



Johan (78) and Hilda (68) in January 1949

The history of our grandparents Hilda and Johan Andersen

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Our place of origin is Nordmarka

Grandmother's family from Hakadal and Maridalen

I started my family research reading about our ancestors in Birger Kirkeby's "*Bygdebok for Nittedal og Hakadal*" (Local history published in two volumes 1965 and 1968) as well as in Egil Collett Aabel's "*Nordmarksfolk – plasser og slekter gjennom 300 år*" (places and families through a period of 300 years), published 1985. Even if the essentials of those books, largely based on oral sources, are correct and reliable, they may, quite naturally, suffer from certain errors or lack of information. Therefore, *as far as our own family is concerned*, I have made some corrections and added supplementary information from old church registers. This is a laborious process that may be continued indefinitely...

Some readers may disapprove of the fact that I include all kinds of finds – even the less flattering ones. Why should it be necessary to disclose the weaker points in our ancestors? My answer is this: As the events I refer to, may have taken place e.g. 150 or 200 years ago, they are not likely to hurt or offend any of our contemporaries. Our own generation has also been endowed with positive as well as negative traits of character. I find it natural to disclose all finds, in order to create a picture as true and correct as possible of our ancestors – and thereby obtain closer relations to them. We are all "in the same boat", irrespectively of what epoch we live in. I do not apply any "moral" perspective in this. All finds contribute to making the history of our ancestors come alive!



Very few capitals in the world have such unique – and vast – natural resources in immediate vicinity as Oslo. In our generation, Nordmarka has always been our car-free area for outdoor life all the year round, and quite especially for cross country skiing in wintertime. Nordmarka borders on the whole length of the municipality of Nittedal, incl. Hakadal. Until 1940 around 250 persons had their homes in Nordmarka, scattered in more than 40 different places. Forty years later, only half of those places were inhabited, and the number of inhabitants had been reduced to one third. There is reason to believe that 300 or even 400 persons may have lived in the area in the 19th century. About half of the places are situated within the borders of the municipality of Oslo (or Aker – at the time of our grandparents), whereas the other half belongs to the neighbouring municipalities of Nittedal, Lunner, Jevnaker and Ringerike.

At least three generations of our ancestors passed part of their lives in the south-eastern part of Nordmarka, first and foremost the parents of Grandmother at *Laskerud* and the parents of her father in *Maridalen*, but for shorter periods even Grandmother and “Bess” themselves, during the first time of their marriage, before they could afford to have a house of their own. Then they moved down towards Rotnes, first to *Løvli*, later to *Hjørnet*, and finally to *Berget*. We have “always” known about those three places.

What we did not know, however, was the fact that our grandparents started their 54 years of married life at *Midtoddan* by the lake Maridalsvannet in the spring of 1898. Subsequently, they lived in Danmarksgate 47 at *Vålerenga* in 1900, and later at *Bomstua* in Maridalen. That was for a short period, until they settled permanently in Nittedal in the summer of 1902.

Before that – or probably at the same time – our great-grandparents Gudbjørg and Olaus Eriksen lived for more than 40 years at the cotter’s farm *Laskerud*,¹ close to Ørfiske. Before settling at Laskerud Great-grandfather Olaus had lived in *Maridalen* for more than 20 years, from 1847, when he went there from Hakadal together with his parents.

Laskerud was sold to “Det Ankerske Fideikommiss”² in 1814. Thus it belonged to Wedel Jarlsberg and subsequently to Løvenskjold at the time when our great-grandfather managed the place. Today’s border with Oslo was at that time the border between Nittedal and Aker. Nittedal had no border in common with Kristiania, because Aker was in between. Nittedal got a common border with Oslo after the fusion of Aker and Oslo in 1948.

¹ Laskerud was a cotter’s farm, originally a part of *Mo Farm*, which was situated in the area where the council house now stands, down by the present Hadelandsveien (Hadeland Road). But Laskerud was situated at a considerable distance from the manor, close to the edge of the forest and only one or two kilometers from the border to Oslo (at that time Aker).

² Fideikommiss (from Lat. Fidei commissum, “Trusted in honour and in conscience”) is the term used for a property that is bound to be transferred by heritage and therefore must not be sold. The person disposing over a fideikommiss has a right to the income, but the full value of the property has to descend to another member of the family, according to a set order of succession. The system of fideikommiss probably originated in Spain in the Middle Ages – with royal succession as a model. The intention behind the establishment of fideikommiss was to secure the welfare and esteem of a family over a long period of time, by keeping the fortune undivided on one hand (from <http://no.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fideikommiss>).

Three “Greats” at Nøkleby

As far as we know, at least three generations *before* our great-grandparents had lived with Nordmarka as their nearest neighbour. In 1772, the great-great-grandfather of our grandmother, **Erik Kristensen**,³ bought *Nøkleby Farm*, situated in the northern part of Hakadal, close to the border between Hakadal and Hadeland.

Erik’s son, **Ole Eriksen Nøkleby**, owned and managed the farm from 1783 on. He got ten children, but two of them died at a very early age. Ole may first have been married to Mari Mortensdatter, with whom he got two or three of his ten children. From 1787, however, his wife’s name is **Anne Mortensdatter**. She may have been a sister of Mari’s, since both had a father named Morten. It was Anne who became our grandmother’s great-grandmother. She bore seven or eight of the ten children, among them our great-great-grandfather Erik in 1800.⁴

Nøkleby was in 1817 divided between the sons Kristen and Morten. Kristen received Søndre (Southern) Nøkleby, also called “Søgarn”, and Morten’s inheritance was Nordre (Northern) Nøkleby, called “Framme”. Kristen was 32 years old at that time, Morten only 19. Morten did not take his farm in possession until his father died, 11 years later. The formal division of the farm was also confirmed then, in 1828.

Our great-great-grandparents at Mork

Erik Olsen Nøkleby, our great-great-grandfather, who was child number eight in the family, was 17 years old when the farm was divided between his two elder brothers. Thus he had no influence on that decision. As his father died, and Morten took possession of “Framme” in 1828, or when Erik married **Kirstine Kristoffersdatter**⁵ the year after, he probably had to find a job and a dwelling elsewhere.

³ Kristensen was not a family name, but according to naming customs at the time, only a piece of information telling that Erik was the son of a person whose name was Kristen. He probably added Nøkleby as an extra name after settling on the farm, just as his son Ola also did.

⁴ The names of the children are mentioned in Birger Kirkeby’s Bygdebok (local history) for Hakadal (vol. 2, p 237). There is reason to believe that the names are correct, whereas the years of birth seem to be less accurate. The “Bygdebok” says that Erik was born in 1803, but according to church registers he was born three years earlier. By the way, the church register spells his name with –ch (Erich), but such variations and inaccuracies were rather common in those days.

⁵ In several names spelling varies e.g. between k and c. I have chosen to spell all names in the Norwegian way, thus preferring k to c.

Erik was then 29 years old, and Kirstine 23. Most likely, he became a farm hand at *Haug Farm* in Hakadal. Our great-great-grandmother Kirstine came from the neighbouring farm Mork (spelt Mørk at that time).

