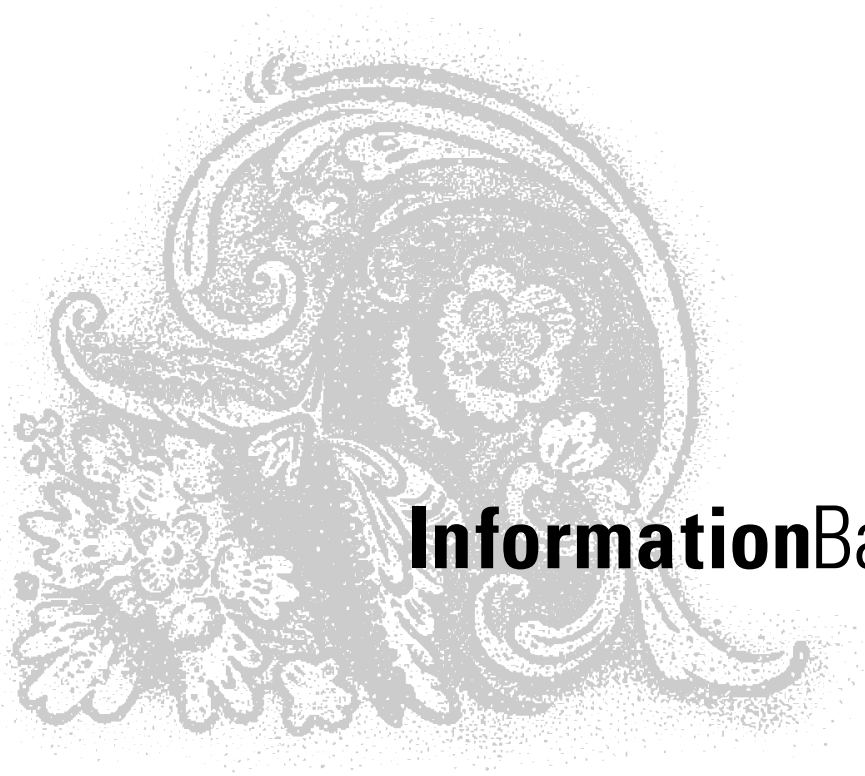




**Sons of Norway
HERITAGE PROGRAMS**



InformationBank#22

THE FAMILY TREE/VIKING ARTICLES

Prepared by Gerhard Naeseth

Revised May 1995

Table of Contents for the Family Tree

Introduction	April 1984
How to Begin.....	June 1984
How Can Cemeteries Help?	August 1984
Church Records an Excellent Source	October 1984
Don't Ignore the Census Records	December 1984
Norwegian Names	February 1985
Cooperation in Genealogy	April 1985
What About the Bygdebøker?.....	June 1985
Church Records on Microfilm	August 1985
Norwegian Naming Customs.....	October 1985
What About Computers?	December 1985
Passenger Lists.....	February 1986
Passport Records	April 1986
Emigration from Voss	June 1986
And Then There is Sigdal.....	August 1986
Aurland is Interested in America	October 1986
Etne is Celebrating.....	January 1987
Early Immigrants from Norway	July 1987
To Those with Hafslo Roots.....	September 1987
The First Norwegian in Wisconsin	November 1987
Vik in 1989.....	January 1988
Exactly Where is My Farm?.....	March 1988
Målselv Celebrates in 1988	May 1988
Karmøy's Role in Emigration	September 1988
A Family Reunion in Norway.....	December 1988
Sørlandet Beckons	February 1989
How can the Mormon Library Help?.....	May 1989
A Success Story	July 1989
The Vesterheim Genealogical Center	September 1989
Letter Writing	January 1990
Telemark's Bygdebøker.....	March 1990
Buskeruds' Bygdebøker	May 1990
Nordland's Bygdebøker	July 1990
Rogaland's Bygdebøker	September 1990
Oppland's Bygdebøker	November 1990
Hedmark's Bygdebøker	February 1991
Bygdebøker for Akershus.....	April 1991

Bygdebøker for Aust-Agder	June 1991
Bygdebøker for Northern Norway	August 1991
Bygdebøker for Nord-Trøndelag.....	October 1991
Bygdebøker for Sør-Trøndelag	December 1991
Bygdebøker for Møre og Romsdal	February 1992
Bygdebøker for Sogn og Fjordane	April 1992
Finding your Roots.....	May 1992
Bygdebøker for Hordaland	July 1992
Bygdebøker for Hordaland	September 1992
Researching your ancestors from Vest-Agder	January 1993
Researching your ancestors from Aust-Agder	April 1993
Researching your ancestors from Vestfold	June 1993
Researching your ancestors from Østfold	October 1993
Naeseth's Life Work	June 1994

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

For many years, the *Viking* has had a feature called "Do You Know Them?" This has been helpful to many Sons of Norway members in finding missing relatives and ancestors.

But there may be a better way. It is possible that by the publication of a series of articles on how to do family history, we can enable you to find these missing relatives by yourselves, without depending upon someone responding to a question in a column. It is true, of course, that some questions can not be answered in any other way.

Therefore, beginning with the June issue, I will be writing on a number of topics, with one objective in mind: to help you help yourselves in finding the answers. Among the topics I plan to

discuss are how to begin; Norwegian farm names and patronymics; the many changes in names and name forms; sources to be found at home; church records; census records; vital records in county and state offices; probate and other records; do's and don'ts in family history; how to read difficult handwriting, such as the old Norwegian Gothic; dictionaries; immigration and settlement trends; obituaries; local newspapers; county and township histories; church history; Norwegian-American newspapers; special obituary files; printed histories about Norwegians in America.

In some issues of the *Viking*, I will discuss problems in tracing your families back into Norway, such as the

variations in the Norwegian language; the Norwegian farm and those who lived there; how to locate farms in Norway; maps and atlases which can help; where to locate Norwegian local histories; Norwegian church, census, probate, and other records; printed aids to Norwegian genealogy. Inevitably, I will want to tell about the Genealogical Society of Utah and its fantastic collections.

The above list is not intended to be definitive. Readers of the *Viking* may want to submit subjects for future articles.

Gehard Naeseth

Introducing Gehard B. Naeseth, who will be writing for the Viking a regular column on Norwegian-American Family History and Genealogy, beginning with this issue.

Since 1975, Professor Naeseth has served as the director of the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, a division of the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa. The Center has endeavored to be a clearinghouse for information and inquires, as well as providing a collection of books and other materials in the field.

Naeseth published his first family history in 1956, and is now completing a biographical directory of Norwegian immigrants who came prior to 1851. In 1969 and 1980 he was one of the lecturers at the two World Conferences on Records and Genealogy held in Salt Lake City. He has also lectured for the Norwegian Genealogical Society and the Telemark Festival. He was one of the first to be awarded a scholarship by the Emigration Fund of 1975. He was the recipient, in 1978, of the Knight's Cross, First Class, Royal Order of St. Olav.

Naeseth is a professional librarian, culminating his career with thirty years as associate director of the University of Wisconsin Library in Madison. He has been active in many professional organizations as well as organizations concerned with Scandinavia. He has been an active churchman, and was the first layman to serve as chairman of the Church Council of the American Lutheran Church.

On the invitation of Nordmanns Forbundet, he is leading a genealogical tour to Norway in June of 1984.

Odal Genealogy Club Offers Assistance

The Odal Genealogy Club would like to help and exchange information with those who are searching for ancestors from eastern Norway. They are especially interested in hearing from those people whose ancestors emigrated from Odal, near Kongsvinger in Akershus.

The club has access to microfilms of church registries and many books which contain farm and family histories.

To seek or share information write to Odal Sledtshistorielad, c/o Elna Heggen Tømterud, Oppstad, N-2100 Skarnes, Norway.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

How to Begin

A good place to begin the study of your family history is at home. In other words, begin with yourself and those living with you. Do it today!

Arm yourself with a blank notebook and a pen and/or pencil. On a single sheet, write down what you know about yourself: your full name, your date and place of birth, your schooling, your military service, the positions you have held. And if you are married, record the date and place of your marriage and similar information for your spouse. Add the names and dates of your parents and your children. At this point, you will have yourself what genealogist call a family group sheet.

When you have completed this, carry out the same exercise for your brothers and sisters, using a separate page for each one. And for your spouse's brothers and sisters (in Norwegian they are called søsken).

So far, this has been easy. Now move back one generation by writing down what you know about your father and mother, following the pattern of information listed above. If your parents are still living, you will want to sit down with them and go over the ground leisurely. You may want to move next to the brothers and sisters of your father and mother.

Sooner or later, you will come to the end of information to be found at home. But until you do, keep writing down what you can learn at home about your grandparents, your great-grandparents, etc. If you have not done this before, almost surely some errors will creep in—or at least some guesswork. Don't let that worry you. Even misinformation can lead eventually to the right answers.

At this point, if you are fortunate, you may want to stop to prepare two kinds of charts. The first will be an ancestral chart. You could start with yourself, showing two arrows leading to your father and mother, four arrows leading from them to your four grandparents, and so on until you run out of space or information.

The other will be a chart

showing descent from a common pair of ancestors, let's say, your great grandparents. Place their names at the top of the page. Run arrows to each of their children. And from the children to their children in turn. And on to the great-grandchildren. In this way, you can see how each person is related. You can also see where you may have some gaps in information. A sample of this kind of chart is shown here.

I cannot imagine that you will want to stop here. In future issues, we will discuss tracing families in Norway. However, let's be content for today with studying your families in America. A logical next step for many of you could be to go to the local cemetery. There you may find a number of tombstone inscriptions for persons related to you. Copy carefully all that is inscribed about

names, dated, and places. Enter each of these pieces of information onto appropriate pages in your notebook, thus gradually adding information about your family.

By now, you should be catching the fever which afflicts all family historians. Be warned that it is incurable. If you indeed have the fever, you will want to pursue your ancestors until you have exhausted all possible sources, and even then you may not want to stop. If this scares you, think of all of the fun—and exercise—you will have. And the joy of sharing with some of your relatives some of the discoveries you have made.

In our next column we will discuss cemeteries, what they can and cannot do for you. And some of the pitfalls. Happy Hunting!

<i>Jørgen Oliver Wrolstad, 1882-1963</i>	—	<i>Harriet Sophia Wrolstad, 1918-</i>	<i>Amy Catherine Wrolstae, 1949-</i> <i>Signe Ann Wrolstad 1952-</i> <i>Jay Parkins Wrolstad, 1955-</i>
		<i>Merald Ernest Wrolstad, 1923-</i>	
<i>Henry Edwin Wrolstad, 1884-1954</i>			<i>Daniel Christian Wrolstad, 1944-</i> <i>Mark Alfred Wrolstad, 1946-</i> <i>James Luther Wrolstad, 1952-</i> <i>Steven Carl Wrolstad, 1955-</i>
<i>Oscar Alfred Wrolstad, 1886-1955</i>	—	<i>Bjarne Bestul Wrolstad, 1913-</i>	
<i>Martin Olsen Wrolstad 1856-1919</i>		<i>Helen Marie Wrolstad, 1914-</i>	<i>Susan Maureen Foster, 1944-</i> <i>Brian Jay Foster, 1946-</i> <i>Amber Marie Foster, 1952-</i>
		<i>Luella Beatrice Wrolstad, 1918-</i>	
<i>James Elmer Wrolstad, 1888-1958</i>	—	<i>Marwin, Otis Wrolstad, 1921-</i>	<i>Bradley Alfred Wrolstad, 1955-</i> <i>William Christopher Wrolstad, 1958-</i> <i>Sara Jean Wrolstad, 1959-</i>
<i>Wilhelm Julian Wrolstad 1890-1969</i>	—	<i>Eleanor June Wrolstad, 1920-</i>	<i>Diane Marie Huglen, 1942-</i> <i>Michael Keane Huglen, 1944-</i> <i>Mark Selmer Huglen, 1953-</i> <i>Steven William Huglen, 1954-</i> <i>Cynthia Louise Huglen, 1957-</i>
		<i>Harriet Marie Wrolstad, 1921-</i>	<i>Daniel James Leach, 1945-</i>
		<i>Doris Arlene Wrolstad, 1923-</i>	<i>Joyce Arlene Teel, 1948-</i> <i>John William Teel, 1948-</i> <i>David Foster Teel, 1950-</i> <i>Thomas Wayne Teel, 1954-</i> <i>Susan Lori Teel, 1960-</i>
		<i>Carlyle Monroe Wrolstad, 1926-</i>	<i>Carla Serena Wrolstad, 1958-</i> <i>Christopher John Wrolstad, 1962-</i> <i>Eric Carl Wrolstad, 1966-</i>
		<i>Donald Edward Wrolstad 1928-</i>	<i>Andrew Paul Wrolstad, 1966-</i> <i>Karen Marie Wrolstad, 1969-</i>
<i>Agnes Wrolstad, 1882-1965</i>	—	<i>Richard Lee Wrolstad, 1931-</i>	<i>Gary Allen Wrolstad, 1957-</i> <i>List Marie Wrolstad, 1958-</i> <i>Nina Beth Wrolstad, 1969-</i>

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Church Records an Excellent Source

When we discussed cemeteries two months ago, we realized that they would often lead logically to related church records. This time we will consider American church records, what they offer and where they can be found.

Since the entries in church records are usually made soon after an event, they are likely to be correct. An since they were written by educated persons, they are more likely to be accurate. The best church records have sections listing members of the congregation, baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, communions, as well as minutes of meetings. Not infrequently in the earlier records, the entry provides the date of a ministerial act, such as a baptism; but may omit the actual birth date. This is also true for burials.

I am especially appreciative of those membership records which provide complete summaries of family groups, including full names, full birth and baptismal dates, and the name of the home community in Norway. On the other had, I have come to realize that these records lack some consistency, especially in the use and spellings of patronymics and farm names. This reflects the fact that many immigrants were not well-educated.

On more than one occasion, I have discovered that it pays to check every possible listing in a church book, because a vital fact omitted in one instance may be listed in another. As an example, I searched for a certain family in many parts of the Koshkonong Lutheran Church records before I found a casual mention of the immigrant's home community in Norway.

Needless to say, church records are normally to be found in the church office or in the pastor's study, which suggests strongly that an applicant using the records should make an appointment. But there is more to the study.

In the 1950s the then Evangelical Lutheran Church made a project of microfilming most of the records prior to 1900. These microfilms are on file in the office of the Archivist of The American Lutheran Church, 333 Wartburg Place, Bubuque, IA 53001, and may be used with the prior permission of the pastor or congregation. The present fee is five dollars for a period of two months.

In addition, the University of North Dakota Library has copies of the films for that state. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin is in the process of purchasing many of the records for the churches in

Wisconsin. The Emigrant Museum in Hamar, Norway, also has copies of many of these records. The Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711, has copies of a few of them. Thus, access to these records is improving.

A family historian will do well to read some books on the history of the Lutheran and other churches in the United States, because religious controversy over such questions as slavery and predestination has resulted in many new congregations being formed from parts of other congregations. Also, until recently, language differences have kept many churches apart.

In addition to the set by Norlie mentioned last time, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans*, by E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold (Minneapolis, 1960) offers much useful background. Arlow W. Andersen's *The Salt of the Earth* (Nashville, Tenn., 1962) tells the story of Methodism. There are several other excellent historical books available to the persistent scholar.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Don't Ignore the Census Records New Genealogical Resources

The federal record most useful to the genealogist is the census, taken every tenth year since 1970. The originals are on file in the National Archives, Washington, D.C. Second copies are often to be found in their respective state historical societies. The advent of microfilm has made them much more accessible. As one example, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin has purchased a microfilm copy of all of the available census records for all of the states. As a matter of fact, individuals may purchase them.

The detail in these records varies a good deal from decade to decade. Name, age, sex, occupation, state or country of birth are normally provided. The 1960 census adds such facts as the month and year of birth; the number of years married; the number of children born to the mother, and the number still living; the year of immigration. The census is arranged geographically, first by state, then country, then township or city. The census taker worked road by road, street by street. He noted all of the persons living in each house, frequently indicating the relationship to the head of the household.

The Norwegian was frequently a problem for the census taker. The names were difficult to spell and pronounce. As a result, misspellings were common. For the most part, the farm name was omitted. In spite of these failings, the census often can produce information not found elsewhere, such as names of children who later died. Notations of places of birth can sometimes be a clue to the schedule of moving from one community to another.

Census users will be well-served if they become acquainted with the Soundex, an ingenious simplified index; as well as with some printed index.

The last volume of the Furnes Bygdebok is now available. It includes, among other topics, a list of Mjøs area emigrants from 1850 to 1930. Contact Sparebanken Hedmark, Postboks 25, N-2381 Brumunddal, Norway.

A private archive listing all U.S. immigrants from Vossestrand (now in Voss) and Hjelma-Herdia (now in Øygarden in Hordaland) is accessible without charge by writing to Jahn Sjursen, Gyldenprisveien 15, 5000 Bergen, Norway.

The Family Tree

by Gehard Naeseth

Norwegian Names

In the study of family history, names can often lead to new information. However, to have names work for you, it is necessary to understand them and how they are used. This month's article will attempt to provide some of that understanding.

Let's start with surnames, the last names. In Norway, these are both simple and complex. For the most part, there are three groups; the farm names, the city names, the immigrated names. Let's discuss them one by one.

Several centuries ago, the authorities established permanent names and numbers for all of the farms in Norway, names which are still used today. In subsequent years many, perhaps most, of these farms were subdivided, sometimes into many parts. It is not unusual to find such a subdivision called by the name of the larger farm, together with a farm number (*gaard nummer*, abbreviated to *br*). In many cases, the subdivision developed its own name.

Professor Oluf Rygh in his nineteen-volume set, *Norse Gaardnavne*, has carefully listed all of these farms, together with their farm numbers, arranging them by county and community. In addition, he has included the variant spellings of the names over the years, as well as the meanings and derivation of the names. Of the nineteen volumes, the first eighteen are devoted to the eighteen counties of Norway. Volume nineteen is an index. This set can often help a great deal in determining where in Norway a family came from. When only one

farm in Norway uses a certain name, Rygh will usually locate that farm for you.

This article cannot go into all of the complexities of farm names. However, it is important to point out that the language reform in Norway has had its effect upon names. The Danish influence has had Dahl, instead of Dal; Rondstvedt, instead of Ronnestvet; and numerous similar examples. But this is nothing new. A study of some of the names in Rygh's books will show that spelling has changed over a long period of time. In fact, it can be argued that in earlier years careful spelling was not a particular concern.

We may want to return to this subject in a future issue. But now we must look at other kinds of names.

A full Norwegian name is usually made up of three parts: the first name; the middle name; the last name. What about the middle name, often called a patronymic? This is a name which shows the name of the father. Thus Olsen, Pedersen, Eriksen, simply mean son of Ole, son of Peder, son of Erik. Here is another complication, in that about a hundred years ago, authorities both in Norway and the United States decided that this kind of surname could not be changed with each generation. More than a century ago, the name, Peder Guliksen Haugen, meant: Peder, son of Gulik, living on the Haugen farm.

A great many city dwellers used only the patronymic, simply because they did not live on a farm. Some city dwellers brought with them the names of the farms they

had left behind.

Many of Norway's clergymen, merchants, and officials emigrated from Denmark, and occasionally from other countries. Usually, they and their families retained, generation by generation, the names from their former homeland. Examples include Wright, Smith, Blichfeldt, Tschudi, Zelitz, Sverdrup, and many, many others.

New Genealogical Resources

A new tool for Norwegian genealogists searching in Asker and Bærum is available. It is a computer compiled index of parish records from 1726 to 1807. The work contains christenings, marriages and burials for the first seven years indexed alphabetically by head of family, for the remaining years, deaths are indexed by name of head of family, by wife's name, and by farm name.

The Vesterheim Genealogical Center in Madison, WI and the Genealogical Department in Salt Lake City have copies of this work. Personal copies are available from the compiler, Helen S Ullmann, 713 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720.

Tyvandeslekta—en Gråtoppgren is the name of a new book which records the Tyvand family history— that is to say, of nearly everyone who claims a connection to Drangedal and Kragerø in Telemark. The book follows the descendants of Peder Finneid Tyvand and Johanne Pedersdatter Grødsjø who were married in 1742. Both of them were descendants of Halvor Gråtopp, who lived in the 14th century.

Written by the late Leif Lønne, the 608-page book portrays the everyday life and festive occasions of nine generations. Write: 1/S Tyvandeslekta, c/o Per Lia, N-3790 Helle, Norway.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Cooperation in Genealogy

This article should be read not only by those who are interested in family history and genealogy, but also by all others who have roots in Norway, which should be just about everyone who reads the *Viking*.

