærle*, and the plural of the word *ås* (OSw. *ās*) ‘ridge’, referring to an esker – a ridge laid down by glacial meltwater – running through the parish and past the church village. The author argues against this interpretation of the first element. Instead, he suggests that the name contains a common noun OSw. **jarlās* ‘gravel ridge, esker’, the first part of which he assumes to be an Old Swedish word **jarl* m. or **jarle* m. ‘gravel’. The second element, despite its plural form, could refer to a single ridge, the one just mentioned, or alternatively to several; the area in question is rich in eskers.

Regarding the two other names mentioned in the title, of which *Järle* refers to a manor house in Nacka, near Stockholm, and *Järle* a village in Ervalla parish in Västmanland, the author suggests that they contain OSw. **jarle* ‘gravel’, one of the alternatives proposed as the first element of *Järlåsa*. He is not, though, able to provide concrete topographical support for such an interpretation.