Before Kirstine and Erik had time to marry, they got their son *Olaus* (*who became our great-grandfather*) primo September 1829. The child was christened at the end of the same month. In the church register the vicar has written *Olavus*.⁶

The vicar also wrote “*illegitimate child*” behind the name, but with this conciliatory addendum: “*Marriage announced for the parents*”. The marriage took place in Hakadal church just before Christmas that same year. It was usual to add “Illegitimate” behind the name of a child whose parents were not married. This seems hard and unnecessary to us today, and it was of course rather unpleasant at that time as well. “Illegitimate” meant “born out of wedlock”, a *formula* that might sound a bit better, but still was discriminating.

We do not know for certain how many children Erik and Kirstine got. Since Erik did not have a farm of his own, not even a cotter’s farm in Hakadal, those children have not been mentioned in the “Bygdebok”. Nine children have nevertheless been found through a laborious search in *church registers*, and most likely that was the total number. Our great-grandfather Olaus was the oldest child (born 1829), Kristian was born two years later (1831), and at that time they were living at Haug in Hakadal.

Three years later (1834), Anne Marie was born. “*Aas*” was stated as her domicile, which in practice means the same as *Mork*. Anyhow, Erik lived at Mørk (Mork) when the next children came: Edvard (1836), who died at the age of two, a new Edvard (1841), Karl (1843) and Antonette (1845). By studying dates of christening and confirmation in church registers, we can also see where they lived at different times.

When Kristian was confirmed in 1846, his domicile – according to the church register – was “*Aaseiet*”, which was not really a name, but just a piece of information telling that the place where he lived belonged to Ås Farm in Hakadal. That does not necessarily mean that they had moved from Mork, as the farm Mork (namely Sømork) belonged to Ås Farm at that time.

⁶ Olavus is the Latin form for Olav. Our grandmother Hilda inherited that name as a second name, but in the feminine form Olava.

From Hakadal to Maridalen

The two youngest daughters, Borgine and Karoline, were born in Maridalen, respectively in 1847 and 1849. Both parents were then in their forties. The whole family, two adults and six children, moved to Maridalen in the middle of June 1847, only three days before Borgine was born. They settled at one of the seven cotter's farms belonging to *Sander Farm*, situated in the area between Laskerud and Maridalsvannet (the lake), along the route where our grandparents lived for two short periods at the beginning of their marriage.

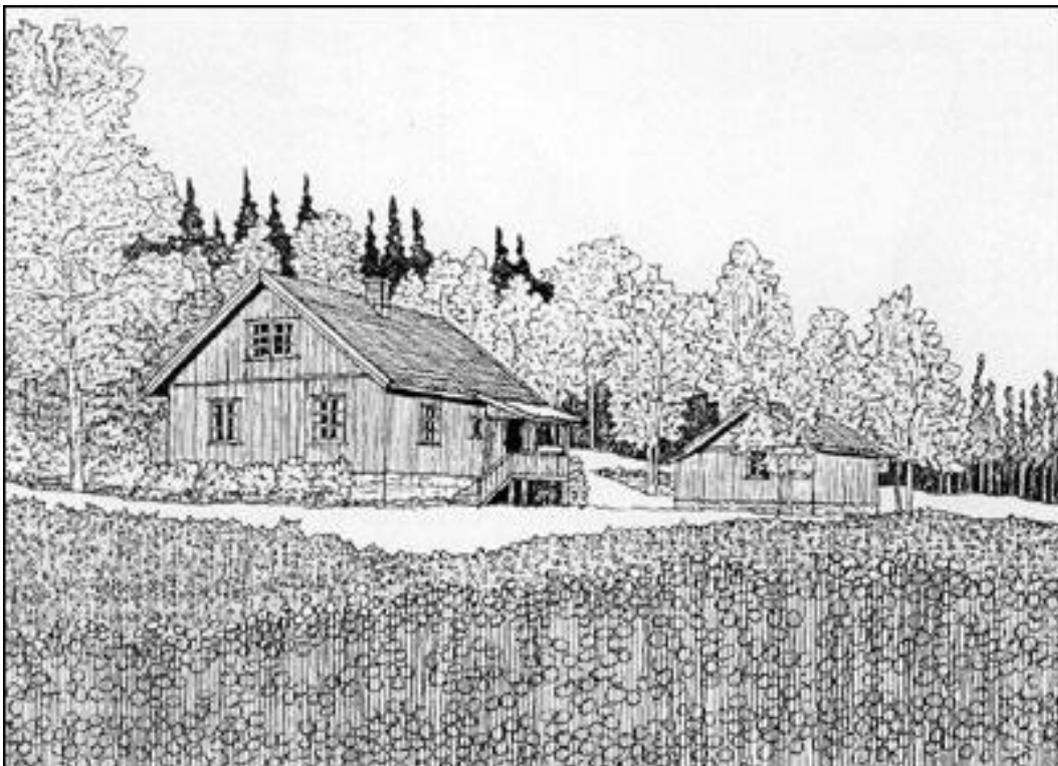


Photo: *Sagstua / Berntsberg* - drawing by Tom Stensaker (Cf. www.maridalensvenner.no).

We have reason to believe that among the seven cotter's farms it was *Sagstuen* (Sagstua) that became their home. Sagstua got new borders as it was extended northward along the river Dausjøelva (later called Sagstuelva). It got a new name as well – *Berntsberg* instead of Sagstua. Berntsberg was one of the cotter's farms belonging to Sander Farm in the 18th and 19th centuries. Here our great-great-grandfather Erik was a cotter for 37 years, after 17 years in the service of the farmers at Haug and Mork in Hakadal. Kirstine and Erik stayed in Maridalen for the rest of their lives, that is to say – for both of them – more than 30 years. Kirstine died in 1878 at the age of 72. Erik died five years later, at the age of 83.

Their daughter Borgine and her husband Anton Thoresen seem to have succeeded Erik at Berntsberg. The youngest daughter Karoline married Hans Olsen, who was the leader of a saw-mill at Brekke, by the southern end of the lake.

Greveveien (the Earl's Road), passing by Sander, ⁷ was the road most people used between Nittedal and Kristiania at the time. Greveveien, completed just after 1800 and named after Earl Herman Wedel Jarlsberg, led from Maridalshammeren to the Hakadal Works. It was the main road to Kristiania for the farmers from Hadeland and Hakadal. They used their feet or their horses. The condition of the road was rather poor, so the horses had pack-loads in summer and sledges in wintertime. The big annual markets in Kristiania, that lasted several days, always took place in February, the best time of the year for carrying goods on the bad roads in the countryside.

In the 19th century it was not unusual for young people to leave home after confirmation to earn their living. But Olaus and Kristian, who were confirmed while they were living in Hakadal, accompanied their *parents* to Maridalen. Most probably they were employed by farmers or other cotters somewhere else in Maridalen, and thus not far away from their parents. There were no big distances between farms and cotter's farms in "*the lovely Maridal*". ⁸

⁷ The transport of planks dominated much of the "traffic" between Hadeland and Kristiania in the latter half of the 19th century. The drivers had a cottage where they could pause and rest at Sander, one of the biggest farms in Maridalen. The lake Maridalsvannet was in the older days (before 1800) called "Sander Sjø" ("Sander Lake").