More and more, historians in Norway are becoming interested in learning about the hundreds of thousands of emigrants who left Norway and went to America. And we are the ones who can tell them.

It would help historians greatly if each one of us with roots in Norway would tell the story of our immigrant ancestors, with such details as names and dates, places, occupations, military service, political offices held, names of parents and children.

Let me tell you about a few such historians and what they are doing. Dordi Glaerum Skuggevik, cultural secretary, 6650 Surnadal, Norway, has persuaded a number of persons in Norway to prepare lists of immigrants from several communities in Møre of Romsdal. She has sent these lists to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711, and plans to visit the United States later this year in order to find some of these people.

It would make her work much

easier if all persons with roots in Møre of Romsdal would send the Center information about the emigrants. Some day she plans to write a book about some of our immigrant ancestors. We should try to help her.

The Grong Historical Society in Nord-Trøndelag has sent the Center a pamphlet listing emigrants from Grong for the years 1850-1925. I know that the society would be delighted to receive information about these emigrants from those of us who have that information.

Zona Mathison, 1328 20th Ave. S., Moorhead, Mn 56560, is helping to collect information about emigrants from Vik in Sogn, a community which has sent a great many to America. Terje Østro, 3550 Gol, Norway, is doing the same for Gol in Buskerud.

Arnfinn Kjelland, editor of a local history for Lesja in Gudbrandsdal, living at P.O. Box 63, N-2665 Lesja, Norway, is planning to include a list of emigrants from Lesja in his book, and would welcome hearing from emigrants and descendants of emigrants.

The Cleng Peerson Institute, P.O. Box 451, 4001 Stavanger, Norway, has developed an impressive card index, listing emigrants from Rogaland. A copy of

that file is in Madison. We can help to make that file even better.

Members of the Norwegian Genealogical Society have prepared a card file of many thousands of cards listing emigrants from Telemark. They are completing a similar listing for Østfold, and are considering some of the other counties of Norway. All of this activity should stir us in America to action, in order to do our share in a cooperative project. And there are many similar projects, too numerous to list here. In any case, by sending to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center information such as suggested above, the material will be forwarded to the appropriate scholar in Norway.

In 1965, Morten Hansen published an excellent bibliography of Norwegian family histories in his book, *Norske Slektsbøker*. Jan Fr. Anker Sloem, Østerlivei 6, N 7000 Trondheim, Norway, is collecting family histories from Norway and America in order to publish a supplement. To qualify for inclusion, there must be a copy of a given book in Norway. Some of you will want to contribute copies of your histories for that project.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

What about Bygdebooks?

My column two months ago brought me a number of letters, telephone calls, and visits. For this I am grateful, because they contributed to the sharing of information and expertise.

Much of the mail coming to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center asked about bygdebooks, or more correctly, bygdebøker. Norwegians translate this term as rural chronicles; I prefer local histories. No matter what we call them, we are talking about books providing information about local Norwegian communities, their history and government, their farms and families.

In part because standards for such books have developed over a number of years, the quality of these books varies greatly. An additional factor is that the Norwegian Local History Institute has sometimes given emphasis to the history of the farms, without providing much information about the people who lived on them.

Many of these local histories are full of information for the family historians and genealogists. It is important, however, to realize that these books are secondary sources; that is, they are written and published on the basis of the primary or original sources.

Therefore, the serious genealogist will want to use these histories with care, checking the original sources as far as possible.

So much detail goes into these books that it is very, very easy for

errors to creep in, not only typographical or inadvertent, but also in matters of conclusion. Sometimes, the reading of the preface will help explain how the author has decided what to publish and what to leave out.

Many Norwegian local histories consist of a section, sometimes even a volume or two, telling the general history and geography of the community. Often, this is followed by detailed descriptions of the farms, together with information about the persons who owned and operated them.

While a few histories have the farms arranged in alphabetical order, the majority have preferred to arrange them in numerical sequence, based upon the numbering system which has been in existence for many decades. Occasionally, the book is strictly genealogical. The best histories have detailed indexes, not only of the farms, but of their subdivisions.

A number of American libraries have good collections of Norwegian local histories. Among them are the libraries of St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota; Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota; Luther College, Decorah, Iowa; Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington; the University of North Dakota (Grand Forks). The two best collections in the United States are those of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library (Madison) and the Genealogical Society of Utah. Some of these libraries will lend such

books on interlibrary loan; others, including North Dakota and the Genealogical Society, will not.

One bit of advice: if you find that your family in Norway is concentrated in one or two communities, you should consider purchasing copies of these local histories for yourself, even though you will find that they are expensive. They can be obtained by writing to the local community c/o the Mayor's office, or from J.W. Cappelen, Kirkegata 15, 0153 Oslo 1, Norway.

The Vesterheim Genealogical Society continues to make an effort to know about all such books. There are printed lists, including *Norsk Lokalhistorie*, by Harald Andresen, published in 1969; *By og bygdebøker*, published from time to time by a book store in Oslo, J.W. Cappelen; an annual list in the periodical, *Heimen*; monthly listings in the trade bibliography, *Norsk Bokortegnelse*. When space permits, Vesterheim's genealogical Society is 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53711.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Church Records on Microfilm

My recent articles in the *Viking* have resulted in large numbers of letters, all of which I am trying to answer. Two recent letters offered constructive criticism of one of the articles. When I listed several libraries with strong collections of *bygdebøker*, I should have included the University of Minnesota Library, which indeed has a large number of these books. And Dordi Glaerum Skuggevik has written to clarify the fact that she is personally interested *only* in the emigrants from Stangvik and Surnadal, both in Møre og Romsdal. She is getting more mail than she needs.

Over the past two months, most of the bygdelags have held their annual meetings. Some of them have included sessions on genealogy. In several cases, they had borrowed from the Vesterheim Genealogical Center microfilm copies of pertinent Norwegian church records. In fact, the bygdelags, together with the National Council of Bygdelags, have furnished much of the money enabling the Center to purchase the microfilms.

Well and good! A recent letter asks for more help in understanding these church books on microfilm. A number of oral comments have echoed the same question. For example, how complete are these records? How long after a birth was a baptism

recorded? There are no absolute answers, but let me attempt a few comments.

The earliest records offer less detail than the later ones. For example, up until about 1814, most records provide only a baptismal date, not a birth date. Again up until 1814, the mother's name is often not given.

Occasionally, the names of both parents are omitted. Although there is evidence that it was customary to have a child baptized within a week or two of birth, there were many exceptions. I am inclined to believe that social status did not determine whether or not a child was baptized and therefore recorded. On the other hand, it seems likely that ability to get to church over poor paths and roads played a part. So far as I know, a fee was not required for baptism. True, at least in later years, it became customary to give the pastor something, certainly here in the United States.

Following the union with Sweden in 1814, most Norwegian parishes started new record books with more columns and detail. Both baptismal and birth dates were recorded; occasionally, the names of both parents with the names of sponsors. Sometimes stillbirths were reported in a separate section of the books.

When I work with a reel of microfilm, I first determine its

contents. For example, it may include books 5 and 6 for a certain parish, book 5 covering the years 1814-1842, book 6 1842-1859. For the most part, each book will include baptisms, confirmations, marriages, burials, vaccinations, lists of those entering or leaving the parish—but not necessarily in that order. Occasionally a pastor entered some records, such as baptisms, on pages intended for burials in order to conserve space.

Many parishes kept duplicate books, one by the pastor, the other by his assistant, in case of loss by fire or other disaster. There is clear evidence that fire has destroyed a number of records which cannot be found anywhere else.

I may return to this subject in a future issue.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Norwegian Naming Customs

In the February issue we discussed Norwegian surnames, especially with reference to farm names. In the current issue we will take the logical next step by discussing forenames and how they can help us determine relationships. I will use as my resource an article published in a Swedish publication by Dr. Per Seland, president of the Norwegian Genealogical Society. A translation of the entire article was published in the July issue of *Norwegian Tracks*.

By doing research in the church records for Fjotland and Sirdal in Vest-Agder, and in Vang in Hedmark, Seland has determined several basic principles for the naming of the children. The first one is that the older children are named for their grandparents:

- a) The oldest son was named for the paternal grandfather,
- b) The oldest daughter was named for the paternal grandmother,
- c) The next oldest son was named for the maternal grandfather,
- d) The next oldest daughter was named for the maternal grandmother.

Sometimes it will appear that this principle was not followed,

when in fact, research will usually show that there were other children with "missing" names. An exception would be when the property rights rested with the wife; then her parents would be named first.

In the naming of children, the names of the four grandparents were often not sufficient. Then the naming pattern moved to the great-grandparents. Here there is no clear pattern as to which should be named for first. On the other hand, it appears that an effort was made to avoid such combinations as Hans Hansen and Mads Madsen.

There were a few principles for use in exceptional cases. For example, if the first wife died, the first daughter in the second marriage should be named for the first wife. Similarly, if the first husband died, the first son in the second marriage should be named for the first husband.

If a baby boy was baptized after the death of this father, he was automatically given the name of this father. This resulted in such names as Hans Hansen and Mads Madsen. If a baby girl was baptized after the death of her father, she was given a closely related name, such as Todne for Torkel. About the year 1800, new women's names

were made out of men's names, such as Oline for Ola.

There were rules for the naming of children born out of wedlock. If the natural father did not want to be recognized as the father, the child was named for him, again such as Hans Hansen. An unusual case in 1836 concerns a girl who was named Johanne Adamine for her natural father, Johan Adam Wigant. Occasionally, the natural father succeeded through legal means to be absolved from responsibility; then the child might be named with a matronymic, such as Lars Adlaugson. Records have shown a name such as Dorte Dortesdatter. History records many variations

When a childless couple gave a gift, such as land, to a married couple, the latter's first child was named for the childless couple. There are many instances in which it is clear that parents tried to perpetuate a name by using it over and over.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

What About Computers?

Today I wish to discuss computers and genealogy. But before I do, I need to ask the readers of *Viking*, at least those who are interested in genealogy, to let me know what subjects would interest them most. In other words, I would welcome some suggestions for future articles in this column. My address is: 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

I do not pose as an expert on computers. It is true that as a university librarian, I was frequently exposed to the field. And in recent years, I have read a number of helpful articles and one book on the subject. Not much, but a start.

All of the experts recommend that a person interested in purchasing a computer for genealogical purposes first select the program he wants, that is, the software. The hardware is the machine, the software is the program which enables the machine to produce the wanted product. Unfortunately, many persons have decided upon and purchased hardware, sometimes as a part of a sales promotion, only to find that there is no good genealogical software which can be used with it. This point is called compatibility.

Do you need a computer and compatible software? Only you can answer that question. In my opinion, if you have a relatively small family tree, and if you are having no difficulty keeping it

under control, you probably do not need a computer. On the other hand, if you are working with a large family, if you are having difficulty keeping track of all of the lines, if you frequently need to update your material, then indeed you should consider gaining access to a computer.

There is a growing number of genealogical programs for the computer. It is not my purpose to sell any one program. When you shop around, you might look for some of the following capabilities: storage of such vital data as birth, marriage, death, occupation, and offspring records; automatic printing of genealogical charts for both ancestors and descendants; the automatic production of family group sheets; indexing and search capabilities; storage of extensive textual material. Some programs go well beyond these basic needs. It depends so very much on what you want, and often on how much you are willing to spend.

I have a personal prejudice. When I prepare copy for printing, I want it to read like a book. To put it another way, I want my print to be of letter quality, as distinct from the dot-matrix produced by a number of computer printers. There is a noticeable cost difference. For many, the additional cost of letter quality printing is not worth the price. Again, this is for you to choose. I have a word processor, chosen in part because of its book

style printing capability, in part because of many other useful features, including Norwegian letters.

I might share with you my present thinking about a computer for myself. To purchase one of the good genealogical programs may not be necessary, simply because I already have so much of my material in good typed and even printed form. On the other hand, I badly need a computer with a compatible program which will index records of many kinds—such as church records, passenger lists, census records, passport records, cemetery records. And I need a portable computer which I can take to libraries and archives which have materials they cannot lend to me. I would like to sit down with that computer, feed into it—and thus onto a floppy disk—copies of records I want indexed; then take the floppy disk to the large computer for actual sorting.

This article has barely scratched the surface of the subject of computers. Some of you would profit from reading a book, *Computer Genealogy; a Guide to Research Through High Technology*, by Paul A. Anderock and Richard A. Pence. In addition, I have a number of advertisements and other descriptions of potentially useful genealogical programs.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Passenger Lists

For many of us, tracing our families back to Norway is difficult. We are looking for the essential clue which will connect us with the old church. When all else seems to fail, we wonder about the passenger lists.

Passenger lists can help—sometimes. Simply put, passenger lists are lists of persons arriving on given ships. Most of the lists provide the name of the ship, the name of the captain, the home port, the date of arrival in an American port, the port of arrival, and the names of the passengers. So far, so good.

Passenger lists in United States ports date back to 1819, when a law requiring them went into effect. Canadian passenger lists date back only to 1865. It is important to note that beginning in 1854, the majority of Norwegian immigrants came in by way of Quebec. It is usually futile to look for a Norwegian on a passenger list for the years 1854-1864.

The good lists provide the full names of the passengers, their ages, sex, occupations, home country, intended country of destination. Some lists do better than that by providing farm names, home community in Norway, intended place of destination within the

United States. Unfortunately, they are the exception.

At the other end of the spectrum are the early Canadian lists which give only the name and the fact that the passenger is not of British origin, such as "Ole Olsen, foreigner." Add the fact that some of the lists are written almost in a scrawl, that some of them are written by persons having no acquaintance with Norwegian names, that some of the lists appear to have been lost.

In my opinion, more often than not, searching for a specific name or specific family on a passenger list is not worth the effort. Too frequently, the information found in this way adds nothing to the knowledge about the family. Worse, many hours can be spent looking through the passenger lists for a given year, without finding anything. Sometimes a searcher may know the name of the ship which left Norway, only to discover that the passengers changed ship somewhere in a British port.

On the other hand, the search can pay off. For example, the list may show that a passenger died on the voyage; or that a baby was born. Occasionally the list will tell the amount of baggage each passenger brought.

And for a family history, it can be useful to know the date of arrival in an American port, the length of the voyage, the number of passengers, and other facts. I find especially helpful the names of other passengers who accompanied my kinfolk. Sometimes I have discovered new relationships. Occasionally, by tracing the settlement of some passengers, I have found out what has happened to others.

American passenger lists have been kept by the National Archives in Washington, D.C. They have been microfilmed and are available in the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City, and can be borrowed through its branches. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has purchased all of the American and Canadian passenger lists on microfilm up to about 1900. However, since they are in such demand, the Society will not lend them. On the other hand, visitors are always welcome to come to the Society in order to "read" the microfilms.

I would add quickly that the persistent genealogist may find that other libraries and archives have made a similar purchase, and that copies of these lists are closer to home.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Passport Records

Last time we discussed passenger lists and found that while they could often be helpful, they are not as good as they should be. In many instances the Norwegian passport records are more helpful.

The Emigrant Protocol (*Emigrantprotokoller*) records have the effect of being passport records. These records were kept in the local police offices in the port cities. In chronological order they list the persons leaving the country by name, age, occupation, home community, date of departure, shipping line, and in many cases the name of the ship. In other words, they provide valuable information about emigration for most of the ports in Norway.

They are available for Oslo beginning in 1867, Kristiansand in 1873, Trondheim in 1867, Bergen in 1874, Ålesund in 1853. Needless to say, the originals are on file in the respective archives in Norway and most of them have been microfilmed. Microfilm copies are to be found in the Genealogical Society in Salt Lake City; in the Vesterheim Genealogical Center in Madison, Wisconsin; and, thanks to a recent major gift from Sanford Fosholt, in the archives of the

Norwegian-American Historical Association in Northfield, Minnesota.

Better yet, the Bergen Emigrant Protocol records for the years 1874–1924 have been transcribed and indexed, and are available on microfiche. As a result, it often takes no more than five minutes to locate information about an emigrant who left through the port of Bergen. On the other hand, the records for Stavanger were destroyed by fire some years ago—a considerable loss to the student of emigration.

Although the Stavanger records are irretrievably lost, all is not lost. In 1975 the Regional Archives in Stavanger presented to the Norwegian-American Historical Association several bound volumes containing photocopies of the emigrant lists in the various parishes in Rogaland. In addition, the Vesterheim Genealogical Center has acquired from the Cleng Peerson Institute in Stavanger a photocopy of its extensive card file listing emigrants from Rogaland.

What about the smaller ports, such as Arendal, Skien and Drammen? Frankly, I don't know, although I have been trying to find out. I suspect strongly that Emigrant Protocol records were

maintained in all ports. And it is my hope that they will come to light. As a matter of fact, when the Police Department of Oslo moved recently to a new building, some early passport records—from as early as 1835—were unearthed.

Emigrants did not always leave by way of the nearest or most logical port. Instances have been noted of persons from the Trondheim area leaving by way of Oslo. Therefore, it is a good idea to search all lists. Especially through the port of Trondheim, persons from Sweden and Finland are noted. This is understandable, when one studies the map.

There have been hints from Norway about efforts to transcribe and index the Emigrant Protocol records for the ports other than Bergen. This would be a boon to the genealogist because these records may provide the best clue to the names of the home communities of Norway for thousands of emigrants. Advances in computer technology may make this possible sooner than we have had a right to hope.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Emigration from Voss

Among several excellent suggestions for future articles in this column was a wish for several summaries of emigration from specific localities in Norway. This is a good time to start, because in June the community of Voss, near Bergen, will hold an emigrant festival, first in Voss proper, June 20-23, and then in Vossestrand, June 25-July 25. Included will be several lectures on the emigrants from Voss. All of this is to note the 150th anniversary of emigration from that community to America. Many Americans will be there.

Today Voss is a modern city, a tourist attraction, with several outdoor museums, many facilities for winter sports, a number of factories, and an old stone church dating back to about 1270. Both today and 150 years ago, it is in a good agricultural area, producing excellent crops and fruits. And yet, in spite of some natural advantages, Voss was among the earliest communities to send emigrants to America in large numbers.

Knut Rene, in an 830-page book published in 1930, *Historie om Udvandringen fra Voss*, has provided us with a detailed history of the emigration and the emigrants. Although several persons started out for America in 1836, the only family to get to America from Voss that year was that of Nils Knutsen Røthe, who settled in Chicago. But 1837 brought 75 persons from Voss, some of them settling in Chicago, others in Fox River, still others in the ill-fated Beaver Creek settlement near the Indiana-Illinois border.

In 1840, after an earlier visit, three men, Nils Sjurson Gilderhus, Lars Nilsen Bolstad, and Odd J. Himle, settled on land

in the Koshkonong area in eastern Dane County, Wisconsin, and thus became the founders of a Norwegian community which is still strong today. Especially in the area near Deerfield, the people from Voss settled in large numbers. Vossings settled at Spring Prairie in Columbia County, Wisconsin; Big Canoe near Decorah, Iowa; Rock Dell near Rochester, Minnesota; Kenyon, Minnesota; Lake Mills and Northwood, Iowa; Story County, Iowa; Jackson County, Wisconsin; and many, many other places.

Most of the Vossings came as farmers and took up that occupation in America. Gradually, however, they took up other callings. We find many Vossings among the clergy, both in the early days as well as in modern times. Not least was Elling Eielsen Sundve, a truly pioneer pastor.

A few have become famous. No Vossing will let us forget the great football coach, Knute Rockne. Some went into politics, including R.A. Nestos and Knute Nelson. The latter was so popular that many intimated that, if it were not for the accident of birth in a foreign country, they would have liked to have seen him in the White House.

Much has been written about Voss and its people, most of it in Norwegian. A delightful exception is a new book, *Gamalt frå Voss*, published in 1985, and providing articles in both Norwegian and English about emigration from Voss to America.

As good as this book is, it will not satisfy readers. Such readers will have to shift to the Norwegian language. For a history of the farms, one must turn to Lars Kindem and his four-volume *Vossaboka*; Lars Schjaerven's *Evangerboka*,

published in two volumes; a two-volume set on Bergsdalen published in 1978-1983. As for family history, in addition to farm history, useful are Roald Lyngvaer's *Ættebok for Vossestrand*; Kvaalem's *Ættarbok for Granvin*; Lars Kindem's *Vossaætter*, again in four volumes.