⁸ "The lovely Maridal" = "den fagre Maridal" (from a song written by the famous writer Henrik Wergeland)



Photo from 1901: *Gamle Aker kirke (Old Aker Church)* – until 1861 just *Aker kirke*

After the family moved from Hakadal in 1847, they belonged to *Aker kirke* (Aker Church), which was the parish church for the whole municipality of Aker. Aker encompassed the Capital on all sides. Thus *Oslo kirke* (Oslo Church) was also within its borders, until Oslo became a *section* of the City of Kristiania. That section, as well as the church, was later named *Gamlebyen* (Old Town/Old Town Church). That was when the Capital got its present name *Oslo* (1925).

From 1855 the new-built *Vestre Aker kirke* was the parish church for the family. After the extension of the city in 1861 the former *Aker kirke* was located within the borders of Kristiania, and was afterwards named *Gamle Aker kirke* (Old Aker Church).

Contemporaneously, Aker was divided into two parishes, but remained one municipality. The eastern parish got a new church – *Østre Aker kirke*, situated at Ulven.



Photo (Postcard from 1924): Vestre Aker prestegård og kirke (parsonage and church).

Nedre Blindern Farm (Lower Blindern) became parsonage for Vestre Aker in 1855. That was also the location of the vicar's office, which Great-great-grandfather Erik as well as Great-grandfather Olaus and Grandfather Johan had to visit in the latter half of the nineteenth century, to make appointments concerning christenings, weddings or burials. Jørgen Moe, famous fairy-tale collector – was vicar of the parish from 1871 to 1875, so both Erik and Olaus may have met him ... The photo shows Vestre Aker Church in the background.

The tenant farmer's house (to the left – out of the picture) was built ab. 1790/1800. Ragnhild and I lived there together with our three children from the spring of 1982 till January 1993. It was at that time an official residence which I disposed of as secretary for the council of the diocese. Our children Kristin, Håvard and Tone were confirmed in Vestre Aker Church. If Erik, Olaus and Johan were acquainted with the tenant farmer, they may have enjoyed a cup of coffee together with him in "our" kitchen!

Why did they leave Hakadal?

We may wonder why our great-great-grandfather Erik moved from Hakadal with six children and a pregnant wife in the summer of 1847. Like Kirstine he was born in Hakadal, and they had even passed 17 years of their adult lives together in that region. Why did they leave Hakadal? Two grown (confirmed) sons went together with them. Why did they all leave – never to return?

Two explanations are possible. First, the farmer's son Erik had to leave Nøkleby when it was divided between his two elder brothers 19 years earlier. After that, he had to live with a far lower status than his brothers. His father, as well as his grandfather, had been farm owners, whereas he himself had to accept being hired by strangers as a farmhand.

Such a fall in social esteem was no easy matter. And the fact that he was still living so near to the farm where he had grown up, may have made things even worse. Class distinctions were a lot sharper than today, and they had more serious consequences. Moreover, it was practically impossible to rise from a lower level to a higher status.

Another possible reason may have been Kirstine's situation. She was an "illegitimate" child, whose mother besides had not been confirmed.⁹ But her mother, **Margrete Tomasdatter**, was clearly beyond confirmation age at the time when she bore her daughter. She was 58 when she died in 1835, so she must have been nearly 30 when Kirstine was born in 1806.

The fact that Kirstine's father **Kristoffer Halvorsen** – from Nannestad – never married Margrete, probably emphasized her vulnerable status as "illegitimate child". It was not easy 200 years ago to grow up with such a label. And we can imagine that the family at Nøkleby was not very happy about the marriage between her and Erik. That may also have been part of the motivation for "escaping" from Hakadal.¹⁰

But their decision may also have had a more positive background. We could imagine that Erik on one of his numerous trips to Kristiania – during a pause at Sander, where most of the travellers rested – quite simply had been *offered* one of the seven cotter's farms at Sander. Such an offer – a cotter's farm within easy reach of the Capital – must have been very attractive for a 47 years old Hakadal farmhand with a large family.

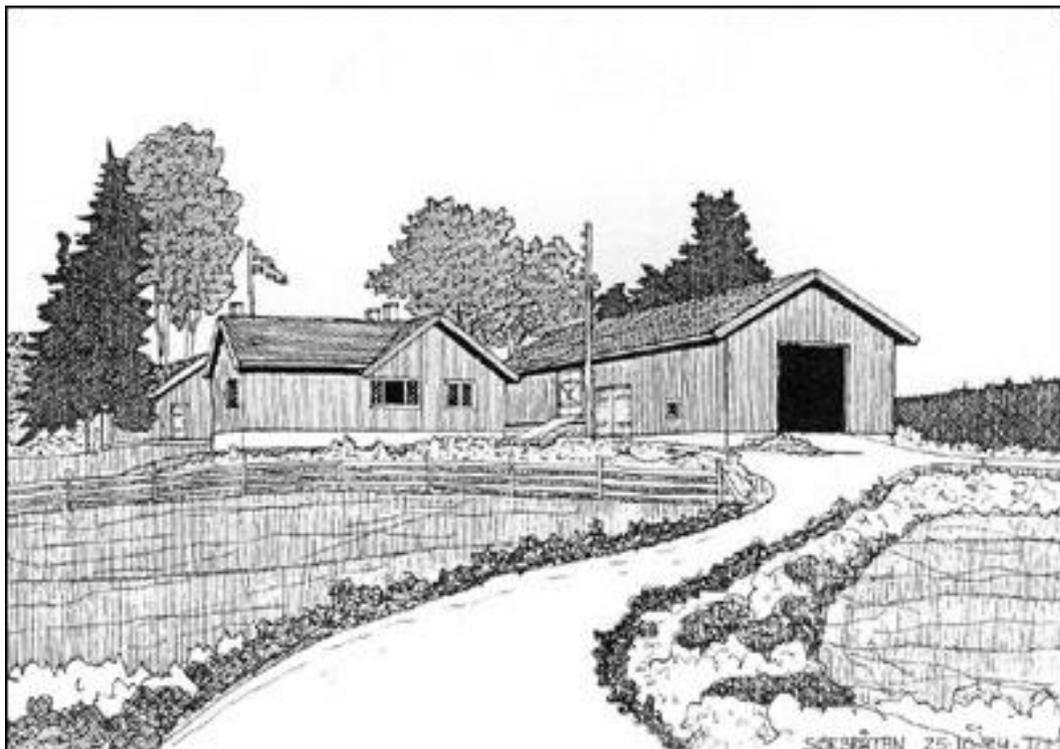
⁹ From Birger Kirkeby: "Bygdebok for Nittedal og Hakadal", vol. 2, p. 343.

¹⁰ They moved many years after Kirstine's mother died. Kirstine possibly never got acquainted with her father.

At any rate we must hope that Erik and Kirstine got a much better life in Maridalen. True enough, he did not become a farm owner there either, but he could at least live on an equal footing with the other cotters and tenant farmers, and they could more or less lay their former life in Hakadal behind them.

Great-grandfather moves to Laskerud

Olaus Eriksen was the oldest son of Erik and Kirstine, and he became the father of our grandmother. He came from Hakadal together with the rest of the family at the age of 18. Olaus was 35 as he married his first wife *Kristiane Marie Olsdatter*¹¹ from *Sørbråten* in Maridalen. The wedding took place in Vestre Aker Church in 1865, and they settled at *Sørbråten*.



Picture: *Sørbråten*, – drawing by Tom Stensaker (Cf. www.maridalensvenner.no).

¹¹ Kristiane (born 1836) was the daughter of Ole Sørensen and Inger Marie Mathisdatter at *Sørbråten*.

Kristiane became mother of the two oldest children, born in 1867 and 1869. In the spring of 1868 they moved to *Laskerud*, where their second child was born. In 1870, in the springtime, Olaus and Kristiane hired a housemaid to Laskerud. Her name was *Gudbjørg Hansdatter*. We will hear more about her quite soon.

At Laskerud Kristiane died only 34 years old, after a spontaneous abortion in the second month of pregnancy. This tragedy occurred in 1871 just after the turn of the year. Olaus was allowed by the vicar in Nittedal to take the coffin to Vestre Aker Church and get Kristiane buried in the churchyard there.

It is possible that her parents were still living at Sørbråten in Maridalen when Kristiane died, and, as we know, they belonged to the parish of Vestre Aker, just as Olaus had done for a period of 20 years before he settled at Laskerud. At the time of his wife's death Olaus was probably not yet emotionally domiciliated in Nittedal. Maybe he never was.

Olaus, and his parents who were still alive in the 1870es, had to bear the loss of two more family members in the winter and spring of 1871. In February, his brother Karl, 27 years old, froze to death on the ice of the lake (Maridalsvannet), and in April their sister Antonette (24) died of consumption (tuberculosis). She had married less than four months earlier. Karl was unmarried. It must have been a very hard time for Kirstine and Erik, who were now 64 and 70 years old, and of course for Olaus and his surviving siblings as well.

It was in the spring of 1868 that Olaus and Kristiane moved from Sørbråten to Laskerud.¹² We know very little about the cost of renting the cotter's farm at that time, but in 1919, the last year it was rented by someone in our family, the yearly rent amounted to 550 crowns. How many animals they had is also uncertain, but according to a census from 1720¹³ there were one horse, three cows, five sheep and seven goats at Laskerud. Hens, dogs and cats were not counted. Whether the number of animals had increased or decreased 200 years later, that is an "open question".

The widow Anne Jensdatter, who lived at Laskerud before Olaus came there, had been lured by a wooer from Toten to go with him on a ship to America in 1867. She was then 70 years old, and as soon as they had arrived "over there", he left her. The fact that she left Laskerud was indeed the event that "opened" Laskerud for our great-grandfather.

¹² Egil Collett Aabel writes in his book "Nordmarksfolk" that the transfer took place in 1875, but that does not seem to be true. According to church registers, it had been reported in 1872, "four years late".

¹³ Birger Kirkeby: "Bygdebok for Nittedal og Hakadal" (vol. 1, p. 245).

*If Anne had not been seduced by that man from Toten, our great-grandparents would probably never have met. There are, however, thousands of smaller and greater events in life that may change the course of history for all of us ...*¹⁴

Great-grandmother Gudbjørg appears

In 1871 Olaus was left alone at Laskerud with a little son aged three and a daughter who was one year and a half. He probably felt unable to take care of the little girl, so she was moved to her paternal grandparents at Berntsberg in Maridalen, where she grew up. There she had even her aunt Borgine to see to her. We do not know for certain at what time the girl came to her grandparents, but it must have been at a very early age.

Gudbjørg Hansdatter, our great-grandmother, lived at Laskerud together with Olaus and his little family. She had come to Laskerud as housemaid the year before (spring 1870), while Kristiane was still alive and in good health.¹⁵



Photo: *Laskerud in modern times. The veranda has been built in after the time of our great-grandparents.*

¹⁴ Birger Kirkeby: "Bygdebok for Nittedal og Hakadal" (vol. 1, p. 247).

¹⁵ There was very little space for five persons at Laskerud. Up to 8 persons may have been living there at the same time. In 1867 the buildings were measured by an insurance company, showing a base of 21 x 11 alen for the dwelling house. One alen = 62 cm. That is to say that the square content of the house – containing a kitchen, a bedroom, a living-room and a hall – was 90 square meters. In addition they had a barn (75 square m.), a summer cow-stable (44), and a potato cellar (25).

Gudbjørg must have been a great comfort to Olaus less than half a year after he became a widower, for she was eight months pregnant when they married in April 1872. Gudbjørg was then 29 years old, Olaus 42. She came originally from *Rya Farm* in *Lunner*, half-way between *Grua* and *Roa*.¹⁶

As we have seen, Olaus had two children before he married Gudbjørg. The youngest one, *Oline Marie*, who had been moved to *Maridalen*, grew up there. But *Emmart* (or *Edvard Ingebrekt*) was also quite small, only two and a half years old, when Gudbjørg came to *Laskerud*. So, in his mind, she had probably “always been there”.

Of the seven children Olaus and Gudbjørg got together, one little girl died early in the same year as our grandmother was born (1880). She lived only for a few months, and her name was *Hilda Olava*. When Grandmother was born in December the same year, she was named after her – with both names. Grandmother was number eight of the nine children.

Our grandparents, *Hilda Olava and Johan Edvard Andersen*, also got a daughter who died only a few months old.¹⁷ She was number three of ten siblings. Moreover, Aunt *Bergljot* and Uncle *Gunnar (Glømmi)* had to suffer the same kind of sorrow. In 1927 their youngest son *Kjell* died in a traffic accident. He was only one year old. Thus, the tragic loss of a little child – not unusual in olden times – has hit at least five generations in our family.

*Olaus was befriended with the owner of Ørfiske Farm, Amund Hansen, who was Olaus's best man at his wedding in April 1872. But Amund sold the farm and left for America in 1873. The new owner of Ørfiske was Royal Forester Otto Gjerdrum, who straightway built a hunter's cabin in the area, where he from time to time had very prominent guests, e.g. Fridtjof Nansen and King Oscar II. But it is unlikely that our great-grandfather was ever invited to the cabin on such occasions, even if he was of the same age as the king. It is more probable that he befriended the new tenant Martin Iversen and went to see him at times when Otto Gjerdrum and his royal friends were not there.*¹⁸

¹⁶ Both Birger Kirkeby and Egil Collett Aabel have stated that Gudbjørg came from *Jevnaker*. But that was because *Lunner* at that time was within the church parish borders of *Jevnaker*. Gudbjørg was christened in *Jevnaker Church*, but she was born on *Rya Farm* in *Lunner (Hadeland)* and grew up there.

¹⁷ The name of the child who died was *Elfi Viktoria*, and the next child was named after her: our aunt *Elfi Hildegard*.

¹⁸ It is Egil Collett Aabel who tells the story about *Ørfiske* in his book “*Nordmarksfolk*”, but it was in the church register for *Nittedal* that I found facts about the wedding at which *Amund Hansen* was *Olaus's* best man.

From Laskerud to Sørli

Great-grandfather Olaus died at Laskerud in 1912, and then his son Morten (29) may have taken over his contract. At least he managed the farm for the following six years. But of course, it is possible that he did so in his mother's name. Rent contracts usually contained a paragraph allowing widows to remain on the farm if they could cope with it.

In 1918 our grandfather Johan Edvard Andersen bought Sørli Farm (by Sørлитangen near to Nittedal railway station). But our grandparents did not settle there. Instead, they let Grandmother's youngest brother Morten manage the farm, and Gudbjørg moved together with him from Laskerud to Sørli in 1918. The year after, Grandfather sold the farm to his brother-in-law Morten. At approximately the same time our grandparents moved from Løvli (where they had lived since 1903) to Rotneshjørnet.