For persons really interested in Voss, books will not be enough. The Vesterheim Genealogical Center has microfilm copies of the church records for Voss, going back to 1711, and the 1801 census on microfiche. It is just possible that since the Rene book is 56 years out of date, some young Vossing will decide that the time has come to write a new book about Voss in America.

Genealogy Help to Vossings

Those who can trace their roots back to Voss, Evanger and Vossestrand will have additional cause to celebrate Voss' anniversary. For a small fee, the Anniversary Committee will prepare your family tree. Just send the Norwegian name, birth date, and origin of your ancestor, and the genealogical table will be waiting for you when you arrive in Voss. Apply for further information and a special form to fill out from the Anniversary Committee. Box 14, N-5701 Voss, Norway.

The book *Gamalt frå Voss* may be ordered in North America from Vosselag, c/o Kari Bye, Box 3215, Estes Park, CO 80517. For more information on the Emigrant Anniversary Celebration, write to the Anniversary Committee.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

And Then There is Sigdal

On June 15 of this year, a large number of members of Sigdalslaget flew from Minneapolis to Oslo in order to participate in a joint meeting of Sigdal emigrants and residents in Sigdal, June 25-29. It would be wrong to call this a first; on the other hand, it does demonstrate a growing trend among the bygdelags: the joining of hands across the sea.

Sigdal and Eggedal, together with Krødsherad, are communities in the county of Buskerud, a bit west of Hønefoss and north of Kongsberg, with a combined population of more than 6,000. It is an agricultural community, known for good trout fishing.

The first emigrants from this area were part of a major migration from Numedal in 1839. Erik Nielsen Soland, 1821-1878, came to the Fox River settlement in Illinois, becoming one of the leaders there. He returned to Norway in 1845 to marry Engbur Finrud Nelson. He is said to have gone to California to join the gold rush. The other emigrant from Sigdal in 1839 was Hans Andersen Krogen, about whom we know no more.

1840 saw six more emigrants, according to church records: Reier Gunbjornsen Nubberud, his wife, Christi Knudsdatter, and a daughter, Aase; Ole Aslesen Baasummyran; Ole Haagensen Gronhovd with wife, Kari Christophersdatter. Other sources add Ole Andersen

Gronhovd, 1806-1885, his wife Ingeborg Haagensdatter, and children Anne, Anders, and Ingeborg. The family came to the Muskego settlement, where some of them lie buried. Ole Haagensen and his wife also settled there. Ole Aslesen, 1813-1894, as a single man, settled first at Rock Creek in Illinois, moving soon to Jefferson Prairie, and finally in 1851 to be among the first in the Madison settlement, just west of Decorah, Iowa. He was married twice and had a large family.

There are noticeable concentrations of Sigdoler around Spring Grove, Rock Dell, and Norway Lake, Minnesota. However, the largest number are to be found in the Madison settlement near Decorah, Iowa, as a part of the greater Washington Prairie settlement. Well-known was Ingebret Nielsen Solland, a brother of Erik mentioned earlier. Ingebret emigrated in 1843, coming to Winneshiek County in 1851.

A walk through the East and West Madison Lutheran cemeteries could make one feel that he is back in Sigdal in Norway because there are so many familiar names on the tombstones. True, some of the farm names have been dropped, but we see such names as Myrand, Berg, Blekeberg, Snersrud, Skaalen, Haga, Hellerud and Basol. And yet like most Norwegian-American communities, there is a liberal sprinkling of names from Valdres,

Numedal, and other parts of Norway.

Sigdal and Krødsherad have been well covered in print. The giant has been Andreas Morch who has written the last four volumes of Sigdal og Eggedal, and the three volumes of Krødsherad. These volumes include excellent detailed histories of the farms, with numerous references to persons who left for America. In addition, Sigdalslaget in earlier years published six yearbooks with much information about Sigdoler in America.

Andreas Morch is not through. He now wishes to trace all descendants of emigrants to America from Sigdal, Eggedal and Krodsherad. Cooperating in that work are Mrs. Connie O'Kieffe, 523 Washington Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091, for the Chicago area; and Mrs. Lee Rokke, General Office Products Company, 4521 Highway Seven, Minneapolis, MN 55416. To the extent that these persons hear from descendants, Morch's book should be an excellent one.

Americans with roots in Sigdal ought to consider joining Sigdalslaget, whose president is Marilyn Somdahl, 10129 Goodrich Circle, Bloomington, MN 55437. In addition to the meeting in Norway, the lag held its annual American meeting in Decorah, Iowa July 10-12.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Aurland is Interested in America

When I was in Norway this past summer, I met Asbjørn Ramsøy who is writing a book about the emigrants from Aurland. Ideally, he would like to know something about every person who left Aurland to go to the United States. It would help him if every reader of the *Viking* who has roots in Aurland, or who knows persons who have such roots, were to write him telling about the emigrants from Aurland. His address is Hillratjønneveien 5, 5070 Mathopen, Norway.

Sometimes spelled as Urland or Uhrland, Aurland is a rural community in Sogn, lying at the inner end of the Aurland fjord. Many American tourists have gone to Aurland by way of the Flåm railroad, which is a spur from the well-traveled and beautiful Oslo to Bergen railroad. Trains on the latter make a brief stop at Myrdal to drop off and pick up passengers from Flåm. The lucky ones then take the spectacular train ride down the valley.

Once having reached Flåm and Aurland, travelers have several options. They can return the way they came, or they can take a long ferry ride, a slow bus, or arrange for a car. I suspect some of this is easier said than done. But why hurry? There are small hotels and other sleeping arrangements. The leisurely tourist will want to visit old stone and stave churches, Viking grave

mounds, old homes and museums.

But I started to write about emigrants. How people from Aurland could leave that stunningly beautiful area, I don't know; but they did. Nearly 200 left before 1851.

The Aurland records indicate that Iver Hansen Vinjum and the Ole Torjussen Flom family emigrated in 1843; actually, they left in 1844, settling in the Koshkonong community, not far from Stoughton, Wisconsin. Iver soon went on to Columbia County, being one of the very first to settle in the Vonnet Prairie community, near Rio, Wisconsin. He married an 1845 immigrant from Aurland, Marthe Gjellum. Although both died in 1853, probably from cholera, their son Hans, grew to adulthood. A descendant is living today here in Madison, about two blocks from our house. Among families still in evidence at Bonnet Prairie are Underdahl and Otterness.

The Flom family remained at Koshkonong. It was a descendant of that family. George T. Flom, who became a professor at the University of Iowa, and who later published one of the important histories of emigration from Norway.

The larger number of emigrants from Aurland settled in Minnesota. By 1858 there were enough Norwegian Lutherans in Black Hammer Township in Houston

County to organize a congregation. Among Aurland names to be seen in the cemetery there are Otterness, Ohnstad, Treangen, Berqvam, Winjum, and Veum. Three churches with the name Urland are to be found in Clay, Freeborn and Goodhue Counties. And the name of Flom was given to a small village in Norman County.

Urland in Goodhue County is near Cannon Falls. Again, we find some familiar names in the cemetery: Flom, Ohnstad, Otterness, Lie (perhaps originally Yttrelie), Frettem, Urevig, Berguam, Vangen, Stondal, Brekke, Underdahl, Durdahl, all of them well-known farm names in Aurland. Visitors from Aurland in Norway must marvel at the extensive and fertile land farmed by their emigrants, comparing it with the small farms and mountainous areas back in Norway. It is little wonder that word about farming opportunities in Minnesota reached the farms of Aurland rapidly, with the result that even more left for America.

Persons with roots in Aurland should consider joining such appropriate bygdelags as Vestlandslaget and Sognalaget. Current leaders in these lags include Dean and Ann Gesme (Gjesme) of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Etne is Celebrating

Several months ago, this column told of the coming celebration of emigration from Voss in Hordaland. That event is over. And a fine one it was. But now it is Etne's turn, since it was in 1837 that the first emigrants from that community left for America.

When we were in the Etne area last June, Sten Valen (address: Silda, 5590 Etne, Norway) told us of ambitious plans to observe this migration, with a celebration to take place sometime in the summer of 1987. For anyone with roots in Etne and Skånevik, this might be a very good time to visit "home."

The first emigrants from Etne were Nils Hansson Vettestø and his wife, Brita Ommundsdatter Osvåg, and their daughter Liva Eli. With them was a young servant boy, Jacob Fredrik Weltzin, who later fought in the Civil War. They came on board the "Ægir," which sailed from Bergen on April 7, and arrived in New York Harbor on June 9. Nils' history in America is far from ordinary. He first settled in Iowa, where his wife and children died. He then married a widow of the Mormon religion, and moved with her and her children to Utah. He later went to California to search for gold, returning to Kamas, Utah to farm. His son Charles M. Hall, visited Etne in 1952.

Six years passed before the next family left: Helge Jonson Gjerde, with his wife, Ingeborg, and two children. They emigrated in spite of the fact that they held the deed to some good land in Etne. This appears to bear out a growing impression among scholars that not all of the emigrants were poor and

in need of good land in the United States.

In 1845 emigrated a gifted young man named Osmund Erikson Skjeldal. He was the son of the local sheriff, and at the age of twelve was a teacher in his home community. Settling first in Lisbon, Illinois, he moved nine years later with many others to the vicinity of Story City, Iowa. In 1859 he was ordained as a Lutheran clergyman. The town of Scheldal, Iowa is named for him. Four of Osmund's brothers also emigrated.

Another early emigrant, Hadle Evensen Fjøsne, had a son named Even Hadley, who served in the Civil War and fell at the battle of Stone River.

A family of influence in Wisconsin emigrated in 1846. Sjur Olson Håland with his wife and the following children settled in southern Wisconsin: Ole, Ragnhild, Ommund, Erik, Christen, Sjur, Bjørn, Haldor, and Malachias. All of the children grew to maturity, and were well-known as industrious and upright. Bjørn was a farmer and teacher. The town of Hollandale was named for him. He served in the Wisconsin Constitutional Convention of 1848. Christen was a justice of the peace. Erik held political office in Kendall County, Illinois. Their sister Ragnhild was married to the well-known pioneer clergyman, Peter Andreas Rasmussen; they had four sons who also became clergymen.

It appears that in the early years relatively few emigrated. But in 1847 all of that was to change when a large number of persons from the Etne area emigrated on

the ship Kong Sverre.

In 1917 a committee collected from immigrants and descendants from Etne the sum of \$2,032 and sent it as a gift to the people of Etne, the interest to be used each Christmas to help the poor of the community.

There are some who may want to read about the farms of Etne. This can be done in a two-volume set called *Etne-soga*, covering the periods up to 1800. A similar set is in progress for Skånevik, called *Skåneviksoga*, with volume 1 covering the area of Holmmedal, and a second volume covering Åkra. A third volume for Skånevik proper will be published soon.

Next time we will turn our attention to Telemark.

Wanted: Letters from Norway

If you have old letters from Norway written before 1950, Bjørn Gunnar Østgård would be much obliged if you would send him copies of them. He hopes, with this help, to gain a clearer or perhaps different picture of daily life in old Norway. His special area of study is Valdres, but he welcomes copies of letters sent from all of Norway. If possible, he asks that a little background history about the recipients accompany the letter.

Send to: Bjørn Gunnar Østgård
Valdresveien 9
N2900 Fagerness
Norway

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Early Immigrants from Norway

Judging by letters coming to me and others, many of you have been reading the articles on the immigration from different communities in Norway. I am glad that you have been enjoying them. And I plan to write some more. But today I wish to tell you about a project of my own, one of which many of you can help.

I could make this brief: I would like to hear from anyone whose immigrant ancestors came from Norway before 1851. But there is more to the story.

For more than thirty years, I have been collecting biographical data on the approximately 18,000 persons who emigrated from Norway to America between 1825 and 1850. A natural starting place was the "Udflyttede" lists in the Norwegian church records, literally, the lists of those who "flew out" of the parish, including those who went to America. These lists usually provide the date of emigration, together with full names and dates of those leaving, for the most part in family groups.

As far as time and records have permitted, I have taken these lists back to the basic records, looking especially for the names of their parents and birth dates. Since many persons moved from one farm to another—sometimes several times—this research has frequently proved to be difficult. As one example, I found born in the same year in the same parish four

persons named Ingeborg Olsdatter. My problem: to identify the right one.

To trace these persons across the Atlantic, the next logical step was to consult passenger lists of ships arriving in American harbors. To do this, I have looked at all of the passenger lists for the years up through 1850, copying the names and other facts for those coming from Norway. Some lists appear to be missing. Other lists were inaccurate, showing Norwegians as Swedes or Germans. Some lists noted those who died on the voyage, others conveniently omitted such information. Some of them are in difficult handwriting. No matter, they help to confirm the fact that the immigrants actually made it to America.

There are many ways to find out where these immigrants settled in America. The Census record shows the locations of most of these immigrants, giving the name of the state, county and township in which they lived. Prepared every ten years, these records frequently help to trace the immigrants from one location to another. In addition, they give occupation, as well as the names of newer additions to the family. Of course, we Norwegians know how badly our names can be treated in the census.

Perhaps the best record to help locate Norwegian immigrants is the American church record. Each congregation has kept its own set

of records of births and confirmations, marriages and burials, and often lists of members. Microfilm copies of many of these records are on file on the Archives of the American Lutheran Church in Dubuque, Iowa, and with written permission from the local congregation can be borrowed for a modest fee. A future article may well devote itself to the history of the Norwegians in the various religious organizations. Suffice it to say now that it is a very involved and fascinating story.

In addition, information can often be found in Norwegian and American local histories, in the obituaries in local newspapers, from cemeteries, and of course from family histories and personal stories. If you know about some of these early immigrants, please write to: Gerhard B. Naeseth, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, Wisconsin 53711.

I plan to publish this material in several volumes: 1825–1843; 1844–1846; 1847–1848; 1849; 1950. Let me hear from you.

It is clear that the members of the Sons of Norway are reading these articles. Both Lorna Anderson and Marwin Wrolstad have reported many letters coming to them as a result of the Telemark article. And as long as they last, I have several copies of a brochure describing the Emigrant Anniversary Celebrations at Etne, August 13–16.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

To Those with Hafslo Roots

It isn't often that we have an opportunity to help with the preparation of a book. For Americans with roots in Hafslo, the time is now. Let me try to explain.

For perhaps fifteen years, Lars Oyane has been preparing and publishing a detailed history of Luster and Jostedal, resulting in five volumes, three of which have now been published. Soon he will be ready to give his full attention to Hafslo, with the intent of publishing four more volumes. At the end of the entire project, he plans a tenth index volume.

Almost surely, if some of your roots are in Hafslo, and if you have not been in touch with Lars, you will want to write to him now. His full address is: Lars E. Oyane, Straumesvingen 10F, N 5064 Straumsgrend, Norway. As a first step, Lars plans to prepare a completely computerized file for the population of Hafslo, beginning with the seventeenth century and going up to the present time. This would identify some six to eight thousand households. The file will make it possible to detect virtually all emigrants from Hafslo to the United States, not only those who received certificates of transfer from the pastor, but also those who left without such a certificate, including those who left by way of other Norwegian communities.

Using the resulting list of those

who left for America—or who must have left—he will then use all possible resources in tracing their families in this country. They will include the census transcripts made by Gerhard Naeseth; information learned on extensive research trips made by Lars to the Midwest in 1979 and 1982; family histories and other genealogical material provided by Americans. He expects to locate at least ninety percent of these families.

This year in June and July, Lars joined a group of 100 persons from Sogn, first to attend the annual meeting of Sognefjordlaget in Viroqua, Wisconsin, then to visit a number of Hafslo settlements, including the Hafslo church in Polk County, Minnesota, and the Lyster church in Buffalo County, Wisconsin. Almost surely he learned more about the immigrants by this visit.

But to make the book complete, he needs to hear from you. Judging by the earlier books, he will want such details about the immigrants and their families as full names, places of settlement, full dates of birth, marriage, and death, vocations, and the like. If you do not have Hafslo roots yourself, you may know of someone who does. In this event, in one way or another, tell Lars about them.

Luster is one of the four communities in Indre (Inner) Sogn,

in one of the truly spectacularly beautiful sections of Norway. The community has good agricultural land, but not in plentiful supply, which helps to account for many going to America.

The first emigrants left Hafslo in 1845, most of them coming on the ship "Peder Schreuder." Erik Larsen Grov and Anders Sjursen Solvorn, with their families, settled in Bristol Township, Dane County, Wisconsin; while Einar Pedersen Solvi and family settled in nearby Hampden Township, Columbia County. Anders Hansen Ødegaard and family settled at Koshkonong, while Lars Johan Suckow and family settled in Laona Township, Winnebago County, Illinois. One other family, that of Lars Hermundsen Hunshamar, has not yet been located by Naeseth in America. The next year came Johannes Olsen Langenes and family, settling in Albion Township, Dane County. Twenty-nine more persons emigrated in 1847.

As you know from my July article, I am interested in hearing from all of these families. And so is Lars. Put the pen and typewriter to work!

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

The First Norwegian in Wisconsin

Although 1987 has been an important year of celebration in Norway, it is likely that there are many similar celebrations to come. At the risk of ignoring some other observances, I wish to focus attention this time on Rollag in Numedal. The inspiration for this article comes from an issue of *Laagendalsposten*, published June 22 in Kongsberg, contributed by Barbara Levorsen Quinn.

The headline read: "Rollag Invaded by Americans!" More than one hundred Norwegian-Americans from the United States and Canada attended the Rollag celebration, which took place June 19–21. Included were area tours, festive meals, speeches, music, dancing, movies; a festival church service—and coffee. The program was planned to highlight the first emigration from Rollag.

For anyone considering a trip to Norway over the next few years, serious thought should be given to timing such a trip so as to take in one of the emigrant festivals. I cannot think of a better way to become acquainted with the homes of one's ancestors.

But back to Mrs. Quinn. Twenty-eight members of the Levorsen family made the trip to Rollag. Their ancestor had emigrated in 1869. Some of the family moved about 1900 to Virginia, where they helped to found a small but important Norwegian settlement called Norge. Imagine the joy of meeting descendants of those relatives who decided to remain in Rollag. I keep

saying that all of us have relatives in Norway. The only question is: How close?

What has this to do with the first Norwegian in Wisconsin? A good deal, because one of the first groups of emigrants from Numedal was Ole Knudsen Nattestad, who emigrated in 1837. A year later, on July 1, 1838, he crossed the border from Illinois into Wisconsin, settling in Clinton Township, Rock County. Visitors to the Jefferson Prairie Lutheran cemetery will see a historical marker commemorating this event. To be sure, Ole ventured only a mile across the border, but it was enough to count.

More influential than Ole was his brother Ansten, who returned in 1838 to Norway in order to encourage more migration from Numedal—especially from Rollag. As a part of his sales pitch, he printed his brother's description of the journey to America. (This has been reprinted several times, and has been translated into English.)

Ansten was a good salesman; when he returned to America in 1839, he brought with him about a hundred countrymen. While some settled in LaSalle County, Illinois, the majority came to southern Wisconsin. Some of them joined Ole at Jefferson Prairie, others moved on to Rock Prairie (now known as Luther Valley); a few miles northwest of Beloit.

As with all of the Norwegian settlements, there has been much movement. But there are fascinating exceptions. For example, the farm

homesteaded by Christopher Newhouse (Nyhus) in 1840, about two miles south of Clinton, is owned and operated by the family. Even the original house is still standing. Its present owner, Erling Newhouse, has done much to preserve the culture of the past, not least by developing a skill for carving. For those with a fascination for history, Jefferson Prairie was one of the centers for early religious controversy.

The founder of the Luther Valley settlement was Gullik Olson Gravdal, one of the immigrants of 1839 from Rollag. He settled there because he found "good spring water, also prairie and woodland in the right proportion." Another 1839 immigrant from Rollag was a widow, Mrs. Gunhild Ødegaarden, whose family intermarried with many of the pioneer families in the settlement. Her log cabin was the first built in the town of Newark.

The Rollag influence did not stop at Luther Valley. The founder of the Rock Run settlement in Stephenson and Winnebago counties, Illinois, was Clement Torstenson Stabaek, who also came in 1839. One of the very first settlers in Koshkonong was Gunnul Olson Vindeig, who came from Rollag in 1839. One of his descendants is the president of the Koshkonong Historical Society. Oh, there is so much more to tell, but our time is up.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Vik in 1989

Vik in '89! Why not? We are speaking of Vik in Sogn, which will celebrate the 150th anniversary of emigration from that community, June 18-25, 1989. Already the plans are well advanced, giving interested Americans time to make the necessary arrangements to attend.

The tentative program is attractive. A professional playwright in Sogn is writing the manuscript for a play on the emigration theme; it will first be performed in June 1989. A concert will present the folk music from the emigration period, as well as music and folk dances from the present day. An excursion to Finnafjord will include a religious service, together with some entertainment and a picnic.

Vik is having a film made, showing old handicraft techniques and agricultural methods of the last century. This is possible because a few of the local farmers have kept up the old traditions. There will be some lectures on emigration and the research being done in this field. As far as space permits, guests from the United States will be offered a chance to stay with a related family in Vik.

As if this were not enough, the community of Vik plans to publish a book listing the emigrants from Vik, showing their circumstance before leaving Vik, and, as far as possible, what happened to them in America. This book will be completed in 1988, and may

be ordered from Oddny Kjelsen, Secretary of Culutral Affairs, Vik kommune, N-5860 Vik i Sogn, Norway. Incidentally, it is not too late to contribute to Zona Mathison, 1328 20th Ave. S., Moorhead, MN 56560.

The first emigrants from Vik demonstrate the importance of family connections. Per Iversen Undi emigrated in 1839 with his wife, born Anna Davidsdatter Skjervheim, together with two children, Martha and Iver. They came on the ship *Magdalena Christina*, which arrived in New York harbor July 6, 1839. Per's wife was from Voss, and her brother had emigrated two years earlier, in 1837. We know that both families settled in Wayne Township, Lafayette County, Wisconsin.

Peder died by 1860 and was buried on the Wiliam Johnson farm. His widow was still living in 1880. Iver moved to Minnesota. Peder and Anna had four children in America: Inger, who married Nils Larsen Fenne; David, who moved to Kansas; Martha; and Johanne.

The success of this venture led to the emigration of Peder's two brothers, Erik and Ole, both of whom went to Lafayette County. However, there is some evidence that Erik may have died on the voyage. And two sisters, Ragnilda who married Hans Lassenes Refsdal, and Anna who married Erik Ingebrigtsen Hove, also settled in Lafayette County.

A few others also emigrated from Vik in 1843. Guttorm Rolandsen Thistel, together with

his wife, Brita Ellingsdatter Fyli, emigrated to the Long Prairie settlement in Illinois, and Ole Guttormsen Gulteig, his wife Brita Lassenesdatter Refssdal, together with five children settled in Chicago. Two single women, Brithe Nielsdatter Vange and Kari Larsdatter Aase, end the list of emigrants from Vik prior to 1844.

So far as I know, there were no other emigrants from Flom before 1844, other than Gjert Gregoriussen Hovland, who emigrated from Askvoll in 1831. He married Jørgine Halsteiinsdatter Jordal from Odda. Hovland settled first in Morris County, New Jersey moving to Kendall County, Illinois, and finally about 1835 settling in Mission Township, Illinois. He wrote a number of letters back to Norway which influenced migration from western Norway.

Many of the emigrants from Vik settled at Capron, Illinois; others near Ridgeway and Northwood, Iowa. Research on the families from Vik is possible with the use of a three volume set by Olav Hoprekstad called *Bygdabok for Vik i Sogn*, which offers good farm histories. Needless to say, the book is written in Norwegian. For a good background material on this peroid of migration, I recommend *A History of Norwegian Immigration to the United States*, by George T. Flom, whose grandparents emigrated from Aurland in 1844.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Exactly Where is my Farm?

This article is inspired by a recent letter from a new member of Numedalslaget, who asks for the exact location of a farm called Rudskverna, probably in the Hedenstad parish of Sanndsvær. To many family historians, this kind of information is important. Which leads me to tell a story of my own.

About fifteen years ago, I was in Hamar on research. One evening, my host and I were invited to dinner at a lovely country home in Stange called Ottestad. The owner had maintained the old house as it had been more than two hundred years earlier. We had quite a time. The next morning I decided that I should try to learn something about one of my own ancestors who had lived in Vestre Slidre in Valdres, but who was believed to have come from Stange. I discovered in the church records that she had been born as a "husmannsjente," that is, a cotter's daughter, on the Ottestad farm. Naturally, when I wrote a thank you letter to Gustav Gjestvang, I mentioned this fact.

About five years later, I was again in Hamar on research. And we were invited out to the Ottestad farm for dinner. We were met at the gate by Mr. Gjestvang and two young historians. Each of us was handed a cane. We walked about three-quarters of a mile, across plowed fields and along cow paths, until we came to a clearing in some woods. There stood an old house, with roof fallen in. Mr. Gjestvang said: "I think this was where your great-great-grandmother was born." You

can imagine my feeling, a feeling which can be experienced by many of you who take the trouble to find out the exact location of your family's farm in Norway.

So, what can be done about that? The essential ingredients are the name of the country community your people came from and the name of the farm. Even this will not always accomplish your objective. But with these names in hand, you should first go to an atlas of Norway. Depending upon circumstances, I use three different books: *Norge Rundt*, a travel handbook published by the newspaper, *Aftenposten* (my copy was published in 1957); *NAF Veibok*, the equivalent of the map book of our American Automobile Association; *Norge*, a four-volume geographical work on Norway. If you are doing much geographical study of Norway, it would pay you to get one or more of these books.

NAF Veibok is prepared for motorists, with good road maps, a place name index, and lists of what to see and experience along the primary highways. Perhaps a friend in Norway can give you a used copy. Volume one of *Norge* is general in nature; volumes two and three describe each community in some detail, together with outline maps; volume four has a detailed atlas, with an extensive place name index. I have also found helpful *Kartbok for Vestlandet*, a little book of maps for western Norway, showing locations of many of the farms. It is published by *Bergens Tidende*.

For many of you, this will not be enough. If so, I would then encourage you to purchase for your specific area the equivalent of the American Geological Survey maps. They are published by Statens Kartverk (the National Map Producers), formerly known as Norges Geografiske Oppmåling. One of the maps in my possession is marked as on a scale of 1:50,000. It looks as if an inch covers a distance of about a mile. The map shows by name the locations of a great many farms, even to the extent of showing the locations of individual houses. Available also is a *Kartkatalog*, indicating the area covered by each map.

True, it is not always this simple. Not all farms and sub-farms may be listed on the map. Some farms have been subdivided, often many times and sometimes with new names. But I believe that you will be pleased with what you see.

These detailed maps can be purchased in a number of the larger book stores in Norway; from The Master's Touch, 209 W. Water St., Decorah, IA 52101; and Travel Genie, 113 Colorado Ave., Ames, IA 50010, among other places.

Back to Rudskverna. I have not found it listed, although it may be on one of the detailed maps. Kverna means mill. I suspect that Rudskverna is the mill for the Rud farm. I am guessing that the Rud in question has the post office address of Skollenborg. Perhaps it would be best to inquire of the local post office.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Målselv Celebrates in 1988

For many months I have been sharing with you information about emigrant celebrations in southern Norway, and will probably continue to do so. Now a community in northern Norway, Målselv in Troms, has announced plans for its bicentennial anniversary June 22–17, 1988. True, this is not much advance notice; but on the other hand, those of you who really want to go will find a way.

The bicentennial celebration committee has worked out a 14 to 16 day tour arrangement, including a five-day roots festival in Målselv. The dates of the tour are June 20 through July 5. The contact man is Jon Thoresen, Aksjon Amerika brev, Lyngen Kulturkontor, 9060 Lyngseidet, Norway.

Why 1988? It was two hundred years ago that the first settlement took place in Målselv. The mayor of the community, in his official invitation, says that several descendents of the first settlers emigrated to America.

Although we do not have details of the celebration, almost surely it will include music, speeches, dancing, good food, perhaps some plays or pageants. The end of June is usually an excellent time to visit Norway, weatherwise.

But there is more. Jon Thoresen and his organization are studying the emigration history of Troms, including the collecting of primary historical material. They are working under the guidance and general supervision of the regional museum. Descendants of the emigrants from Målselv should at least write to Mr. Thoresen to tell what they know. The more cooperation there is of this kind, the more likely a better history of the

migration.

Since Målselv was a community of newcomers, it was natural that emigration to America should take place later than in areas in southern Norway. The first emigrant from Målselv was actually a native of Gudbrandsdal, Hans Iversen Kongsli, who in 1843 left a small place in the woods in Rostadalen, taking with him his wife and three teenagers, two sons and a daughter. Hans was baptized in Sødorp, Nord-Fron, October 15, 1799, the son of Iver Engebretsen Sundet and Thore Thorsdatter. It may be that his decision to emigrate was influenced by his involvement in moving a cemetery from Nordmo to Nergård. It is possible also that he had some Gudbrandsdal relatives in America., who encouraged him to emigrate. We do know that Hans; his wife, Gunild; and Berthe, arrived in New York, July 19, 1843, having come on the *Haabet* from Stavanger. Perhaps one of our readers can tell us what happened to the family in America.

During the next 17 years, very few persons emigrated from Troms County, let alone from Målselv. Jens Olsen Storbakken, who had sold his farm to the government to be used for the Parsonage, left in 1857 or a bit later. Jakob Andreassen sold his farm place in Fagerli in 1860 and emigrated. When three young boys, Johan Nilsen Fleskmo, Iver Andreassen Fagerli and Bersvend Tøresen Aasen, made it known that they were going to America, Pastor Welhaven told them he wanted them to come to church before they went. That Sunday, Welhaven preached a warm and moving sermon, telling the young

men that since this was probably the last time they would attend church in Målselv, they should know that the whole parish was concerned about their welfare. It is said that there were many wet eyes in church that day.

Even though Målselv is in the far north, it is possible to reach it by following highway E6. It is located near the end of Målselvfjorden. According to a recent guidebook, it has 8091 inhabitants, 3219 square kilometers of land, of which 31 are cultivated. The government has control of salmon fishing rights.

Lesja Bygdebok Available

Norwegian *bygdebøker* (books containing local histories and genealogies) are a good source of information about Norwegian farm families. A. Kjelland's Publishing Co. Ltd. in Norway has just completed volume 1 of a bygdebok for Lesja in Central Norway. The 634-page volume is titled "Gards og slektshistorie for Lesjaskogen" (Farms and family histories for Kesja forest). All farms, farmer's cottages and residences at Lesjaskogen from the early 1600s to the end of 1986, are described in the book. It also contains names and important information like births, deaths, and marriages. In addition, you will find a new map of Lesjaskogen and in the index, there is map references of all homes in Lesjaskogen.

The book costs US \$52, including postage, and can be ordered by writing A. Kjellands Forlag A.S., P.O. Box 63, N-2665 Lesja, Norway or calling 62-43-174.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Karmøy's Role in Emigration

Two men in Karmøy, Johannes Mjølhus and Martin Gjersvik, have written us to appeal to Americans for help in identifying emigrants from Karmøy, and in getting further information about them. They are at work compiling for publication a list of all such emigrants, including the names and other data on their children.

But first a word about Karmøy, a large island between Haugesund and Stavanger. Since the island is so large, it has been broken down into several individual parishes. This in turn has helped to dictate the format of a local history for the island, to be completed in five volumes. Four volumes have already been published, one each for Torvastad, Åkra, Stangaland and Kopervik. Still to be published is a final volume on Avaldsnes.

Each volume has about 600 pages, rich with information about the families who lived on the various farms, often with sketch maps showing how the individual farms were divided and subdivided. A page of definitions, followed by a first name index makes this a valuable set indeed.

Since Karmøy is near Stavanger, it is not surprising to read that parts of the island contributed to the early history of Norway. For example, at Avaldsnes King Harald Hårfagre had an estate, where Saint Olav met the famous Erling

Skjalgsson at Easter time in 1023. The church at Avaldsnes was built shortly after 1250 by King Håkon Håkonsson on the royal estate. In more recent times, major aluminum and other factories have been built here. And the area has been very much involved with the development of oil in the North Sea. And not far away was a major copper mine, which produced some of the copper used in the erection of the Statue of Liberty. Certainly, Karmøy deserves our attention.

But what about emigration from Karmøy to America? The church books for Torvastad and Avaldsnes have revealed the names of twenty-two persons who emigrated in the spring of 1836. Unfortunately, a fire in 1842 destroyed the records at Skudenes. Emigration records were kept at Ellis Island in New York, but these records were destroyed by fire in 1987. To compound the problem, similar records of emigration for Stavanger were also destroyed by fire.

As a result, Gjersvik and Mjølhus have had to search unusual sources for the names of emigrants from Karmøy. This is where we come in. I am certain that some of us have information on emigrants from Karmøy that cannot be found in any other way. The historians are hoping to hear from us with information on each immigrant: Full name, year of birth, place of birth, profession, the year of emigration, the place they lived,

the year of death—and additional data where appropriate. They would like similar data for each of the children. And the names of the parents of the immigrants. This is a tall order. But do not hesitate to write, even if you know but one or two of the desired facts.

The addresses of the men are: Martin Gjersvik, 4270 Akrehamn, Norway; Johannes Mjølhus, 4250 Kopervik, Norway. In their letter of a few months ago, they make clear their interest in getting copies of family histories of persons who emigrated from Karmøy.

The community of Karmøy has not taken this project lightly. In a recent new release, it was reported that the Skudenes and Aakra Savings Bank, together with the Bergen Bank in Åkra, have financed the purchase of a computer which Mjølhus will use to organize and record all of his notes.

Johannes Mjølhus is the fifteenth generation living on the Mjølhus farm and is a retired teacher living in Kopervik. He was educated at Norway's agricultural university at Ås. For most of his life, he was a teacher, first at the agricultural school at Nedstrand, and later at schools in Kopervik, still living his life as a farmer on the Mjølhus farm. He took over the work on farm and family history from his father, also a teacher, who had begun this work in the 1920s.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

A Family Reunion in Norway

It is not unusual for families in America to hold reunions during the summer time, sometimes crossing the entire country to attend. While some of these reunions are reported in the newspapers, many others take place without any publicity at all. Relatives get together, often annually, in order to renew old ties, and to make an effort to keep the family together. With good food and fellowship, worship, family histories, efforts are made to perpetuate family traditions and togetherness. All of this is worthwhile, one part in preserving our Norwegian heritage.

In recent years, a few families have tried a fascinating variation on the old plan, namely, reunions in Norway. Just such a reunion took place this summer with the Wrolstad family.

It started with more than a year of planning, led by two cousins, Marwin and Harriet Wrolstad. An early requirement was the choice of dates satisfactory to kinsmen on both sides of the Atlantic. It sounds easy. A complication is the fact that Norwegians normally take their vacations in July. Air reservations had to be made. Someone had to handle the financial arrangements. To be completely effective, hard work and planning was necessary both in Norway and America.

For a reunion in Norway to be successful, it is useful to build around a special event. In the case of the Wrolstads, there was one ready-made. In fact, it was the reason for choosing the summer of 1988. An ancestor, 550 years ago, Hallvard Gråtøpp, had led a revolt of the peasants against the heavy and unreasonable taxes of that day. The revolt was unsuccessful; however, Hallvard has remained a hero in the Telemark community of Drangedal to this day. And the citizens of Drangedal arranged a

festival in celebration of Hallvard and his followers.

Since it may serve as a model for other family groups going to Norway for a reunion, I will provide a brief outline of the Wrolstad family's activities in Norway.

Following arrival in Oslo, some local sightseeing, and some rest, the group, some thirty-five in all, boarded a chartered bus (oops, motorcoach) for Kragerø, where they took a chartered ferry through the islands on Norway's south coast to visit Jomfruland, the island where the family ancestor had built boats prior to leaving for America in 1843. The day included a visit to the Porsgrunn porcelain factory.

The next day the motorcoach took them to Drangedal, where the schedule included a parade featuring logging equipment and costumes from the past, a visit to the local outdoor museum, together with a visit to the historical sites of significance in the history of Hallvard Gråtøpp. It is worth pointing out that the group stayed at the beautiful country tourist hotel, Gautefall Touristhotel.

The following day the group was taken on a special tour of the Vrålstad seter, with short presentations by local family members. Then to the Gråtøpp monument and a program, including music by some of Norway's best entertainers, and a dramatization of the life of Hallvard Gråtøpp. The day included a visit to the home of one of the Norwegian relatives, with special refreshments and a view of old family furniture, and the opportunity to meet some of the Norwegian kinfolk.

On Sunday was a special festival service in the old Tørdal church, with a sermon by the area bishop. Included was a personalized introduction to the old family church, and a visit to the adjacent cemetery. All of this was

concluded with a gala dinner at the hotel, with both Norwegian and American kinfolk becoming better acquainted.

So much for the program. As a part of this 550th anniversary celebration, a local historian named Stian Henneseid wrote and published a book about the life and times of Hallvard Gråtøpp. Many members of the family purchased copies, partly in hope that the book could later be translated into English. And other mementos were available.

For some this was the end of the tour. It was time to return to Oslo in order to catch the plane for home. For others, however, it was the threshold for seeing more of Norway. There is so very much to see in that country. The Wrolstads traveled by their special motorcoach to Gol in Hallingdal, and on to Ulvik on the Hardangerfjord. The following day they motored to Voss and Gudvangen, and on to Flåm and Bergen. After two days of intensive sightseeing in Bergen, they boarded the Hurtigruten ferry, going as far as Trondheim. Then train through Trøndelag to Lillehammer and its lovely open-air folk museum, Maihaugen. Finally, motorcoach back to Oslo and the flight home.

The calendar says that there were 16 days altogether for the visit to Drangedal and for the tour of western Norway. Needless to say, such a tour can be shortened or lengthened. There are a number of possible alternate plans. Someone has to decide. The Wrolstad family tour was successful because of good planning and leadership, because of hard workers in both Norway and the United States, because an effort was made to experience the best that Norway has to offer. I suggest that other American families can have a similar experience.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Sørlandet Beckons

When my wife, Wilma, and I were in Norway this past summer, we participated in the Hallvard Gråtøpp festival in Drangedal, as reported in the December issue of *Viking*. We also spent a few days in the neighborhood of Arendal, one of the lovely cities in the southern part of Norway called Sørlandet. This deserves an article all by itself.

Sørlandet has been defined as the coastal area of Norway, from Kristiansand to the Oslofjord. It includes the coastal region of all of Aust-Agder and Telemark. The average tourist does not visit Sørlandet, simply because it is not on the main roads and railroads from Oslo to Bergen, Hamar and Trondheim. As a matter of fact, to reach Arendal by train, one must take the train from Oslo to Kristiansand and Stavanger, leaving the train at a lonely stop called Nelaug, then taking a spur line down to the coast.

The reward of a visit to Sørlandet is an exposure to Norway's Riviera, where thousands of Norwegians spent their summer vacations. The area is relatively unspoiled. It is difficult to find mammoth hotels, with all of the pleasures of home. Instead, the visitor comes closer to nature; quiet seaside villages, remote wooded islands, delightful seashores—an area quite different from bustling Oslo and the mountain fjords of western Norway. If you are a true Norwegian-American, you will probably prefer a visit here, rather than to the tourist-infested centers in the big cities.

A study of the map of Norway will quickly identify the coastal cities worth your attention. This time, we concentrated on Arendal and

Tvedestrand, as well as the rural community of Holt.

Arendal is the oldest city in Sørlandet, originally a "Venice" built upon small islands and a peninsula. More recently, the channels were filled in, so that today the city is built on terraces around a cozy harbor. As with many of Norway's cities, fires have determined the present structure of the city. And yet a number of the original houses have survived in the harbor area.

Since Arendal was an important seaport for several centuries, it follows that it sent several of its ships to America with emigrant passengers. It was an important factor in the trade among Norway and the countries to the west and south. The Napoleonic wars, with blockades and battles, brought hard times to Arendal, but during the years 1826 to 1850, the city's fleet increased tenfold. In 1884 there were about 500 ships based in the harbor.

The long history of Arendal has led to the creation of several museums. One is Kløckershus, the Arendal city museum. Another is the museum for Aust-Agder, which includes significant collections dealing with the maritime industry, ethnography, archeology, and geology. It is well worth a visit. For the family historian the museum has an excellent library and archives, with thousands of records, family history collections and indexes. For a person with roots in Aust-Agder, this library is a must.

One can drive in almost any direction from Arendal and find scenery and history. We went to Holt, where we found evidence of major industry from earlier centuries; the Nes Iron Works, owned for many years by Jacob Aall, one of the men at

Eidsvoll in 1814. The old home at Nes is famous for the Jacob Aall library. Unfortunately, it is not open to the public.