Great-grandmother Gudbjørg died at Sørli in 1923. Grandmother's youngest brother Morten lived till 1962. He was Chairman of the District Council of Nittedal from May 8th 1945 till the end of that first year of peace. I vaguely remember that I on one occasion went on a visit to Sørli together with my mother, while her Uncle Morten Laskerud was still alive. That must have been once in the nineteen-fifties.

With Rallar blood in our veins

- Our grandparents in Nittedal -

*We do not know when or how our grandparents met. But there is reason to believe that the short distance between Laskerud and the new railroad through Nordmarka was a decisive factor. Several Swedish workers ¹⁹ found employment as railroad builders, and one of them was 27 years old **Johan Edvard Andreasson**.*

*That was in the summer of 1897, when our grandmother **Hilda Olava Olausdatter** was a young girl of 16 ½. When Johan came to Nittedal in the middle of the 1890s, he became a lodger at Jon Moskogen's "Saga" (also called Moskauen). The house, situated close to the new railroad, was later sold to the NSB (Norwegian State Railways) and used as a watchman's dwelling after "Nordbanen" (Northern Railroad) was opened in 1900.²⁰*

From Dalsland – via America – to Norway

Our grandfather Johan Edvard Andreasson was born August 27th 1870 at Rännelanda in the county of Älvsborg. Rännelanda is situated in Dalsland, to the west of Vänern, the largest lake in Sweden.

¹⁹ The large number of Swedish migrant workers, who took part in the building of Norwegian railroads towards the end of the 19th century, they were called rallare. The name was derived from the Swedish dialect word ralla, meaning *wheelbarrow*.

²⁰ "Nordbanen" (Northern railroad) – later on "Gjøvikbanen" – was opened in 1900, and covered to begin with only the distance from Røykenvik to Grefsen, which at that time belonged to the municipality of Aker. Two years later the rails were extended into Kristiania. (About the name Kristiania, see note 23, page 19).

Johan's father, **Andreas Carlsson**,²¹ who was a miller, was widowed no less than three times. His first wife, Britta Maria, died five days after a stillbirth. The child was a girl, but we do not know whether she was given a name. That was in 1865, when our great-grandfather Andreas was 25 years old. Britta Maria was some years older than him, and nearly 30 when she died. Andreas was left alone and childless.

Two and a half years later, on April 10th (Good Friday) 1868, Andreas married again in Högsäter Church. His bride was **Kristina Eriksdotter**, who was to be our great-grandmother. The couple got five children. Number two was Johan – our grandfather.

The third child, Sara, died in 1874, only one year old. It is always tragic to lose a child. Still worse, at least for the children, was the fact that their mother Kristina died four years later. That was in February 1878. Johan was then only 7 ½ years old. The two youngest ones, a new Sara and Alfred, were only respectively three and one, so they could certainly not remember their mother as they grew up.

Their father, Andreas, was still a young man of 38 when he was widowed for the second time, and he needed a new mother for his four children, so he married again. His third wife, Anna Lena, also bore him four children.

Anna Lena died in 1895, only 48 years old. Andreas was widowed for the *third* time. Again he was left with four minor children, aged fifteen, twelve, ten and seven, but he never married again. Andreas, our great-grandfather died, 64 years old, in the middle of July 1904. A drowning accident took his life.

Johan and his siblings (Kristina's children) were not so well off with their new stepmother. We can only hope that their half-siblings, Anna Lena's own children, were in a better position. However, they did not get many years together with her. Only her eldest son may have been old enough to get confirmed before she died.

Grandfather Johan and his two years older brother Carl Verner left home quite early. They may have gone together to the United States. At any rate, their sister Sara, five years younger than Johan, emigrated to the States and settled in Minneapolis in Minnesota, where she remained until she died 85 years old. Alfred, her two years younger brother, emigrated together with her in 1901.

²¹ Our great-grandfather Andreas Carlsson (1840 – 1904) had three siblings: Maria Katarina (b. 1838. d. in early childhood), Sakarias (b. 1843), and a new Maria Katarina (b. 1846). Their parents, i.e. our great-great-grandparents, were Carl Magnus Johannesson (1810 – 1861) and Sara Eriksdotter (1804 – 1864).



Photo: Grandfather Johan with his siblings (Kristina's children): In front Sara (1875 – 1960) and Johan (1870 – 1958). Behind them: Alfred (born 1877) and Carl Verner (1868 – 1916). Sara and Alfred emigrated to the United States in 1901. The Photo is probably taken in the early 1890s.

Even their half-sisters Hulda, Anna and Agnis settled in Minnesota! Whether Carl Verner left for the States, is uncertain. If so, he must have returned to the land of his childhood. He died at Skållerud in 1916, 48 years old.

Information from a Swedish church register indicates that our grandfather Johan left for the USA March 29th 1889.²² He was then 18 ½, and - for all we know – he may have stayed there for a number of years before going “home” and eventually settling in Norway.

²² It was our second cousin Jan Olof Andreasson who found this information in a church register.



The photo above taken between 1880 and 1890 shows us a central part of Kristiania at the time when our grandfather Johan came to Norway. Grand Hotel is to the right. A horse-drawn streetcar turns from Rosenkrantz Street to Karl Johan's Street. In the background, we can see the Royal Palace, where King Oscar II used to stay when he visited Norway. He was king of Sweden and Norway 1872 – 1905 (in Sweden till 1907).

Maybe he did not find any ship bound for Göteborg (Gothenburg) when he wanted to go home? Maybe he had to go on a ship bound for Kristiania²³ instead? His first glimpse of Norway may have been from the deck of an “America liner” sailing up the Kristiania Fiord²⁴ some day in the mid-1890s.

²³ The name of the Norwegian capital was Christiania (Kristiania) from 1624 till 1925. From 1877 on it was spelt with an initial K. The city had its name from the Danish King Christian IV. Norway was part of the Danish monarchy from 1380 till 1814, when Norway was incorporated in a union with Sweden. Even if Norway got its own Constitution in 1814, that union remained until 1905.

²⁴ From 1925 the name of the city is Oslo, and consequently the name of the fiord also changed from *Kristianiafjorden* (Kristiania Fiord) to *Oslofjorden* (Oslo Fiord).

A different Christmas 1897

Christmas 1897 turned out to be different from other Christmases to the family on the small cotter's farm of Laskerud in the outskirts of Nordmarka, boarding to Maridalen and Aker. We might imagine the following scene if we could pay the family a "visit" at Christmas time:

One of the last days of December, half of the family members are gathered around the table in the living room to celebrate the youngest girl *Hilda Olava*.

It is her 17th birthday. Her mother *Gudbjørg* has laid a nice table and prepared a large quantity of coffee. Big sister *Kristiane*, still living at home with her parents, has baked a delicious birthday cake. Father *Olaus* is wearing the same fine shirt as he had worn on Christmas EVE, hoping that the collar is still tolerably clean.

There are only five family members present at Laskerud this Tuesday evening. The youngest one is *Morten* (14), who was confirmed last autumn, and who is still living with his parents. However, when spring comes, he will have to leave and find employment somewhere. Most likely, he will move downwards in Maridalen to seek his fortune, just as his older siblings have done.