But the Holt church is open, by arrangement. Believed to have been built in 1100 or a bit earlier, the church's walls are about five feet thick. It boasts an altar going back to very old times; and a more recent altar painting presented by Jacob Aall in 1836, on the occasion of the 300th anniversary of the Reformation in Norway. In the adjacent cemetery are the graves of Jacob Aall and Adolph Carl Preus, a pastor in America for 22 years before his return to Holt for the last six years of his life.

I must mention Berit Guddal, whose address is Tvedestrand; an energetic and capable historian, with a special interest in the emigrants from Holt. And the Agder Historical Society, which arranged for me to talk to a large audience at the City Hall on the subject of emigration from Aust-Agder.

Opportunities in 1989

In addition to the celebration in Vik, mentioned in an earlier issue, there will be an emigrant celebration in Hornindal, July 7-16.

And the Norsemen's Federation, in conjunction with historical societies in central Norway and the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, is sponsoring its third Genealogical Seminar and Tour, June 9-26, with concentration on Valdres, Toten, Land and, Hadeland.

For further information on either of these events, send a large self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

How Can the Mormon Library Help?

For many months now, we have been discussing a number of sources for information about your families. We have looked at church records, the census, passenger lists, printed books—all offering potential for locating answers to difficult questions. Now it is time to think about where one can find these materials.

Without question, the one single library providing more materials in genealogy than any other in the world is in Salt Lake City. Its full name is the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Quite a mouthful! It could just as well be called the Genealogical Society of Utah. A 763- page guide to this collection was published in 1988 in a book called, simply, *The Library*, a presumptuous title when one remembers such great libraries as the Library of Congress and the British Museum. But realistic if one thinks only in genealogical terms.

When in 1969 I first became acquainted with the LSD library, it was housed in a former Montgomery Ward store. A few years later it moved to a wing in a new administration building for the national LDS church. And now it has moved to a commodious building of its own, containing five floors, and located in Salt Lake City at 35 North West Temple. It is open to the general public normal hours, except that it is closed on Sundays, on all recognized holidays as well as on Pioneer Day (July 24, a Utah state holiday). One does not need to be Mormon; as a matter of fact, it is

likely that the majority of its users are not.

Even if you are interested only in Norwegian genealogy, your first visit to the library should include a brief orientation. You will learn that it has more than 165,000 books that can be used only in the library, and that its famous microfilm collection consists of 1,400,000 reels—the equivalent of more than 5,000,000 volumes of genealogical information. You will be told also that the library has more than 1,000 branch libraries.

Assuming that you plan to work on Norwegian problems, you will then go to Basement 1, the International Area. Here you must quickly select a reading machine, lest you be without a machine. You will learn that the library has about 9,000 reels of microfilm of Norwegian records, as well as a large library of family histories and *bygdebøker*. As a matter of fact, it has copies of all genealogical materials filmed in Norwegian archives and libraries.

To learn more about specific holdings, you must use a catalog now on microfiche. If you know where your family came from in Norway, you will have to use the appropriate microfiche sheets for your county, with subdivision for the specific *bygd*. This will provide a list of actual holdings, together with microfilm numbers.

When you have determined the numbers of the films you plan to consult, you have only to go to the drawers containing the films, pull out your films, and go to your pre-

selected reading machine. This sounds simple, and once you have done it a couple of times, you will agree that it is. The actual use of the films is often difficult, requiring patience, good eyes, and a developing knowledge of Norwegian religious and social customs and laws. But don't give up!

The microfilms include Norwegian church records, census reports, probate records, land and tax records, court proceedings, merchant marine and military records. With persistence, you will find indexes to many Norwegian obituaries and other biographical materials. On nearby shelves are useful books. You should take time to examine this collection, because it might save you much valuable research time.

A fascinating new development is the IGI (International Genealogical Index), a microfiche index to about 120 million names in genealogical records. The Norwegian section has thousands of names, arranged by local county and bygd. We find it helpful when all else fails.

So, take advantage of the dry hot climate: go to Salt Lake City. Plan to stay in a motel or in a camp and explore the resources of a great library. So far as possible, make your research plans carefully and thoroughly, bringing with you information on what you already know. If you are like other genealogists, you will view the library with awe—and you will plan to come again.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

A Success Story

Several months ago, a retired professor, James Marks, told me that he and his wife would soon visit Norway, and that he would like to find his family there. He thought that the Marks name came from a farm name, Mørk, at Kongsberg.

All that Jim knew was that his grandfather was Ole Hansen or Ole Mørk, supposedly born Oct. 22, 1859, at Kongsberg, had settled at Wisconsin Rapids, married Ella Overboe and had a brother named Charles Marks. The 1900 census revealed that Ole was born in October 1856 and emigrated in 1882. The Oslo passport records showed an Ole Hansen Mørk, a laborer from Sandsvør, emigrating on July 2, 1880, to New York, going on the ship Angelo. Sandsvør is the rural community around the city of Kongsberg. The question: Was this our Ole?

The marriage record for the right Ole reported him the son of Hans Halvorsen Mørk and Anne Marie Mikkelsdatter. In the Sandsavør church records, we found Ole, born November, not October, 22, 1859, son of Hans Halvorsen Brenne and Anne Marie Mikkelsdatter. We found the marriage record, November 22, 1845, for Hans Halversen, 27 and Anna Marie Mikkelsdatter Nygaard, 19. We also found several other children born to this couple, including Mikael, who turned out to be the brother, Charles.

I now suggested to Jim that the time had come for him to write to the local newspaper, the *Kongsberg Tidende*, telling what he knew about his family, and asking to hear

from anyone knowing about them, or better yet, might be related. One Saturday, Kim telephoned me saying, "You'll never guess what happened this morning? I just had a telephone call from Kongsberg, from a newspaperman who says that his wife is related to me." From now on, the story is strictly Jim's:

After a long trip and with nothing more than a name—Roar Fusche of Kongsberg—I finally arrived in Kongsberg, on a train from Oslo. There a guide at the tourist office took the time to let me call the still unknown Roar Fusache. The latter said: "Stay right there. I'll be right over." Up to this point about all I knew in Norwegian was "*mange tusen takk*," which I gratefully said many times over the next few days.

In a few minutes Roar drove up, put my luggage in his car and drove directly to his home. Then I met his wife Gulla who greeted me like a long-lost relative, which indeed I turned out to be. There was no question but I would stay in their home. When that was determined, we all enjoyed a bit to drink, and were off to a good start.

The real stroke of luck was that Roar had mentioned my letter to Gulla, who was interested in genealogy, and recognized the Mørk name as a farm name near Kongsberg. Her search, along with Gerry Naeseth's findings which I had sent with my first letter, revealed that, her great-grandmother and my great-grandfather were brother and sister!

The next day Gulla drove me to the Mørk farm area, after asking

directions from an elderly man picking up his mail. The animated conversation quickly resulted in an invitation to coffee. I recall from childhood that an invitation to coffee was much more than that. Now I know where some of our traditions come from.

At any rate, this led to a drive to the Brenne farm area. Gulla had discovered that our mutual great-great-grandparents had moved to that farm. She had the complete records from the Kongsberg church which established the correct date of my grandfather's birth, along with the names of other brothers and sisters and many descendants. Finding that farm introduced us to two sisters of the Brenne heritage, with another invitation for coffee and a tour of the farm house. The sisters were renovating the house and had dug deep into the past. They showed me the original log walls and pointed out under the flooring to the simple dirt floor.

But a word of caution. My search involved incredibly good luck. For others who would like to find their roots, do two things. First, research as much as you can from any available records—dates of birth, marriages, and deaths. Then make some contact in Norway, even putting an ad in a newspaper, and retain the services of a genealogist. Even if you can read Norwegian, old church records are very difficult to follow and some of the handwriting is atrocious.

But the rewards are enormous. It is exhilarating to find, after many years, long-lost relatives.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

The Vesterheim Genealogical Center

A few months ago in this column I told about the tremendous library developed by the Mormons in Salt Lake City, intended to provide genealogical information on families throughout the world, including Norway and the United States. Today I will describe the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, whose sole purpose is to provide genealogical information on families with Norwegian background.

In 1974 the Norwegian-American Museum in Decorah, Iowa, established this center as a division of the Museum, but to be maintained in Madison, Wisconsin. This location was chosen because of the availability of two other tremendous libraries, the Memorial Library and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

The Memorial Library has the largest collection in the United States of Norwegian local histories, while the Historical Society has perhaps the best collection of genealogical material in an American historical society. The use of the Center and the two libraries can go a long way in solving genealogical problems.

A few years later, the bygdelags, first through their National Council and then through the individual lags, contributed several thousands of dollars permitting the Center to purchase about 1400 reels of microfilm of Norwegian church records, censuses, passport records and other materials. By taking this step, the bygdelags recognized the Center as the central organization

providing genealogical information about Norwegian families. As a result of this support, the Center realized that it should aim at providing all possible resource materials to accomplish this purpose.

At the same time, several college and university libraries have built good collections of Norwegian local histories. In their annual meetings, the bygdelags have begun providing extensive service to the members who attend. Special interest groups in state genealogical societies, such as Minnesota and Washington, are collecting resources aimed at assisting their members learn about their families.

For the first years of its existence, the Center's resources were housed in the personal study of Gerhard Naeseth, in the family home at 4909 Sherwood Road in Madison. When the study became full, the collection spilled over to the family room and into the basement. With the advent of the microfilms, temporary arrangements were made with the Memorial Library to house the films in the Microfilm Reading Room of that library. When it was realized that Microform Reading Room needed all of its space for its regular patrons, the director of the Library found another temporary room.

The situation today is this: In the Naeseth home are all of the correspondence files; virtually all of the family histories which have been collected; many of the *bygdebøker*; all of the census indexes provided by the University

of Tromsø; American local history books; extensive lists of emigrants, often with indexes, transcripts of American census records and church records; as well, as a large collection of other books dealing with Norwegian-American history; equipment processor, and a personal computer.

In the 175 square foot room in the Memorial Library are all of the microfilms; many of the *bygdebøker*; the microfiche copies of the Rowberg obituary file, the 1801 census and the Bergen passport record; some of the card indexes to the 1900 census records; many books and pamphlets listing emigrants from particular parts of Norway; many transcripts of American cemeteries and census records; two film and three fiche readers.

Each mail day the Center receives about 10 requests for genealogical information; each calendar day, the Center sends about ten answers. More and more people are coming directly to the Memorial Library central office, some to ask for help, others to work on their own. When possible, the Center responds to request of the loan of books and films. For example, it often sends large numbers of films to the annual bygdelag meetings. To provide this service, the Center has two full-time staff members, Gerhard Naeseth and Blaine Hedberg, and five others who give regularly of their time and talents. A letter to the Center at 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison WI 53711, will provide further information and the fee schedule.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Letter Writing

This month I am shifting away temporarily from the Norwegian emphasis, talking to you simply as family historians. If you are like most of the family historians I know, you are working with a limited budget—or no budget at all. You do not have the time to visit all of your relatives in the United States and Canada; and if you have the time, you don't have the money. One solution is to let the mailman do the walking for you.

Most family historians do their work through the mail. Granting this fact, it should be worth considering how best to make our letters work for us. Normally, one does not begin with a complete list of names and addresses, but rather with only a few names. The exception might be the case of a well-organized family association which has maintained an address list for a number of years, and has kept it up-to-date.

I suspect that there are many ways to approach people by mail. You will want to be effective, if only to avoid writing too many follow-up letters. Perhaps best in your initial letter would be to identify yourself, such as: I am the great-granddaughter of Ole Peterson Hosaaas and therefore your third cousin.

Describe your project or objective, such as I have been asked by our family to collect information about our relatives, and if I get enough, to publish this material in a family history. Then ask for the specific items of information you want.

If I were doing it, I would include such items as full

names; full dates of birth, marriage and death; details of schooling; church membership; occupation, including positions held (ask them to be as detailed as they can); places lived.

You will probably want the same kind of information for spouses. And where appropriate, you will want the full names and dates of all the children. You may want to ask about hobbies and other interests and anything else of interest. Sometimes, answers to this question will provide some pleasant surprises.

Essentially, this is the routine I used to compile two family histories. In addition, I always asked for names and addresses of brothers and sisters and other relatives, so that I could write also to them. Not everything worked smoothly. I still remember the reply from a relative out West: "What are you getting so nosy for?" Well, I put that one on the back burner until the day when I was able to visit the area. When I dropped in unannounced and had a chance to explain my mission, the family cooperated fully and enthusiastically.

In another case, a cousin told me a bit about himself, then mentioned the fact that he had three brothers and sisters, telling about them as follows: "I had one brother, but he died many years ago, I think here in town. I have a sister living somewhere out in California. And, come to think of it, I think I have a sister living here in town." Uff da! Then he explained that when their parents had died a few decades earlier, they had such a fight

over the estate that they had not been talking to one another since.

Oh yes, in writing, be clear on the kind of photographs you want. Pictures sell books. I still recall the day we published my first book at a family reunion. A cousin asked to see a copy. "Ah, there is my picture. I'll take three."

I have some personal gripes about some of the thousands of letters which come annually to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center. For example, it is not enough for the writer to put name and address on the envelope; it must be included also on the letter itself. My daily routine is to open the envelopes and lay the letters in a pile for action; the envelopes are thrown away. I find that I have to be vigilant about saving addresses and that should not be my job.

I greatly prefer 8 1/2 x 11 sheets; smaller ones risk becoming lost. Some handwritten letters almost make me cry, because they require me to spend extra time reading them; that is not fair to me. One of my correspondents fills every bit of space on her letters and often adds last-minute notes on the envelope.

Although I have not covered completely the subject of letter-writing, I hope that I have left you with a few useful thoughts.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Telemark's Bygdebøker

As a change of pace, I thought I would use a few of our columns to describe briefly the *bygdebøker* available for individual *fylker*, or counties, in Norway. Since so many have been written and are still being written, it is likely that a report like this will be out-of-date before it is published. But it is worth a try.

I have decided to begin with Telemark because it has been covered so well by these local histories. And I will begin with the so-called mountain communities.

H. H. Einung published his *Tinn saga* in 1926–1942, in two volumes. One of the volumes provides farm and family history; unfortunately, it is not detailed enough to satisfy many family historians. Rauland and Vinje are even worse, even though Berge's *Vinje og Rauland* is in four volumes; the printed material is difficult to follow and is published in a difficult dialect. O. T. Bakken's *Lårdalsoga* is a little better, with genealogical charts. There is a recent history for Hovin, and a history for Mo is in preparation.

Middle Telemark is in better shape. K. Tjønnås has done an excellent history of Gransherad. G. K. Karlsrud in 1987 published the first volume of a series for Hjartdal, this one covering Tuddal; others are in preparation. Seljord's history, in three volumes, is old and lacks useful detail. On the other hand, Sauherud has been covered in five volumes, published 1980–1988, with excellent detail.

The story is the same for Bø,

again in five volumes. Heddal has an old, but good history of its farms and families, published by O. H. Holta. Kviteseid has two volumes, one of them strictly genealogical. The two Nissedal volumes are excellent. Lunde has an old genealogical volume, rather difficult to use. Fyresdal has an old genealogical volume, intended to go with a general history. I find this book useful, but am troubled by the fact that the charts force me to make conclusions that are not clear.

Drangedal med Tørdal, by Olav Sannes, published in 1924, is good, with a great deal of genealogical detail; on the other hand, I cannot escape the feeling that the book is not complete in describing the people who have lived on the individual farms.

Finally, we have southeastern Telemark, where there is more industry than in the rest of the county. In 1941, Kr. Lid published a farm and family history for the southern part of Gjerpen with much genealogical information. J. L. Qvisling's small histories of Gjerpen are useful. More recently, Terje Christensen has published three beautiful volumes on this community, one of them a farm history. Unhappily, with the exception of the Lid book, there is no good history of the families.

Simon Ytterbøe published a two-volume history of Holla, one of which has been revised; one of the volumes has good histories of the farms and families, although with detail not always satisfactory to the genealogist. Siljan has a very good farm and family history. Solum is disappointing: there is a history

of the farms, but of relatively little use to the genealogist. C. S. Schilbred published in 1984 a history of the farms and families of Eidanger, which is excellent.

Schilbred has also published a history of Bamble up to the year 1814, complemented by a similar history by Z. Zakariassen up to 1950. The two volumes provide much farm and family history. The joint community of Sannidal and Skåtøy has a three-volume history. The first two volumes are histories of the farms. I, for one, have found these books difficult to use in terms of genealogy.

A *bygdebok* is a history of a rural community. Therefore, strictly speaking, the cities do not have *bygdebøker*. Schilbred has published a history of Brevik, with some biographical material concerning important families. There are good histories of Skien, but with relatively little genealogical information. Porsgrunn, too, has a good history. The genealogist may find it useful to look in the back for genealogical tables. There are some old histories of Kragerø, but with little biographical data. And many years ago, Sverre Kjeldstadli published a little history of Rjukan.

In summary, virtually all of Telemark has been covered by local history books. If you want to locate some of these books, you may want to look at our column of June 1985. Or you can request a copy from Sons of Norway or write me at 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Buskerud's Bygdebøker

To continue our series of columns on the *bygdebøker* of Norway, I am shifting today to Buskerud. I suspect that the name of Buskerud, one of Norway's counties, is not very well known to many, whereas some of the parts of the county are very well known, such as Hallingdal, Numedal and Ringerike.

Let's start with an easy group, Sigdal and Krødsherad. Thormod Skavedt wrote volume one of *Sigdal og Eggedal* in 1914, a general history. For the genealogist the valuable volumes are two and three, with detailed histories of the farms and families. Andreas Mørch wrote these volumes and followed them with volumes four and five, all with useful material. Mørch also wrote the three volumes of *Krødsherad*; volume one, with the histories of the farms and families is especially useful.

Turning now to Ringerike, A. Lagesen, in 1922–1935, published *Ringerikske slekter*, volume one covering Hole and Tyrstrand, volume two Haug, volume three Norderhov. All three volumes have personal history, although they appear to leave out many families. Gunnar Tveiten's *Hole herred*, published in 1914 in 401 pages, has helpful information. A similar book for Ådal is not as good. Although there are histories of the city of Hønefoss, they do not provide much personal information.

Tord Pedersen and Odd Thorson have published a four volume history of Drammen, *Drammen, en norsk østlandsbys utviklingshistorie*. As with other histories of cities, this set does not go very much into family history. Forgetting that fact, this

is an excellent history. Rolf Fladby has published a six-volume history of Lier, the first two volumes being devoted to farm histories. The family historian will be disappointed in the lack of family history; on the other hand, the farm histories are useful.

Roar Tank has published *Modums historie*: relatively little family history, although an index volume is helpful. Anders Killingstad has published *Røyken bygd før og nu* in 623 pages, again helpful for the family historian, even though many details are lacking. Sigfred Eier has written *Hurums historie* in two volumes, 1963–1969; this is a general history, without much genealogical information. *Eker, træk av en storbygds saga* by Nils Johnsen, is useful, in spite of the fact that it lacks genealogical data; this is a community which needs a better history.

Now for Hallingdal. The Reinton brothers, in the years 1954–1982, published the eight volumes of their *Folk og fortid i Hol*. Volumes three through seven are almost ideal in the detail offered to the genealogist; they could hardly be better. On the other hand, *Aal bygdesage*, in four extensive volumes, mentions a great many names, but leaves the reader to form conclusions on relationships.

H. Flaten's *Hemsedals slektshistorie* 1693–1975 is much better, although the genealogist will be frustrated until he learns the system. *Boka om Gol*, now in four volumes, has a volume devoted to Herad, another to Åsgardane, Hesla and the Gol center; these volumes have much genealogical information. So far, there is only a general history for

Nes; I am hoping that farm and family histories will follow. As for Flaa, we must be satisfied with *Flaa*, a volume published in 1921 in 133 pages.

Things are happening in Numedal. T. K. Loftsgard has published six volumes of a history of Nore, *Gards-og ættesage for Nore*, with excellent genealogical detail and an index which is useful once you get the hang of it. A similar history for Uvdal may be off the press by now. In 1988 Knut Hoff published the first volume of his *Rollag bygdebok*, and now a second volume is off the press. In addition to good genealogical detail, he provides a list of the persons who have emigrated from each farm.

A similar book has just been published for Flesberg. Since we have not yet received our copy, I cannot tell you much about it. I think it will be very good. T. Flatin published an earlier history, with farm histories. Olav Satvedt is working hard on the farm and family histories for Sandsvørs, to accompany Lunde's *Sandsvørs historie*, a general history published in 1973. Finally, there is Kongsberg. I find helpful J. K. Bergwitz's *Kongsberg som bergkoloni*, published in two volumes; but like other city histories, it will be not very helpful for the genealogist.