Hilda, whose birthday is being celebrated, is not feeling well these days – to put it mildly. Mother *Gudbjørg* has been aware of that during the whole Christmas season. Father *Olaus* as well has been a little worried about the girl who is normally a lot more lively. Now she is very quiet – and even seems to have lost her appetite.

In the kitchen, *Gudbjørg* and *Hilda* get some minutes to themselves. Then and there, eventually, truth comes out: *Hilda* is pregnant. *Gudbjørg* has probably understood, for during the last three months, the girl has not had her periods. Who might be the father? Perhaps it is one of the young men down in Maridalen? Hopefully not a fellow from *Hadeland* who has been passing by...

It is mother *Gudbjørg* who nourishes those thoughts. Even if she herself has come from *Lunner*, she hopes that the father of the child is a genuine *Maridal* man. *Hadeland* has gradually become such a faraway place in the world.



Picture: "... downwards in Maridalen to seek his fortune."

Of course 17 years old Hilda knows very well who is father of her child, but she does not dare to tell. *Not yet.* For it is not a young boy, and not a man from Maridalen. Nor is he from Hadeland – for that matter. Eventually she will have to tell the truth.

The father is a *grown* man of 27, ten years older than Hilda. Moreover, he is *Swedish*, one of those who work on the new railroad through Nordmarka. *One of the rallars!*²⁵

No good news to the family, to put it mildly! Olaus Eriksen, the cotter, is now 68 years old, and his wife Gudbjørg 55. They might have imagined another – and better – situation for their youngest daughter. Expecting a child with a grown-up Swede, *whom her parents have never met*, - that is no good start in Hilda's adult life.

Of course, we do not know whether our imagined scene agrees with reality, but it might have been like that!

²⁵ Rallar – (Cf. note 19, page 16)

From Midtodden – via Vålerenga and Bomstua

Things were to develop a lot more favorably than expected, but nobody could know that at Christmas time in 1897. The first years of their marriage were probably not always easy, but Johan and Hilda were enterprising young people who managed to build a good life together.

They married in a civil ceremony in Kristiania on Saturday April 23rd 1898.²⁶ Two of Johan's colleagues (railroad workers) were witnesses, which indicate that family members from Laskerud were probably not there.

At that time, it was customary to have two of the nearest – *male* – relatives as witnesses. It seems that Johan and Hilda had to cope with everything on their own, without any family support, *at least to begin with*.

They settled at *Midtodden*,²⁷ a cotter's farm situated at a headland on the East side of the lake Maridalsvannet. The municipality of Kristiania bought the farm in 1891, in connection with plans for securing the lake as a drink water resource for the city. The same happened to other places in the municipality of Aker. Tenants were employed to run the farms, and Johan may have been one of them. At any rate, Hilda and Johan were allowed to stay at Midtodden for one year – or perhaps a little longer – from April 1898. Today nothing remains of the dwelling, except for parts of the foundation wall.

Less than two months after the wedding by the Justice of Peace in Kristiania, a well-shaped little boy was born at Midtodden, and 2 ½ months old, he was christened in Vestre Aker church, which was also the parish church for Maridalen at that time. The little boy was named **Alf Valdemar**. In the church register, his father's title is railroad worker. He was then working on "Nordbanen" (Northern railroad), which opened two years later.

²⁶ A note in the church register for Vestre Aker tells us that according to a letter of April 26th 1898 from the Justice of Peace in Kristiania, they had married at a civil ceremony.

²⁷ In the 1870s, Midtodden, originally a cotter's farm under Vestre Grefsen manor, became a hunting seat for Proprietor Waldemar Drevsen. At the same time, it was cultivated as a smaller farm. The main building was torn down in the 1960s – as part of a plan for securing Maridalsvannet (the lake) as a drink water resource.

But even before the opening of the railroad between Røykenvik and Grefsen in 1900, the extension of the rails further towards the capital had started.²⁸ That gave Johan employment as hackney-man, and then he and Hilda, together with little Alf, moved from Maridalen in Aker into *Kristiania* – to Danmarksgate 47 at Vålerenga.²⁹



This picture of the little family was taken at Szacinsky's photographic studio in Prinsens gate (Prince Street) in Kristiania, probably in the summer of 1901. It shows Hilda (20) and Johan (31) with the children Alf (3) and Bergljot (1 ½).

²⁸ The rails were laid in a deep passage at Etterstad, and huge masses of earth and stones had to be removed, which required a number of drivers for the horse-drawn wagons. Johan was probably one of them, and thus it was suitable for him to live at Vålerenga.

²⁹ Today many lodgers have Danmarksgate 47 as their home address. Probably there was a large apartment house in the same place a hundred years ago as well, with still more inhabitants – in a number of tiny flats. (Danmarksgate = Denmark Street.)

At Vålerenga a new baby is born – this time a daughter – in January 1900. She is named **Hjørdis Gunvor Bergljot**, and Bergljot is chosen as the name in daily use. She is christened in April – in Vålerengens Bedehus (religious meeting house), because the building of Vålerengen church has not yet been finished.

Before moving back to Maridalen, probably in the summer or autumn of 1901, they go to a photographer in the city. Alf is then 3 years old and Bergljot 1 ½. For such a solemn occasion nothing but the very best counts. So they go to the leading studio in Kristiania at that time, i.e. to the Polish Ludwik Szacinsky's in Prinsens gate 12.³⁰

There is reason to believe that they were wearing their finest clothes – and it is absolutely possible that they even allowed themselves to go by streetcar to the photographer's.³¹



Picture: Streetcar in Kristiania in 1903. “Trikk” – the Norwegian word for streetcar – is derived from the adjective “electric”, and thus an abbreviation for “electric tramway or streetcar”. The sign in front of the streetcar shows that it goes to **Oslo**, which at that time was the name of a section of the city of Kristiania. In 1925, when the name of the whole city was changed from Kristiania to Oslo, that section was called Gamlebyen (Old town). In the background you can see Gamlebyen church, which before 1925 was called Oslo church.

³⁰ The Polish photographer Szacinsky had died many years before this, but his Norwegian wife Hulda, whose maiden name was Hansen, managed to uphold the studio and its reputation.

³¹ In 1900 a new streetcar track opened to *Vaaleringen*, where our grandparents lived at the time. (*Vaaleringen* is an old spelling for *Vålerenga*).

After a year or two in Danmarksgate 47 at Vålerenga (*we do not know for certain how long they lived there*) they moved back to Maridalen, and this time to *Bomstua* (turnpike cabin/toll station). Horse and carriage were of course their means of transport, and one single load may have been sufficient for their few belongings.

There were two cabins for payment of toll ³² along the road Greveveien, ³³ one in Hakadal and the other in Maridalen. It was the southern one that became the home of our grandparents – midway between the later railway stations Snippen and Sandermosen.

At Bomstua the third child, **Elfi Viktoria**, is born in May 1902. Even if Bomstua is situated in the parish of Vestre Aker, she is christened in *Nittedal* church. That is at the end of July, which indicates that they have moved from Bomstua in the early summer of 1902.