As you see, Buskerud is well covered by *bygdebøker*, and is improving. Most of these volumes can be borrowed on interlibrary loan from the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin. When in doubt, write to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Nordland's Bygdebøker

Nordland, as indicated by its very name, is one of the northern counties of Norway. It has an area of 38,327 square kilometers, nearly twelve percent of the total area of Norway. And a population of 243,816—6 percent of Norway's population. The latter figure surprised me; I expected a much lower statistic. It is clear, however, that Nordland is much more sparsely settled than some other parts of Norway. A recent listing shows forty-three local communities, in addition to the two cities of Bodø and Narvik. Nordland includes the island-rich areas of Vesterålen and Lofoten.

To assist us in looking at the *bygdebøker* for Nordland, I will begin with Vesterålen to the north and work down to Indre Helgeland in the south. K. Lindbekk and R. Bertelsen have published two histories of Lofoten and Vesterålen, taking us up to the year 1700, offering very little help to the genealogist. And only the community of Bø has been covered by a *bygdebok*, *Bø bygdelok*, by Rolf Straume, in three volumes. It is a very good history.

Lofoten is a little better off, although only two books offer much genealogical help: *Buksnes bygdebok*, by O. Berg, in two volumes; and *Hol bygdebok*, by P. Berg, Borge and Valberg, as well as Vaerøy, have general histories.

In the Loften area, we find only V. Fjordholm's *Lødingen, Tjeldsund og Tysfjords historie*, with two volumes published so far, these covering Lødingen.

In the Nord-Salten area, we have already mentioned Tysfjord. Two volumes have been published of *Hamarøy bygdebok*; however, since I have not seen them, I do not know how much help they offer

the genealogist. The same is true for *Steigen bygdebok*, two volumes by S. Fygle. And there is a small book by M.B. Hansen, *Folk og slekter i Leiranger og Steigen*.

Sør-Salten fares a little better. G. Berg has published *Slektsbok for Skjerstad og Fauske* in four volumes, a set with excellent genealogical information. *Bodin bygdebok* is in the process of publication, beginning with a general history in two parts, then moving to farm and family history. So far, books have been published for Væran and Nordstranda.

The story for Ytre Helgeland is good, beginning with the first volume of *Helgeland historie*, published in 1985, taking us up to about 1030. I feel quite sure that volumes covering later years are coming. Melrøy is covered by a history of the Benkestok family, as well as by two volumes on the farms; unfortunately, the latter offers little family history. A. Coldevin has published a general *Dønna bygdehistorie*. Bjarne Rabben has published three volumes of *Herøyboka, gardar og folk*, rather good. There is an *Alstahaugboka*, with one volume published so far. And *Vevelstad*, by A. O. Åsvang. And three volumes of *Vega bydebok*, by H. O. Wika, unfortunately, general in nature. I sometimes find *Bindalsboken* by M. Sylten helpful. The second volume of *Sømna gård og slekt* was published recently with much genealogical detail; this book was the subject of one of my columns some time back.

Which brings us to Indre Helgeland. We begin with A. Coldevin's *Mo prestegjeld etter 1850* and his *Rana bygdebok*, covering Hemnes and Mo parishes up to 1850. Andreas Frøholm has published a farm history for the Mo

parish. G. Holand published, many years ago, a small *Drevja, folk og folkeliv; gardar og grannelag*; it is a brief book, but with much material about people. Several volumes have been published of a Vefsn *bygdebok*, but they are general in nature.

Have I forgotten someone? Yes, A. P. Lind has published, in 624 pages, a *Slektsbok for Sørfold*. Although I have not seen it, the title suggests that it must be good. And in 1985 a 195 page first volume of *Leirfjord bygdebok*. And there may be others.

By the time this column is published, we may have received from the Norwegian Genealogical Society an up-to-date list of societies and committees at work on new local histories for Norway. I am hoping that it will reveal many new books coming for Nordland.

Nordland is frequently of importance to genealogists working with families in southern Norway, because many Norwegians moved north for better work opportunities. This lends importance to the work of the University of Tromsø, which has transcribed and indexed some of the census records for Nordland. Specifically, we have Ankenes (1900); Evenes (1900); Hadsel (1900); Hemnes (1875, 1900); Mo (1875, 1900); Tysfjord (1875, 1900); Skjerstad (1875, 1900); Flakstad (1865, 1875, 1900); Loften (1865); Lødingen (1875, 1900). And, as reported in an earlier column, the whole county has been covered by the 1801 census.

As usual, anyone needing more detailed information may write to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Rogaland's Bygdebøker

Rogaland and its premier city, Stavanger, are perhaps best known to Americans because of Norway's deep involvement in the development of oil. But there is more. It was from Stavanger that the first shipload of emigrants going to America sailed; that was on July 4, 1825. The city of Stavanger offers an excellent archive, a superb local historical society, and the Norwegian Emigrant Center—an organization which can often be of help on genealogical problems. Since Stavanger is a city, it does not have a *bygdebok*. Perhaps the most helpful book for Stavanger is *Stavanger borgerbok, 1436–1850* by Axel Kjelland, a list of the citizens of the city.

So far as the rural communities are concerned, let's begin at the south, in the area called Dalane. I have found useful *Hetland skipreide i 450 år*, in two volumes, by P. Valand and O. Heskestad. Altogether, these comprise more than 1,600 pages with much genealogical material. O. Heskestad also wrote *Lunds historie*, again in two volumes. Volume one is full of family history. Sem Austrumdal has published *Bjerkreim; skipreida, herad og kyrkjesokn*, with some genealogical help. Søren Arnesen has compiled *Kyrkejob for Bjerkreim, 1713–1834*. Aamund Salvesson's *Jubileums- og bygdebok for Eigersund herad* has some help. There is a historical society for Sokndal.

Moving north to Jæren we find an excellent set of genealogical books: *Klepp—gards- og ættesoga gjennom*

400 år by Erling Brunnes; *Gards og ættesoga* for Nærbø and for Ognå, by T. Edland; a similar book for Gjestal, by S. Arneson; *Time gards- og ættesoga* by O. Aurenes and R. Undheim. Ola Aurenes has published *Gard og ætt i Sola*, again very good. S. Lindanger has published two volumes of *Randaberg gard og ætt*. Not to be ignored are volumes two and three of Langhelle's *Soga om Sola og Madla*. Not exactly a *bygdebok* is Sevald Simonsen's *Folk på Sandnes i 200 år*, with much biographical material. I have solved several problems with its use.

I almost forgot to mention S. Refheim's *Gard og ætt i Madla*, volume one. Although Finnøy still awaits its *bygdebok*, the other island communities have fared well. Sjernerøy *bygdebok*, by J. S. Løland, is excellent. V. Sunnanå and H. Vetrhus have published *Rennesøy, gards- og ættesoga*. And O. Hestvold has compiled *Masterøy, Bru, Sokn og V. Åmøy*.

In the Haugesund area, we need do no more than refer to the tremendous set, *Bygdebok for Karmøy*, with large volumes for Tarvastad, Åkra, Skudenes and Sakudeneshavn, and Stabgekabd and Kopervik. Still to come is a volume on Avaldsnes. N. Dybdall-Holthe has published *Soga om Vats*, with a good deal of excellent genealogical material. But for Skjold, Skåre and Tysvær, we still have to wait.

The story is a mixed one for Ryfylke. More than fifty years ago, Tor Skiftun published *Hjelmeland skipsreid, herad og*

kyrkjesokn. Although it provided genealogical information, it was often frustrating to use. Now, off the press last year, we have Trygve Brandal's *Hjelmeland, gardar og folk*, volume one, with the promise that volumes two and three will be out before the end of 1990. And S. Engen has published three volumes of *Forsandboka*, again with the genealogist in mind. One of the best is S. Eikeland's *Årdal gardene og folket*; volume two is excellent for genealogy.

Many of our correspondents have spoken highly of the fine book for Suldal, again easy for the genealogist to use. And I like O. Foldøy's *Jelsa, gards- og ættesoga*, volume one. A. Lillehammer has written two volumes of *Soga om Sauda*, with volume one devoted to farms 1–27, volume two to farms 28–54. There are books for Erfjord and Strand, but I do not find them helpful. As for Sandeid, Imsland, Sand, Strand, Høle and Fister, we will have to wait.

Many persons with roots in Rogaland will be rewarded by using Ola Aurenes'

Rogalendingar og ættar, a volume of only 188 pages but with seventy-nine abbreviated family histories. It is thoroughly indexed and easy to use. Not so easy to use, but often helpful, is the annual publication of the Rogaland Historical Society called *Ætt og heim*. If my roots were in Rogaland, I would go out of my way to page through its many volumes. Simply put, it has many articles of family history.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Oppland's Bygdebøker

In discussing Norway's *bygdebøker*, I have seldom mentioned the many fine magazines and yearbooks published by local historical and genealogical societies. For one thing, there are so many of them; for another, while some of them offer occasional genealogical articles, most of them are devoted to historical articles. We will make an exception this time, in part because Oppland offers several good periodicals.

Oppland is made up of several distinct parts: Gudbrandsdal, Toten, Hadeland, Land, Valdres—each with a distinct character and, of course, its own families.

Let's begin at the south, with Hadeland, which has no *bygdebok*. Oh, to be sure, a four-volume set called *Hadeland* was published in 1932–53. Although these volumes have a great deal of information, they offer little in the way of farm and family history. There is no immediate prospect of a history, although a local historian, Randi Bjørkvik, has prepared extensive index cards for the records of the whole district. These cards are on file in the Hadeland Museum.

The Toten district has been treated somewhat better. Under the editorship of T. Lauvdal, we have *Biri-Snerthingdal bygdebok*, in three volumes. One of the volumes is devoted to farm history, with relatively little emphasis on family history. The same editor has given us the four-volume *Vardal bygdebok*, but only one volume is farm history. Like the Biri set, it is useful for clues, but not for family history. Halvard Oudenstad published in 1982 *Utvandringen til Amerika fra Biri/Snerthingdal, Vardal/Gjøvik, 1846–1915*, with much useful information about emigrants. Until very recently, we had little help for Toten. *Toten*

Bygdebok in its first three volumes provided useful general history. Fortunately, in 1984, Volume Four appeared with farm and family history for Totenvika. There is reason to believe that other volumes in this series are forthcoming.

The southern part of Land has been treated well by *Boka om Land*. C. S. Schilbred, for many years president of the Norwegian Genealogical Society, wrote Volume 3 about the farms and families of Søndre Land; and Volume 5 about Fluberg. Arvid Sandaker wrote Volume 4 about the emigration to America from northern and southern Land, 1839–1915. Volumes One and Two are of a general nature. Still to be published is a history of the farms and families of Nordre Land. The Schilbred volumes include a number of genealogical charts.

Until recently, the only useful books for Valdres were *Vang og Slidre*, by Tore Ey; and one of the volumes of *Valdres bygdebok*, with brief farm histories. While Tore Ey's book is good, it has little information after 1850, and it is written in a difficult dialect. Now the Valdres *bygdebok* has been expanded to include farm and family histories. *Geir Beitrusten* has produced *Gardar og slekter i Vestre Slidre*, and *Gardar og slekter i Øystre Slidre*. J. O. Gjermundsen has published *Gard og bygd i Sør-Aurdal*. And Anders Frøholm, now the chief archivist in Trondheim, has written *Garder og slekter i Vang*.

In preparation is a history of the farms and families of Nord-Aurdal. Although these volumes are good, they often lack full family histories. *Årbok for Valdres* was published in 1989, in its 66th year.

And so to Gudbrandsdal, where the story is mixed. Einar Hovdhaugen has published a two-

volume *Garder og slekter i Fron*, one volume devoted to southern Fron, the other to northern Fron. He has also published *Garder og slekter i Ringebru*. These volumes do a good job in tracing farm history, but they are less than satisfactory for the family historian. Too often, the genealogical portion is limited to sketchy lines of descent and to families still living in the community. Even though it consists of only 251 pages, Hans *Kraabøl's Optegnelser om slegter og gaarder i Gausdal, 1820–1824*, is often helpful. And the appearance of a general *Gausdal bygdehistorie* leads us to believe that in the not-too-distant future, we will have some good farm and family histories for Gausdal.

In 1987 Arnfinn Kjelland published the first volume of his *Bygdebok for Lesja*, with farm and family histories. Word has reached us that he is nearly ready with Volume 2. And for *Skjåk*, we have the two volume of *Ættebok for Skjåk*. I have seen reference to a 58 page *Heidal bygdehistorie og gardshistorie*, but believe that it can be little more than a plan for such a history.

All of which leaves the communities of Dovre, Lom, Vågå and Fåberg awaiting attention. There is a four volume history of Øyer, but it does not have farm and family histories. Worthy of mention is the activity of the West Oppland Genealogical Society, including some publication.

In summary, it appears that Oppland is not nearly as well covered by *bygdebøker* as the other counties we have discussed so far. And yet there are indications that this situation will improve. For example, Ringebru and Land have published extensive transcripts or prints of their church records.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Hedmark's Bygdebøker

Hedmark, on the eastern border of Norway, provides much of the Norwegian border with Sweden. This geographical fact helps to account for the many families in Hedmark who have roots in Sweden as well as in Finland. A large part of eastern Hedmark is known as Finnskogen—"the Finnish woods," Hedmark is made up of five sections: Odalen and Vinger, Solør, Hedemarken, Sør-Østerdal and Nord-Østerdal.

Beginning in the extreme south of Hedmark we find that J. I. Engen has published three volumes of *Eidskog bygdebok*, providing the histories of farms 1 through 52. Eyvind Lillevold has published three volumes of the *Vinger bygdebok*. Birger Kirkeby has been very active in publishing five volumes of history for Nord-Odal, as well as volumes three to five for Sør-Odal.

Perhaps the best history of Kongsvinger is *Kongsvinger, 1854–1954*, by Nils P. Vigerland. While some work remains to be completed, this part of Hedmark is very well covered with printed history.

Moving north to *Solør*, Gunnar Mandt has published two volumes of *Brandval-boka*, volume two devoted to farm histories. Harald Hveberg has published *Grueboka* in two volumes; and now another volume has been published for the Finnskogen portion of Grue. H. M. Trøseid has published two volumes of *Hof bygdebok*, providing farm histories for much of that community. In spite of the fact that fire destroyed many of the church records for Åsnes, M. Skrede has managed to publish two good books, *Åsnesboka*. And Alexander Bugge has published a large volume, *Våler bygdebok*.

Turning now to Hedemarken, M. Veflingstad has published two good volumes of history for Stange, *Stange bygdebok*. The Stange Historical Society has published an

excellent yearbook, *Gammelt frå Stange og Romedal*, sometimes with excellent material on emigrants. Bjarne Morthoff, with J. S. Løland, has published four volumes of *Romedalsboka*, all of them devoted to farm and family history. Løtenboka, by J. B. Morthoff, is available in three volumes. Odd Stensrud has begun an ambitious program with his *Vangsboka*. He has published two volumes of histories for farms 153 through 194. Toralv Bleken-Nilsson many years ago published two volumes of *Furnes bygdebok*, and recently a third volume came out. Jon Angel Bakken published two volumes of *Nes bygdebok* many years ago.

Finally, we have Ringsaker, where volume one of *Veldre bygdebok* and a very large *Slekter og gårder i Brøttum* by Niels Moen has been published. However, there seems to be no prospect for a similar history of the main part of Ringsaker. A good local historical society for Ringsaker publishes an annual yearbook. The late Arvid Østby published an extensive bibliography for Hamar, as well as *Hamar borgerbok* about the early citizens of that city.

In a period of three years, 1983–1985, three volumes of *Elverum bygdebok* were published, and now two more volumes have just been issued. Eyvind Lillevold published four volumes of *Trysil-boka*, and now a fifth volume has appeared. Lillevold many years ago published three volumes of *Åmot bygdebok*. A. Fosvold has published two volumes of *Bygdebok for Stor Elvdal*, but they do not provide the usual in-depth history of the farms.

Finally, in Nord-Østerdal there are several histories. O. Andersen has published three volumes of *Bygdebok for Engersdal*. J. B. Bull's earlier edition of *Øvre Rendalen* has recently been reprinted. E. Steineggmoen has published two volumes of *Alvdal, ei bygdebok*—not as thorough as most such books

on the histories of the farms.

Except for a 70-year-old book by Ivar Sæter, *Foldalen*, there does not appear to be a history for Folldal.

On the other hand, I. A. Streitlien has published three volumes of *Tynset bygdebok*—the first two devoted to farm and family histories. Ivar Sæter published in 1908 *Tolga*, a history of Tolga. If memory serves me correctly, a new history is in process. *Osen bygdebok* has recently been published in two volumes and O. T. Hagen has published in two volumes *Kvikne, ei bygdebok*.

A number of the local communities are publishing yearbooks, each with useful information, and sometimes with information about the people in America. For many years, a Hedmark Genealogical Society published an excellent supplement to the local histories.

Frankly, when I finished preparing this article, I was surprised at how well Hedmark had been covered by local histories. If only some stroke of magic would produce one for Ringsaker!

Nearly all of the books mentioned above are available in American libraries. Most are at the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin, where they are available on inter-library loan. Many are also available at the library of the Vesterheim Genealogical Center (4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711). Letters to the latter address can usually provide information on how such books may be borrowed or purchased.

This leads me to put in a final note: If you find that a considerable portion of your family comes from a single Norwegian community, you should give serious thought to purchasing the appropriate local history for that community. You will be the gainer. More importantly, you will help enable Norwegian authors to publish more books of this kind.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Akershus

As a welcome to the recently formed *bygdelag* for Romerike, I will devote this month's column to the *bygdebøker* for Akershus. The county of Akershus is the rural area around the capital city of Oslo. It must be noted, however, that the city itself is a separate county, right on the edge of Akershus.

Beginning with Øvre Romerike, the part of the county farthest to the northeast, we find the area well covered by *bygdebøker*. O. Tvetter published *Hurdal bygdebok* in two volumes, 1958–1973. Volume two is devoted to farm and family history. Although it does not provide as much personal history as in later *bygdebøker*, it is still rather good. Volume one has a listing of earlier emigrants.

As of this writing, four volumes have been published of *Feirings historie*. Volume two covers Tosterud; volume three Årnes; volume four Disserud and Berger. Birger Kirkeby has published *Eidsvoll bygds historie* in five volumes including three volumes of farm histories. Many readers will find these volumes unsatisfactory in the kind of detail they provide. The fault does not lie with the author, but rather with the fact that the church records were destroyed by fire in 1877.

Kirkeby has also published the *Nannestad bygdebok* in four volumes. Volume one is devoted to the main Nannestad parish, volume two to Holter, volume three to Bjørke. The detail is generally very good. Kirkeby has been busy, also writing the three volumes of the *Gjerdrum bygdebok*, the first two volumes covering the farm histories. And he was one of the authors of *Nes på Romerike*, now

in seven volumes. The first five volumes are devoted to farm and family history. Finally, we have *Ullensaker, en bygdebok*, by H. Nesten; published in 1927–1951, it is not as detailed as one would like. Volumes two and three have the farm histories.

Turning now to Nedre Romerike, the southernmost communities have not been well covered. Here we find Birger Kirkeby again, with his two volumes of the *Bygdebok for Nittedal og Hakadal*, full of helpful detail. Halvor Haavelmo has published three volumes of *Skedsmo, bygdens historie*. Two volumes have been published of *Sørum herred*, but so far no attention has been given to farm history. Eyvind Lillevold has published three volumes *Aurskog og Blaker*, volumes one and two have excellent farm histories. And O. Foss has published two volumes of a history of Lørenskog; the second volume is given over to farm histories. It is fairly good.

During the last decade, three volumes have been published of *Bygdehistorie for Fet*; volume two provides histories of the farms in Åkrebe, Nerdrum, Fetsund and Falldalen; volume three for Roven. A first volume has been published for Rælingen, but it does not help on farm history. And Kirkeby has published two volumes of *Enebakk bygdebok*, volume one for the north part of the community, volume two for the west and south parts. Unhappily, there are no volumes yet for Høland and Setskog.

On the edge of Oslo is the community of Bærum, which has a two-volume history, *Bærum en bygds historie*, published in

1920–1924. The reader will usually be disappointed in the amount of genealogical material. Halvard Torgersen has published a 430 page *Asker, bidrag til bygdas gaardshistorie*. It often has good genealogical information. These two communities are now so urbanized that it may be difficult to write truly good *bygdebøker*.

Finally, we turn to the Follo area south of Oslo. There is a general history of Nesodden, *Nesoddens historie*, volume one, covering the history up to 1800; but it lacks farm history. Haakon Falck Myckland in 1967 published *Bygdebok for Frogn* in 707 pages; it has good farm histories. T. Vik has published three volumes as *Ås bygdebok*, two of whose volumes are devoted to excellent farm history material. Perhaps even better is O. Martinsen's *Vestby bygdebok*, now in two volumes. I have found it relatively easy to trace families from one farm to another. So far as I have learned, there are no *bygdebøker* for Oppedgård, Ski, Kråkstad, Hvitsten and Son.

It is frequently helpful to consult the volumes of *Norske Gardsbruk*, which has current descriptions of many of the farms and their owners. A volume was published for Akershus in 1941; and a revised set in two volumes in 1966–1967.

Most of these books are available on inter-library loan from the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin. For further detail about individual volumes, write to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711-1343.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Aust-Agder

The county, or *fylke*, of Aust-Agder in olden times was known as Nedenes. Today it may be divided into three main areas: Setesdal, the coastal communities, and the forest communities—all in an area southwest of Oslo. Let's begin with Setesdal.

Recently published (1985–1987) are the six volumes of *Valle kommune* by Alfred Ryningen. Volumes one and two cover Hylestad, volumes three–six Valle, almost 3,500 pages. Each volume has detailed histories of the farms and families, often enabling genealogists to trace families easily.

Bygland soge, published in 1970, is a general history with very little help for the genealogist. The first volume of *Hornnes*, by Olav O. Uleberg, published in 1969, is much better. *Slægtregistre for Evje hovedsogn med tilstødende gaarde af Vegusdal*, published in 1914 by A. Aavitsland, can sometimes make up for the lack of local history. *Iveland*, by Aslak Fjermedal, has been published in three volumes with the first volume devoted to farm and family history. With its 913 pages, this book has much to offer the genealogist. So far as I can tell, Bykle is the only community in Setesdal not yet covered by a local history.

This summary would not be complete without mentioning *Gamalt* or *Sættesdal*, by Johannes Skar, an extensive collection of tales; and *Setesdalen*, the first volume in a series called *Norske bygder*.

Moving now to the forest communities, T. Hodne has published two volumes of a history of *Åmli*, the first devoted to the farms of Tovdal, the second to Gjøvdal. Apparently, a volume for Åmli proper is still to come. Hallvard Tveiten in 1965 published

Vegårshei i eldre tid in 872 pages. Torleif Kveim in his *Gjerstad*, published originally in eight parts, has provided much useful family history information. Knut Mykland has published *Mykland, ei bygd i Råbygdelaget*, volume one, covering farms and families. Birger Dannevig has published a general history of *Froland*; since it is called volume one, it is likely that in time we will have a farm history book for that community.

On the other hand, H. Herefoss' *Herefoss bygdesoge* has much farm and family history. A history of *Birkenes* has been published by Johan Tveite in three volumes, volumes two to the farms, volume three to a general cultural history.

The coastal areas has several important cities, as well as many rural communities. The history of *Søndeled* has been published in five volumes, requiring a little more patience to use; however, volume 3 and 5 are worth a visit by genealogists. Within this community is the city of Risør, which has a history, *Risør gjennom 200 aar, 1723–1923* by Tallak Lindstøl.

Sven Svensen published a history of *Holt* in 1940 and followed it with an extensive supplement in 1959; it has a great deal of genealogical material. *Dypvåg, gårds—og slektshistorie*, by Daniel Danielsen, was published in three volumes, totaling almost 2,400 pages, and provides much genealogical information. There are two histories of Tvedestrand, but with little biographical material. *Austre Moland, ei bygdebok*, by Kristen Weierholt, is helpful—up to a point. Stokken is covered by H. Berntsen's *Trekk av Stokkens historie*, covering the years 1600–1962. Øyestad has two apparently competing histories, Kjell J. Bråstad published *Øyestad bygdebok*,

covering farms one—forty-seven; while Arne J. Myrdal published *Gamle gårder i Øyestad*. To complicate matters, Myrdal also published *Øyestad og Hiis historie*, in two volumes.

Those desiring information about Arendal are referred to my column in the February 1989 issue of the *Viking*. Some helpful information will be found in Frithjof Foss' *Arendals Byes Historie* and *Arendal fra fortid til nutid*. The city of Grimstad has some history in *Grimstad sjøfarts historie*, by Birger Dannevig; Grimstad, 1800–1850, by J. K. Bergwitz; *Grimstad bys historie*, the latter in 778 pages.

Landvik, gard og grend, by Johan Tveite, published in two volumes, can often be helpful. Birger Dannevig has published two volumes of a history of Eide, *Sagaen om en sørlandsbygd*, the second one devoted to a history of the farms up until about 1900. So far as I can see, Flosta, Tromøy, Hisøy, Fjære, Vestre Moland and Høvåg do not yet have histories.

In addition to the books about individual communities, genealogists will find helpful information about Aust-Agder in three volumes of *Norges bebyggelse*, as well as in volume nine of Andreas Helland's *Norges land og folk*. And an old book, published in 1882 by Tallak Lindstøl, *Stamtavler, væsentlig fra Østre Nedenæs*, can often be helpful.

Most of these volumes may be borrowed on inter-library loan from the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin. And further information can often be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Northern Norway

Perhaps because Northern Norway is less populated than the rest of the country, there are fewer local histories. This is especially true for Finnmark. And since there is less to tell about Finnmark, we are including Tromsø this time.

In east Finnmark, I have noted only two histories. One is a rather brief *Kirke og folk i Båtsfjord kommune*, published in 1973 by O. Solhaug. The other is volume one of *Vadsøs historie* by Einar Niemi; it covers the period up to 1833. In west Finnmark, the situation is not much better. Leonhard Gamst has published *Bygdebok for Loppa Kommune*, a general history. Håkon H. Olsen published in 1965 *Bygdebok for Hasvik*, which has some genealogy. And in 1983 R Jacobsen published a lengthy *Sørøysund lokalhistorie*. The city of Hammerfest has been covered by Jørgen Sivertsen's *Hammerfest, 1789–1914*, with good detail on business families; and by R. Jacobsen's *Bankens virke-byens vekst* a year later. So far as I know, none of these books have much in the way of genealogy. Exceptions are three volumes in the series, *Samiske samlinger*. They are Erik Schytte Blix' *Nesseby-og Polmakslekter*, published in 1967; Adolf Steen's *Kautokeinoslekter*, published in 1952; Blix' *Karasjok slekter*, published in 600 pages in 1987. A new set of two volumes is Randi Rønning Balsvik's *Vardø, grensepost og fiskevaer*, published in 1989. Also in 1989, Ragnvald Jacobsen published *Kvalsund i Finnmark*, in 669 pages. Aa. Lund in 1979 published an extensive history, *Sør-Varangers historie*. And in 1968 Einar R. Hanssen published Volume I of *Porsanger bygdebok*.

Turning now to Troms, I found only two histories relating to east Troms. One is Emil Hansen's

Nordreisa bygdebok, published in 1980, with about half of the book devoted to farms and families. The other is Ivar Bjørklund's *Fjordfolket i Kvænangen*, Volume 1, published in 1985. In the Tromsø area, we find A. O. Hauglid's *Balsfjorden og Malangens historie*; Volume I covers the period up to the 1830s. Emil Larssen in 1976–1980 published *Lyngen bygdebok*; Volume II is devoted to a history of the farms. Håvard Dahl Bråtrein in 1989 published Volume I of *Karlsøy og Helgøy bygdebok*, covering the period up to 1700. And Carl Bertheussen in his *Kulturbilder fra gamle Hillesøy*, devotes Volume II to farm histories. For the city of Tromsø there are a number of publications. Most likely to help are the two volumes of Nils Andreas Ytreberg's *Tromsø bys historie*, published in 1946–1962.

In the Finnsnes district, there is a good history by Arthur Brox, *Berg og Torsken bygdebok*; volume one has farm histories. And in 1977 Hans Kr. Eriksen published volume 1 A of his *Fra veidemann til fiskarbonden; bygdebok for Dyrøy, Sørreisa og Tranøy*. Perhaps of a little help is Ivar Sæter's *Maalselvdalen, Maalselv og Øverbygd herreder*, published in 1926 in 217 pages. Far more helpful is *Målselv bygdebok*; volume two has a good deal of farm history material. And Eystein Eggen in 1950–1960 published two volumes of *Bardu bygdebok*.

Finally, we must take a look at the Harstad district. Per Olai Prestbakmo in 1980 published volume one of *Salangen bygdebok*, more than half of which is devoted to farm histories. Jens L. Jenssen, also in 1980, published *Bjarkøy bygdebok*; volume two is full of genealogy. *Kvæfjordboka*, published in 1960–1973, in two volumes, has helpful material. Trygve Lysaker has published

several volumes of *Trøndenes bygdebok*, including separate volumes of farm history for Skånland, Sandtorg and Trondenes. The latter volume includes the city of Harstad.

And, as is true with most parts of Norway, there are a number of useful yearbooks. For further detail about any of these volumes, you may write to the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711-1343.

Not to be outdone by the larger universities in Trondheim, Bergen and Oslo, the historical institute at the University of Tromsø has engaged in extensive indexing of records, with the use of computers. As a result, transcriptions and indexes of the 1865, 1875, and 1900 censuses for most of the communities in Finnmark and Troms are available. Most of them are so bulky and clumsy that it would be difficult to lend them.

On the other hand, the Vesterheim Genealogical Center is ready to search them for pertinent data. This material is arranged not only by farm, but also with indexes by first and last name. Thus, it is frequently possible to find helpful information in a very short time.

A current development is the plan to publish this summer the first issue of *Baiki: the American Journal of Sami Arts*, a quarterly publication by and about Sami ("Lapp") people and the re-emerging Sami culture in America. Descendants of Sami immigrants are now becoming aware of and interested in their indigenous identity. A column "From the Readers" will solicit genealogical inquiry. The editor is Faith Fjeld, 2127 Fillmore St., #10, San Francisco, CA 94115. She is looking for Norwegian-Americans of Sami heritage to contribute work and ideas.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Nord-Trøndelag

Trøndelag—the area in Norway surrounding the city of Trondheim—is where Norwegian kings came to be crowned and where St. Olav was killed in battle in 1030. It's also an area from which many emigrants left for America. Thus, this month's column is devoted to the *bygdebøker*, or clubs, in North America that study Nord-Trøndelag. Let's begin with the southern section of Trøndelag, covering Stjørdal and Verdal.

Stjørdal, made up of several communities, is described in detail in *Stjørdalsboka* (11 volumes, covering 1950 to 1972). Separate volumes exist for Stjørdal proper: Lånke, Skatval, Hegra and Meråker. Although each has extensive farm and family histories, only some are more completely cross-indexed. (Volume 2 of *Bygdebok for Meråker* covers 1874 to 1987.)

Einar Musum published *Verdalsboka* (six volumes, 1930 to 1983). Volumes 3, 4, and 5 provide farm histories, but not as much genealogical material as one would like.

Skogn, together with Frol and Levanger, is covered by *Skogn historie* (five volumes, 1926 to 1967). Many volumes have farm histories.

Frosta i gammel og ny tid, ei bygdebok (published in 1918, reprinted in 1984) devotes one part to farm history. *Frostaboka* (1970 to

1989) also devotes one of its three volumes to farm and family history. Asbjørn Steen published *Leksvik bygdebok* (1981 to 1983), but no farm histories exist.

Moving north to the Steinkjer district, M.O. Landsem has provided farm histories for Malm in Volume 1 of *Malmboka*; Sturla Brørs published *Namdalseid, bygd, gard, ætt* in 1974; and Ingvald Sakshaug published *Inderøyboka* in three volumes. Though Volume 2 has histories of farms, Volume 3 on the *husmenn* is better.

Gårdshistorie for Kvam—Stod og Egge herreder by N. Taraldsen (1932) covers Kvam and Følling. In 1959, a second Kvam book—*Nokre ætteoppteikningar frå Stod, Kvam, Beitstad*—was published.

Two of the four volumes of *Bygdebok for Sparbu og Ogdal* (1983 to 1989) include farm and family histories. And two sizable volumes of *Beitstadboka* exist, both devoted to farm histories.

From 1956 to 1965, a four-volume history on the Snåsa community was published; it was reprinted in 1984. Entitled *Snåsaboka*, Volume 3 provides farm histories.

Five volumes of the useful *Overhalla bygdebok* feature the Indre Namdalen area; the first four cover farm and family

histories. Similarly, the five volumes of *Bygdebok for Høylandet* devote more than 1,000 pages to farm and family histories.

In 1950, Martin Bjerken published *Grong; bygdebok for Grong, Harran, Namsskogan og Røyrvik*. And Thorleif Mellingen recently published a five-volume series on the Bjorhusdal, Finvold, Flaattedal, Håpnes and Mellingen families in Namsskogan.

Turning finally to Ytre Namdalen, *Flatangerboka* by J. Hylland, which includes 150 pages of family histories, was published in 1962 and reprinted in 1987. Four volumes of *Nærøy bygdebok* cover Foldereid, Kolvereid and Nærøy. In 1969, Bjarne Borgan published *Viknaboka, gards-og ættehistorie*, a three volume set covering farms one through 78; it was reprinted in 1981. Several more communities in this region are developing history books, scheduled to be finished within the next couple of years.

You may borrow most of these publications from the Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information often can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711-1343.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Sør-Trøndelag

Last time we discussed local histories of Nord-Trøndelag; this time we move south to Sør-Trøndelag, beginning with the northern area called Fosen.

From 1950 to 1885, Olav Nilsen published two volumes of *Osen bygdebok*. Even better is *Åfjord og Jøssund gårdshistorie* by Hans K. Hansen in two volumes. Kristoffer Rein published three volumes of *Stadsbygd, ei bok om bygda og folket*. And Astrid Marit Bjørkvik published the first volume of *Gårds—og slektshistorie for Hasselvika*. Both Rein's and Bjørkvik's sets off genealogical material, and Bjørkvik's book also covers the first 12 farms in Rissa. Inge Rian published two volumes *Ørlandsboka* from 1986 to 1988; the first volume covers the area from Kråkvåg to Flatnes, while the second focuses on Hovde to Berg.

From 1955 to 1963, Maurits Fugelsøy published *Frøyaboka* in two volumes; in 1972 he wrote a third. A few years earlier, he wrote *Hitra, Øya og folket*. Johan Singstad published what was intended to be the first of a series of volumes, *Hemneboka, ei bygdebok for Hemne prestegjeld*, covering Heirm, Hemne, Snillfjord and Vinje. Not until 1973 did a second part of Volume 1 become published. In 1979, Volume 2 was produced, covering history from 1830 to 1940 but giving little attention to genealogy.

Moving to the Trondheim area, we find the family-tree search is a little more successful. O. J. Høyem published a little handbook called *Nes eller Bynes* in 1862. In 1984, a more complete edition was produced. Maurits Fugelsøy published the first volume of *Byneset* in 1973. Erling Lauglo published *Leinstrand, et lite stykke Norge* in two volumes in 1957 and 1958. The Strinda community

included farm history in its three volumes of *Strinda bygdebok*, published from 1939 to 1948.

An excellent set is Leif Halse's *Malvik bygdebok* in three volumes, published from 1957 to 1959. Volume 2 is devoted to the farms and families of Sakasvik-Lillesand; Volume 3 concentrates on Kinndset-Jøsås. *Klæbuboka* was published in two volumes in 1973 to 1980; the second volume includes farm and family histories. Per O. Rød published two volumes of *Børsaboka* and *Skaunaboka*, while Jon O. Snøfugl published two volumes of *Buvikboka*; all three sets include farm and family histories.

For an area called Neavassdraget, *Selbu i fortid og nåtid* in five volumes is an extensive set, covering farm and family histories. In 1972, K. J. Gullikstad edited two volumes of *Tydalsboka*. The second provides farm and family histories.

Turning to Orkadalen, we find that Håkon Hoff wrote *Orkangerboka, historiebok for Orkedaksøren og Orkanger* in 1945. Ander Skrondal published *Orkdals boka* in four volumes, which have good farm histories but little genealogy. More recently, K. M. Elda published *Gardtales i Orkland*, Knut Liøkelsøy published two volumes of *Gardtales i Orkdal*, and Per O. Rød published *Geitastrandboka. Meldal bygdebok* in five volumes by Niles Lykkja is impressive as is Helge Halvorsen's *Rennebuboka*, both of which have farm and family histories.

Attention also should be given here to *Innset, en bygdebok*, Volume 2 being devoted to farm history. Ola J. Rise published a three volume *Oppdalsboka*, which offers little help with genealogy. Here again, we have Maurits

Fugelsøy—this time with two volumes of Byneset. And Henry Kristian Jensås published *Tiller, bygd og by*, which includes genealogy.

A number of local histories exist for Gauldalen. Per O. Rød published two volumes of *Hølondboka* and three of *Melhusboka*—both full of farm and family histories. Also helpful are *Bygdebok og bygderlov i Støren* (three volumes), *Busetnad og folkeliv i Soknedal* (four volumes) and *Gard—og grendeliv i Budalen*. Two others are *Flå, gårds—og slektshistorie*, by Peder Byboth in 1974, and *Busetnad og folkeliv i Horg*, two volumes by Jens Haukdal. An older useful set is *Singsås boka*, published in three volumes from 1958 to 1966. Volume 2 and 3 are devoted to farm and family histories.

In 1949, Jens Halstein Nygård published two volumes of *Haltdalen og Haltdaligen* with much family history. Almost literally just off the press is Aud Tretvik's *Alen og ålbyggen*, published in 1990, with good family history. From 1942 to 1975, five volumes were published of *Rørosboka*. Volumes 3 through 5 have good family-history material and include the communities of Brekken and Glåmos.

You may borrow most of these publications through interlibrary loan from the Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information often can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison WI 53711-1343.

Gerhard B Naeseth, an expert in Norwegian genealogy, serves as director of the Vesterheim Genealogical Center.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Møre of Tomsdal

Møre og Romsdal is a county that is less often visited by tourists but has much to offer. Here we find several of Norway's most beautiful fjords—Romsdal, Hjørund, Stor, Sykkylv, Geiranger and Sunndal—and four lovely cities—Kristiansund, Molde, Ålesund and Åndalsnes. Many of Norway's most magnificent mountains are here as well, along with quaint old churches and breathtaking waterfalls. The county itself is divided into three primary regions: Nordmøre, Sunnmøre and Romsdal. From here, many families emigrated and now research their family roots.

About Ytre Nordmøre, Anders Todal in 1964 and 1965 published three titles strong in farm history but weak in genealogy: *Gardtales in Stemshaug*, *Gardtales i Aure* and *Gardtales i Valsøyfjord*. A few years earlier (1956–1960), Maurits Fugelsøy published *Tustna før og no*, which offers good genealogical information. In a comprehensive three-volume work, N. M. Vaagland published *Halsaboka*, which is strong in genealogy, in 1954–1964. Two decades later (1986), Ottar Roaldset published the three-volume *Tustna bygdebok*.

Hans Hyldbakk, a prolific author in this county, published a two-volume *Gards- og ættesoge for Frei* in 1971–1972. R. K. Sundnes in 1948–1956 published the three-volume *Kvernes prestegjeld i gammel og ny tid*, however, in 1979, the first volume of *Averøy bygdebok* was published with some genealogy for Kvernes. Jonny Lyngstad in 1987 published the first volume of *Eideboka*, full of farm and family history. And for the extreme northern part of this area, we now have four volumes of *Smøla bygdebok*, including three volumes with farm and family history. Also, the city of Kristiansund has *Kristiansunds historie*, offered in five volumes by many authors, led by Arne Odd Johnsen, who provides some biography.

In **Nordre Nordmøre**, *Gards- og ættesoge for Rindal* was published by Hans Hyldbakk in three volumes, 1964–1967. He published a similar title for

Surnadal in two volumes in 1947–1949; *Helmar og ættar i Stangvik*, in two volumes in 1953–1954; *Gards- og ættesoge of Tingvoll* in three volumes in 1961–1965; and *Folk og heimar i Åsskard* in 1987—all of them offering sound genealogy.

Dordi Glærum Skuggevik published and extensive history of migration to America from this area called *Utvandrerhistorie fra Nordmøre: Stangvik og Surnadal Prestegjeld*. O.G. Forseth's *Øksendal i eldre tid* can sometimes be helpful as can Ivar Seljedal's *Sunndalsboka*, which was published in seven volumes in 1965–1968.