Back to Nittedal – and a house of their own at Løvli

In the summer of 1902 they move to Nittedal and settle temporarily at Laskerud, where they live together with Hilda's parents, Gudbjørg and Olaus Eriksen, until they get the opportunity of buying a house of their own. At any rate, the church register shows that Laskerud is their home address when Elfi Viktoria is christened.

Little Elfi Viktoria did not live long enough to see more than one summer, one autumn, and one Christmas. Only eight months old, she died of a whooping cough in January 1903. According to church registers, Laskerud is still the dwelling place of the family, and Johan's title is *tunnel worker*.

In the course of the same year (1903), he buys Løvli, where they remained for 16 years.

³² The price for passing those turnpikes at the end of the nineteenth century, was 20 øre (0,20 kr.)

³³ Greveveien = *Count's Road (named after Count Wedel Jarlsberg)* – see also link on page 20.



Picture: Part of the family gathered at Løvli, probably in the summer of 1903. The boy with the wheelbarrow is Alf (5 years old). At his side Arnt Nygaard (9). The girl to the right in the front row is Bergljot (3 ½). Hindmost, slightly to the right of the middle, we can see Hilda (22). Johan (33) is holding a hand on her shoulder. To the right in the mid-row we probably see Hilda's parents Gudbjørg (61) and Olaus (74). The young man in the back-row – wearing the black hat – may be Hilda's youngest brother Morten (20). We do not know the identity of the young couple with twins. But the woman beside little Bergljot might be Hilda's oldest sister Kristiane (31).

How could Johan afford to buy the place? We can imagine that an inheritance from his mother enabled him to do so.

Five – or possibly six – of the children were born while the family lived at Løvli,³⁴ and the place name was also to be adopted as family name for all the children, whether they were born before or after the acquisition of the property – from the oldest one (born 1898) to the youngest one (born 1922).

³⁴ The place name Løvli (without the final –e) was adopted as family name (spelt Løvlie). The name is still in use

The only exception was Elfi Viktoria, who died before the question of a new name had arisen, and even before she could make use of a family name. However, Hilda and Johan stick to the name *Andersen*, a Norwegian variant of Andreasson.

The five children who were undoubtedly born while the family were living at Løvli, were **Elfi Hildegard** (1906), **Ingrid Elfrida** (1910),³⁵ **Guldborg Kristine** (1911), **Arthur Olaus** (1914), and **Gerd** (1916). If it was in the summer of 1919 that the family moved to *Hjørnet*³⁶ even **Ruth** may have been born at Løvli (April 1919). The church register, however, states *Hjørnet* as her home address when she was christened in October that same year.

What we know for certain, is that **Rolf Johannes** (1922), was born after they settled at Hjørnet. At his birth he was already the uncle of two nephews (Odd and Knut). To mother and daughter – Hilda and Bergljot – it must have been a very special experience to go pregnant at the same time. Bergljot even bore her second son three months before her mother got her last child!

As mentioned before, our grandfather bought Sørli in 1918, but they never settled there. Instead, Hilda's younger brother Morten moved to Sørli, together with his little family and his mother Gudbjørg. The following year Johan sold the place to his brother-in-law Morten – and bought Hjørnet for himself and his family. Morten Laskerud was a small-scale farmer, and from May 1945 on, when the Second World War was over, he was chairman of the district council (the rest of the year 1945).

From railroad worker to shopkeeper

Grandfather Johan came to Nittedal as a railroad worker and stayed in the same kind of employment in Maridalen. At Vålerenga, however, he was first a work-wagon driver and subsequently a mountain- and tunnel worker, probably in connection with the railroad building through Nordmarka.

Back in Nittedal he set himself up as a blacksmith. That is his title in the church register on various occasions during the decade 1906 – 1916. He may have had his own smithy at Løvli. In 1914, however, he is a construction worker, but we do not know in what kind of construction.

³⁵ Ingrid was born at Rikshospitalet (National Hospital) in Kristiania in May 1910, and only five days old, she was christened in the same place. Whether any of the other children were born at a hospital, or whether they were all born at home, is uncertain.

³⁶ Hjørnet = the Corner

He had taken part in the building of the Ørfiske dam, but that construction had been finished about 1910. In 1916 he is back in his occupation as a blacksmith.

After Johan and his family had moved to Hjørnet, he had taken up brick-laying for a living. Whether Hilda established her shop at once, is uncertain, for in the summer of 1919 a new baby was added to the already numerous family. However, the two oldest children were now full-grown, and Johan is mentioned as a shopkeeper as well as a brick-layer. In practice, that probably means that Hilda took care of the shop, whereas Johan worked as a brick-layer.

In 1920 the oldest daughter Bergljot marries. She is then a shop assistant, and so is her bridegroom as well. Both are 20 years old – and probably employed in Hilda's and Johan's store. Our grandfather's title at that time was *shopkeeper*, probably at the time synonymous with *country tradesman*. But there is reason to believe that it was Hilda who administered the store.

Two years later (1922) he has set up his own business as a brick-layer – without giving up his local store, and in the following years - according to church registers – he is a brick-layer as well as a store-keeper. However, in 1930, he is back in his role as a blacksmith – and at the same time a store-keeper.

“One morning Johan was gone...”

We do not know to what extent Johan kept in touch with his relatives in Sweden after the turn of the century, but undoubtedly his two years older brother Carl Verner was the one with whom he had most in common, also before their father died in 1904. The two youngest ones of their full siblings, Sara and Alfred, had emigrated to the United States in 1901 – to stay there for the rest of their lives. Carl Verner and Johan had already been on a trip to the States before their youngest siblings emigrated, but they did not stay there long before they chose to go back home.³⁷

Johan settled in Norway in the middle of the 1890s and raised a big family, whereas the oldest brother returned to his point of origin in Sweden. He remained unmarried and childless. When Carl Verner died in 1916, only 48 years old, Johan – who was two years younger – had already a large family, wife and seven children (eight, if we include little Elfi who died), and later he even got two more children.

³⁷ See photo of the sisters and brothers on page 18

Johan went home to Sweden to attend his brother's funeral. That was in the late summer of 1916. Since Carl Verner had no children and the two brothers had had so much in common, and since the two others of the full siblings had left their homeland for ever, Johan probably took it for granted that he was going to inherit his brother's fortune and belongings, at least most of it.

Thus, it was a severe disappointment to him to discover that in his will Carl Verner had left everything to one of his nieces in the neighborhood - Ella, who was the oldest daughter of his twelve years younger half-brother Wilhelm.

During his visit in connection with the funeral, Johan stayed with his half-brother Wilhelm and his wife Olga. It seems that he got furious when he discovered that Ella was going to inherit everything.

"One morning Johan was gone, and so was all the money that had been kept in the house." Johan probably hired horse and carriage – *or perhaps even a car* – early in the morning to escape from Skållerud to Karlstad. From Karlstad he may have gone by train to Kristiania. Undoubtedly he was in possession of sufficient money for the ticket, as well as for food and drink for the whole journey back to Norway.

According to Swedish relatives, that was the end of any contact between the half-brothers: *"After this event Wilhelm and Olga did not want to have anything to do with Johan."* Olga was perhaps the strictest one in that matter. She seems to have been a very high-principled and commanding person. Most of her and Wilhelm's children carefully avoided defying her orders.

But two of their children – Sven and Barbro – (i.e. my mother's first cousins) wanted to reestablish a contact with the Norwegian branch of the family. We met them both during a visit to Sweden in the summer of 1970.

The store at the corner and the house on the hill

At Hjørnet (the Corner) there was in 1919 a local store which Hilda and Johan took over. When the *telephone* was introduced in the district, the telephone exchange for Rotnes was installed in Grandmother's store.

To begin with, she did not even need any telephone number of her own, but when the number of subscribers in her district had reached 24 she found it difficult to combine the duties on the switchboard with her work in the store.

So she left her job on the switchboard and became an ordinary subscriber with telephone number 25. Some of her daughters succeeded her as switchboard operators in their young days.

On Saturday March 22nd 1930, 13 years old Gerd (nearly 14) is walking down Stasjonsveien (Station Road) on her way home from Rotnes School.³⁸ She is in her seventh and last year in elementary school and will sit for her final exams in a couple of months.

Then – all of a sudden – she discovers that Hjørnet is on fire!

That was a shocking experience that my mother could never forget.

The childhood home with the store was burnt down to the ground that Saturday. The family – children and parents – had to split up for some time, accepting the hospitality of a number of friends who were willing to let one or more of them live in their homes during the whole period of reconstruction.

For the house with the store was rebuilt. Hjørnet was ten years later (1941 – the first year of the war) turned over to aunt Bergljot and her husband Gunnar, whereas our grandparents bought – or built – a new home on *Berget*³⁹ and settled there.

The acquisition of Berget may have taken place as early as in 1936, i.e. five years before they left Hjørnet.⁴⁰ If so, Bergljot and Gunnar have been tenants at Hjørnet before they took over (bought) the property from her parents.

Few, if any, of the children were consulted in connection with the transfer of Hjørnet. Some of them were abroad fighting for their country in the Second World War, and those were certainly not asked. Such thoughtlessness in parents has occurred at all times. That was probably also the case with Nøkleby Farm three generations earlier, and has undoubtedly occurred after that time as well.

³⁸ In the countryside the children went to school only every other day, at least in the lower grades. That implied that half one half of the pupils were taught on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, - the other half on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Teaching on Saturdays was practiced right up to the mid-sixties.

³⁹ Berget = the Hill

⁴⁰ The dates (years) have been found in a list of property transactions in Birger Kirkeby's local history book, but the names of the owners are not mentioned there.



Photo: Arthur (20) on the steps to the rebuilt store at Hjørnet (the Corner) 1934



Photo: Our grandfather Johan with his son Arthur, both eager hunters and beagle owners. The photo is from about 1950, when Johan was 80 years old – and Arthur 36.

“Old friend” – eager hunter and story-teller

Grandfather had a nickname in the neighborhood. He was often called “Old friend”, a label which certainly implied positive realities, but perhaps some smiling irony as well. I am not quite certain about its meaning. He may have been friendly and useful to people around him who needed a helping hand. He was an all-rounder and clever at all kinds of practical work.

I remember e.g. that he built a chimney from the basement through two floors plus an attic. He was then 83 years old. I was six at that time. Grandfather Johan was a dedicated hunter and dog keeper, enjoying grousing as well as moose- and hare-hunting. He allowed himself a drink from time to time and loved telling fibs.

I remember that “Bess” – as we called him – once told us about Maria Holen (or *Maria Ho-or´n* in our local pronunciation). She lived at Holen, a cotter’s farm under the Manor Rus in the middle of the nineteenth century. As a matter of fact, Johan never met her, but he had been told a number of stories about her, e.g. by his landlord in the 1890s, Jon Moskauen.

Maria Torbjørnsdatter (which was her real name) was said to have been both visionary and “loose”. She seems to have been attractive and repulsive at the same time, and in the stories about her, it has been difficult to distinguish between imagination and reality. For more than a hundred years after her death she was kept “alive” in oral tradition. And apparently, she was the favorite theme for “Bess” as a story-teller.⁴¹

⁴¹ The story about Maria Holen may also be found in Birger Kirkeby’s local history book (vol. 1 pp. 334 – 335), in which the author refers to our grandfather Johan as the source of the story.



Photo: Our grandparents' house at Berget in the latter half of the 1940s. A petrol pump is shown in the lower part of the picture, but the auto repair building came later – in 1949.

We are part of a numerous posterity

Hilda and Johan got ten children and nineteen grandchildren. One child died at a very early age, and so did a grandchild – respectively in 1903 and 1927. Grandfather lived to see all his grandchildren, except one grandson who lived in Wales and Canada.⁴² But Grandmother Hilda died before the last four or five were born.

Hilda and Johan were comparatively young grandparents for their first four or five grandchildren, but more advanced in age for the next ones. After Hilda and Johan died more than 50 years ago, quite a few grandchildren and great-grandchildren have been born, lately even some great-great-grandchildren.

⁴² That grandson is Nicolas – called Nick – Arthur's oldest son, born in Wales in 1943, i.e. during the Second World War, while his father was serving in the Norwegian military forces. Presumably, our grandparents knew nothing about their grandson abroad. Matters that would have caused no problems today might have been difficult in those days. Nick was introduced to his Norwegian family members for the first time in 2001.

Many of us remember Johan as a really old grandfather. Grandmother Hilda was indeed ten years younger, but in return she died six years earlier. Hilda's life-time was only 71 years, whereas Johan attained the age of 87.



Photo: *Family idyll at Berget (probably in 1941). We can see Hilda (60) and Johan (71) with two of their daughters, Elfi (35) to the left – and Ingrid (31), standing to the right in the background. The two girls are cousin Titten (5) to the right, and Bjørg Kristiansen, daughter of the lodger, with a white hair ribbon. (Ingrid had not yet any children.)*



*Selma Lagerlöf (51 years old) in 1909
She received the Nobel Prize for literature that year*

Selma Lagerlöf and Grandfather's curls

As a final remark, I would like to quote the following little story, told by my mother:

Grandfather Johan was twelve years younger than the world famous writer Selma Lagerlöf from Värmland. She was a teacher before her literary break-through, and it has been asserted that Johan had been one of her pupils.⁴³ Sometimes she gave her pupils individual exercises in the classroom, and while they sat reading or writing, she walked slowly between the desks, in case somebody would need her help or advice. Then she might approach Johan from behind, look at his curly head – and stroke his curls.

Some of us have “inherited” Grandfather's curled head, so we may take pride in the “fact” that Selma Lagerlöf loved our curls!

⁴³ If that is true, it must have been before she was graduated as a teacher. She got her grade from the teachers' training college in 1885, when Johan – nearly 15 – had certainly finished school. However, she may have held positions as a substitute for teachers during her years of training 1882 – 1885. But I have found nothing to confirm that. Thus, the whole story may be fictitious, and the source of the fiction may have been Johan himself!

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Bomstua (Cf. Text under ill. number 3): <http://www.nittedalsporten.no/historie/greveveien.htm>

Our Swedish roots: www.jo-andreasson.com (Click further on *Jan Olof* and *Släkträd 1*)

Rännelanda in Dalsland: <http://www.fargelanda.se/page/11363/rannelanda.htm>

Selma Lagerlöf: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selma_Lagerlöf

Some of the pictures: Galleri NOR (National Library) http://www.nb.no/gallerinor/e_sok.php

With greetings from Dag Løkke – daglokke@yahoo.no