More recently, Nils Tore Leivdal published *Gards- og ættesoge for Gjemnes* in 1983–1989. And in 1990, Ottar Roaldset published the first volume of *Gards- og ættesoge for Straumsnes*.

Little has been published in Ytre Romsdal. However, Jørgen Olafsen-Holm published three volumes of *Bolsøyboka*; volume two has farm histories. And in 1987 Johan Julnes published *Bygdebok for Aukra: gard og slekt* in four volumes.

In **Indre Romsdal**, the situation is better. In 1926 Olaf Olafsen published *Vedøy i fortid og nutid* in two volumes with some farm histories. Ottar Roaldset wrote four of the five volumes of *Gards- og ættesoge for Nesset*, published 1973–1985, while Olav Rekdal published *Gards- og slektshistorie for Vestnes—Tresfjord* in 1973–1977, again in two volumes. These complement Agnar Skeidsvoll's *Bygdebok for Tresfjord*, published in 1959. Volume two of *Bygdebok for Voll* is devoted to farm and family history.

For **Norde Sunnmøre**, *Haram bygdebok*, a general history by M. Rogne, was published in two small volumes in 1947. Much more comprehensive is Harald Styngstad's *Vatne bygdebok*. Volume one covers farms 70 through 95, and volume two covers farms 96 through 117. In 1986, Louis Giske published the comprehensive *Bygdebok for Skodje* in two volumes, covering farms 2 through 69. *Borgund og Giske* published in 1957–1964 in three volumes, devotes two

volumes to farm and family history. Kristian Bugge and Odd Thorson have written extensive histories of the city of Ålesund.

About **Søre Sunnmøre**, much more has been written. *Bygdebok for Ulstein og Hareid*, published in six volumes in 1970–1985, devoted four volumes to farm and family history. Also good is volume 1 of *Vartdals saga* by Johannes Buset, which was published in 1964. Later volumes were published in 1982–1985. Bjarne Rabben published eight volumes of *Herøyboka*, with three given to farm and family history. And he contributed some information to portions of the volumes of *Soga om Sande og Rovde*.

Ivar Myklebust's *Ørsta*, first published in 1933, was reprinted in 1988 and offers some farm history. Ragnar Standal has contributed to the volume of farm and family history of *Hjørundfjordboka*. He also published a book on emigration called *Mot nye heimland; utvandringa fra Hjørundfjord, Vartdal og Ørsta*. Haakon M. Fiskaa published *Bygdebok for Syvde sokn* in 1974–1983, and R. Emil Sæter published *Aettesoge for Vanylven*—both with much family history. Per Årviknes published three volumes of *Volda-soga*, and Sverre Lyngnes published two volumes of *Dalsfjord*; both sets are primarily farm and family history.

Finally, in **Austre Sunnmøre**, *Ørskog gjennom tidene* devotes volume two to farm history. Four volumes of *Sykkylven gardssoga* were published in 1972–1983. And in 1957 M. Gjævenes published *Utvandrarane fra Sykkylven*. Jostein Sande in 1989 published the first volume of *Stordals saga*, which is general in coverage. *Stranda bygdebok* covers family history in its third volume. P.A. Lillebø devotes volume two of *Sunnylven og Geiranger* to farm and family history. Norddal bygdebøker by Leonhard Taffjord covers farm and family history primarily.

You may borrow most of these publications from the Memorial Library, University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information often can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 4909 Sherwood Road, Madison, WI 53711-1343.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Sogn og Fjordane

This issue we move south to the county of Sogn og Fjordane, whose very name reminds us that this is fjord country. As has been our practice, we begin with the northernmost section.

Starting in 1909 and continuing as late as 1943, Jacob Aaland published a series, containing a good deal of genealogical material, entitled *Nordfjord fraa gamle dagar til no*, which includes volumes for Eid-Hornindalen, Gloppen-Breimn, Innvik-Stryn, Davik, Sekje, Sør and Nord-Vågsøy. However, the farm histories seldom make clear the family relationships, leaving it to readers to figure them out. This detracts considerably from their usefulness.

Fortunately, some communities are represented by newer books. For example, the third volume of Per Sandal's *Soga om Gloppen og Breim* covers the farms and families of the Gimmestad and Hyen parishes. Knut Svaar-Seljesæter in 1989 published *Hornindal, Nordfjord, Ættelister for Kvar gard i bygd*.

Moving south to Sunnfjord, Albert Joleik in 1969 published the first volume of *Bremanger bygdebok*, which tells the history up to 1801. Joleik also published *Soga om Flora* in 1980, as well as a similar book, *Soga um Jøst*, up to 1801. The latter work has been continued by Anders O. Klaskegg in *Bygdebok for Jølster*, taking the family history from 1801 through 1974. Abr. Loftheim in 1963 published *Askvoll bygdebok*, vol. 1, followed by three volumes of family histories, published in 1987-1989. (One of them was by Svein Åge Knudsen,) Ragnvald and Magne Fagerheim in 1976 published *Fjlær,*

gards- og attesoge—one volume for Holmedal, one for Dale and one for Dale and Guddal. Gardssoga for Gaular provides a good deal of genealogy in its three volumes.

Ytre Sogn, the portion of Sognefjord nearest to the sea, has many excellent histories written about it. Alf Steinsøy in 1982 published *Gard- og aettesoge til 1980* in two volumes totaling more than 1,000 pages; it provides useful farm and family histories for Solund. Ivar Kleiva has an even larger set in *Gulen i gammel og ny tid*, three volumes published in 1973. Ludvig Engeseter's Brekke herred devotes vol. 2 to farm and family history. Anders Torvund's *Åttebok for Lavik*, published in 1983, offers much genealogical material. And Adolf Førund published a similar work, *Ættebok for Kyrkjebø*, in 1981. Olav Hoprekstad's *Bygdabok for Vik* is three volumes of history; vol. 3 in two parts, does a good job covering farms and families. Rasmus Sunde has provided a detailed survey, with names, of immigration to America with his *Ein stad skal ein vera*, published in 1989.

Here in Ytre Sogn we first meet Jon Laberf, who published several local histories. His *Balestrand, bygd og ætter*, even though published in 1934, is good. However, the first in a new series, *Balestrand*, has just been published; vol. 1 reprints the earlier volumes, but vol. 2 provides excellent new farm histories.

All areas in Midtre Sogn, except for Sogndal, have been well covered by history books. *Leikanger bygdebok*, compiled by Roald Lyngvaer, devotes the second of two volumes to detailed genealogical information for each farm. Also, Anders Ohnstad in vol. 2

of *Aurland bygdebok* provides genealogical information up to 1900. In 1988, he published a brief volume devoted to the farms of Vassbygdi and Fjellgardane. In 1938 Jon Laberg published a history of Lærdal and Borgund, which until recently has been the best source for those communities. However, in 1987 Alfred Espe published *Lardal bygdebok* (vol. 1 covers the Borgund parish) and recently a volume for Lærdal—both enabling one to trace families easily. Also, a new general history exists for Sogndal, with the promise of some farm-history volumes to come.

Finally, we look at Indre Sogn. Jon Laberg published histories of Luster and Hafslo in 1926, and a history of Årdal in 1932. All of them are good, but recently scholars have produced much better works. The third volume of *Bygdebok for Årdal* is an excellent volume of farm and family history. Lars Øyane just completed a four-volume history of Luster, covering Fortun (volume 1) Dale (volume 2 and 3) and Gaupne (volume 4). The author has done a superb job in tracing descendants from Luster throughout Norway and (to an even more amazing degree) to America. He has projected a volume 5 for Jostedal, three volumes for Hafslo and possibly an index volume.

You may borrow most of these publications through interlibrary loan from the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin—Madison. More information often can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 49098 Sherwood Rd., Madison, WI 53711-1343.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Finding Your Roots

With another summer of *bygdelag stevner* fast approaching, this is a good time to look at bygdelags with particular reference to their activities in the field of genealogy. Bygdelags are clubs in which members study and celebrate their Norwegian heritage in regard to their home ancestral towns and districts. And, of course, by their very nature bygdelags have always had an interest in genealogy; however, in recent years they have realized the value of genealogy not only for the enthusiasm it brings to these organizations.

In some ways, genealogy is a year-round activity for bygdelags. In most of them, one or more genealogists serve as resource persons for their particular geographic areas. Of course, these genealogists play their parts in annual bygdelag stevner (meeting/celebrations). But they do much more. They provide genealogical information for newsletters published by the lags; they answer inquiries; they learn about new books and other pertinent publications; and—when they can—they purchase these materials for the lag's library.

More and more the lags build library collections that include *bygdebøker* about pertinent communities as well as family histories and maps. This does create a space problem; one such library is in a genealogist's closet, except at stevne time.

And the lags have generated indexes. Sigdalslaget, for example, has a list of immigrants numbering 4,455 names. And, in common with other lags, it is assembling family-group sheets for immigrant families. In addition, its genealogists has prepared an index to the *bygdebok* for Krødsherad, a town in Sigdalslaget's home region.

Most lags also maintain contact with people in the home community in Norway and with people who are willing to help locate relatives. This has proved popular on both sides of the Atlantic.

The National Council of Bygdelags has found the interest in genealogy so strong that its genealogists hold a day-long workshop in conjunction with its annual meeting in May in Minneapolis. The exchange of ideas and the sharpening of skills has contributed to the success of lag stevner.

Some of the most successful meetings are held on college campuses, where library facilities and resources are made available, including book collections, films, and microfiche, and copying machines. And while genealogists steer members to the right books and microfilms, members usually do their own searching. Generally, they prove more successful when they come armed with charts, notebooks and questions.

In addition, lags borrow pertinent films and fiche from the Vesterheim Genealogical

Center in Madison, Wisconsin, and some duplicate or complement this material with purchases of their own. These films include many of the church records for the individual communities sending emigrants to America, as well as some census, passport, and probate records.

The cooperative relationship between the lags and the Vesterheim Genealogical Center has always been strong. Early in the center's development, the lags contributed several thousand dollars to enable the center to purchase microfilms of Norwegian records. And, as much as possible, these same films are made available to the stevner.

Also, stevner frequently offer classes, not only in beginning genealogical research but also in advanced work such as reading old Gothic script. Since many stevner include several lags at one time, an effort is made to provide adequate space for each of them to do research. Usually each lag has at least one professional genealogist with others ready to help those who need it.

Don't miss a golden opportunity. If you're interested in researching your Norwegian-American roots, join a bygdelag this summer—and attend a stevne or two.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Hordaland

Hardanger is another of Norway's truly mountainous counties. The very names Hardanger and Voss remind us of the beauty of the fjord areas, and the histories of the people there reflect that beauty and strength.

Suppose you know your ancestors are from Hordaland, but you don't know exactly where. A 34-page publication, *Hordaland, bygdebøker med gårdsregister*, may help you locate your farm. An index to bygdebøker for Hordaland, the book is arranged by farm name.

Beginning with Nordhordland, two volumes of *Bygdebok for Modalen herad* have been published. The first devotes itself to farms and families of Mo and Eksingdalen parishes. A two-volume history, *Masfjordboka*, was published in 1950–1951. Its 1973–1978 edition was greatly revised. Nils Hjelmtveit published two volumes of *Bygdebok for Alenfit*—the first is about farms up to about 1814, the second on farms of Seim parish. And Martin Toft published the first volume of *Bygdebok for Lindås*, which covers Myking parish.

Askild Eknaes did a fine job with *Ættebok for Hosanger fram til omlag 1960* in two volumes, which was reprinted in 1988. In 1990 Håkon Aasheim published two volumes of *Hamre: Gards- og ættesoge. Åsane bygdebok* is a smaller book published in 1975. It is a little difficult to describe *Haus i saga og segn*, because the projected history appears to have at least 17 volumes—one of them split up into four volumes of its own. The last volume will interest genealogists covering the parishes of Gjerstad, Haus and Ådna. Other volumes published so far tell the history of the churches and the schools in the area. Brita Skre has

published a superb three-volume set, *Vaksdal bygdebok*; the first two encompass the Bruvik and Dale parishes, the third a general history.

Moving to western Nordhordland, following the island communities, Anton Solheim published a small *Bygdebok for Austrheim* in 1972; Nils Trengereid edited *Bygdesoga for Fjell*, which was published in 1970; and Kjell Fossen published two volumes of *Laksevåg* in 1984 and 1986.

The community of Sund has two small books: Arne Asphaug published *Bygdesoge frå Sund 1320–1660* in 1984 and 1986, while Johannes Hummelsund published *Bygdebok for Sund* in 1970. Readers may be more interested, however, in a two-volume set by Johan Tufteland, *Austevoll, gard og ætt*, published in 1978 and 1982.

Although Bergen cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called a *bygd*, or rural community, it falls geographically within this area. A number of publications are worthy of mention. The Bergen Historical Society since 1895 has published a series of yearbooks, occasionally with articles of genealogical interest. Citizenship in Bergen was not automatic, a fact that underlines the importance of two books called *Bergens Borgerbok*, one covering 1550–1751, the other for 1752–1865. Also helpful is A. M. Wiesener's *Dødsfald i Bergen 1765–1850*, an index to obituaries, and Johan Fredrik Lampe's *Bergen Stifts Biskoper og Præster efter Reformationen*, two volumes full of biographical information about bishops and pastors in Hordaland and Sogn. Many families in western Norway trace their ancestry back to these pastors. In addition, a

number of histories have been published about Bergen.

Voss has been well covered by a series of books. Lars Kindem, for example, in 1933–1938 published *Vossaboki* in four volumes that provide histories of farms. Although the books have been written in a difficult dialect, they provide an excellent outline history of many families. Old as the volumes are, the community of Voss considered them good enough to reprint in 1981. In addition, Kindem published four volumes of family histories, *Vossætter*, which includes such families as Glimme, Smør, Benkestok, Kruckow, Heiberg, Dal, Miltzow, Lid, Losna, Galtung, Rustung, Dagestad, Røte and Tvilde. These histories are easy to follow once you make a connection. Last names indexes are of some help. Perhaps a word of caution should be expressed: Note that some of Kindem's conclusions on early families should be checked against more current sources.

Several other histories have been published as well. Lars and Johannes Schjærven, for example, published in 1982–1984 *Evangerboka*, an excellent farm and family history set. Roald Lyngvær in 1971 published *Ættebok for Vossestrand*, a genealogical guide. And Torstein Hellesnes published in 1972 a farm history for Vinje parish. Also a general history of Voss was published in 1990. Others that should be mentioned include *Gamalt frå Voss—Emigration from Voss to America; Historie om Udvandringen fra Voss; and Bergsdalen ei Fjellbygd i Hordaland*.

So many Hordaland histories have been published that the rest will have to wait for a future issue.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Bygdebøker for Hordaland

When we left off last time (July 1992 *Viking*), we had listed *bygdebøker* for Nordhordland and Voss. Now we continue the Hordaland listing, beginning with the county of Midhordland and moving to Sunnhordland and Hardanger.

Just to the south of Bergen lies the community of *Fana*. Hermod Hjellevstad published in 1933 an extensive two-volume work called *Fana*, which included much genealogical information. More recently, Jacob Larsen published volumes one and four of *Fana bygdebok*. Moving to Samnanger, Nils Lauvskard published from 1930–1954 two volumes concerning *Samnanger*; volume one was reprinted in 1973. O. B. Skaathun in 1961–1967 published four volumes called *Soga for Fusa-Hålandsdal og Strandvikt*. In 1932–1941 Nils Tveit published three volumes of *Os, eit utsyn over Osbygd*; these were reprinted in 1979.

For Sunnhordland, Ernst Berge Drange published a history of the farms and families of Tysnes in three volumes, *Tysnes, gard- og ættesoga*, in 1986–1989. This work is complemented by Johannes Heggland's *Tysnes, det gamle Njardarlog*, a general and cultural history. In 1986 Simon Steinsbø published *Fitjar bygdebok*, two volumes of farm and family history. Ola Høyland in 1966–1973 published *Stord bygdebok* in three volumes; volume two is devoted to farm and family history. *Bømlo bygdebok* actually covers three communities. Simon Steinsbø in 1973–1974 published two volumes for Bremnes and in 1981 a single volume for Moster; Kari Shetelig Hovland published one in 1972 for Bømlo. To top it off, Nils Kolle

published a general history of this area.

In Eastern Sunnhordland, Anders Haugland published three volumes of *Skåneviksoga*—one each for Holmedal, Åkra and Sævareid-Skånevik. So far as I know, none has been published exclusively for Fjelberg, Valestrand or Vikebygd. *Etne-soga* was published in two volumes; volume two is a history of farms and families, 1660–1800. Many of us are waiting for volume three that should cover more recent years. In 1986 volumes two and three of *Bygdebok for Ølen* were published; volume two covers Vågen and volume three covers Bjoa. In 1986–1987 Simon Steinsbø published three volumes of *Gards- og ættesoga for Sveio*, including some material on Vikebygd.

Finally, we must look at Hardanger, which has been well covered by local history books. Some 50 years ago, Aamund Bu published easy-to-use, helpful genealogical books on many communities in Hardanger, including Kinsarvik, Odde, Ullensvang, Ulvik and Eidfjord (called Øyfjord in earlier days). In all likelihood, however, Bu was unable to use all possible sources.

In recent years, however, new books supersede Bu's efforts. In 1977 Olav Kolltveit, for example, published a general work in two volumes, *Granvin, Ulvik og Eidfjord i gamal og ny tid*. In 1987 Kolltveit, Johannes Kvestad and Torbjørn Dyrvik published *Ulvik, gards- og ættesoga*, which includes a great deal of farm and family history. We have heard that a similar history for Ullensvang is in preparation.

Henrik Meyer Kvalem in 1975

published the excellent *Ættarbok for Granvin*. In 1957–1973 an *Ættarbok for Kvam* was published in four volumes; two of the volumes (for Vikøy and Øystese) were reprinted in 1980 with some of the family history going back to early times. An older work, *Strandebarm og Varaldsøy i gamal og ny tid*, was published in 1947–1950 by Anders Næss and Olav Kolltveit; volume two is devoted to farm and family history. Kolltveit also published *Jondal i gamal og ny tid* in 1954. Because these communities are closely related to each other, it is often helpful to use all of these books to do research. Some of these books have extra sections on the genealogy of the very early families.

Kvinnherad includes the Rosendal community, where the last baron in Norwegian history lived. Erling Vaage in 1972 published a general history; then in 1987, he added *Gards- og ættesoga* for the parishes of Ølve, Hatlestrand and Ænes. In 1988 Anders Havnelid published *Gards- og ættesoga, Hovudsokna*. Just a few days ago, we were informed that a fourth volume has been published. Finally in 1966 Knut and Alma Dalen published *Røldal bygdebok*.

As you have observed, nearly all the communities in Hordaland have books about their histories. I am almost certain that the few who don't soon will.

You may borrow most of these publications through interlibrary loan from the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. More information often can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 415 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53701.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Reaching Your Ancestors in Vest-Agder

The county of Vest-Agder used to be called *Lister og Mandalsamt*, probably reflecting the importance of the sea. The seaports of Kristiansand, Mandal, Flekkefjord and Farsund have long been important to the Norwegian sea trade and were used by many emigrants. Those of you who have traveled by train from Oslo to Stavanger know that this rather desolate county includes an area described as "the land that God forgot."

Beginning in the western part of the county, we look at the communities within Kvinesdalen and Sirdalen. Noteworthy are volumes 1 through 4 of *Sirdal, gard og ætt* by Per Seland; they cover the farms numbered 1—60. Seland died recently, but we have received word that his family is continuing the work of preparing volumes 5 and 6 for the printer. Seland also published *Kvenåsen krets i Fjotland*, which provides family history for several farms in Fjotland.

In 1979 Johan Jerstad and Tor Veggeland published *Fjotland, gards- og ættesoge*. Quite helpful is Lars Nuland's *Bygdebok for Gyland*, published first in 1960 and then in an enlarged edition in 1973. Kaare Berg published the first two volumes of *Bygdebok for Nes herred*, which include much farm and family history. Johannes Seland added a third volume with cultural history. Ånen Årli published *Feda, gards- og slektshistorie* and *Kvinesdal, ei bygdebok*. Thus, except for Tonstad and Bakke, this area has been well covered.

Turning to the Lista and Lyngdalen area, Ånen Lauen published *Hægebostad, ei bygdebok* (1975) with farm and family histories. Oddleif Lian published *Lyngdal, gard og folk* in three

volumes, providing much genealogical information. They were followed by *Kvås, gard og folk* (1989). Kåre Rudjord published *Herad, bygda mellom fjorder og fjell* (1977) and *Listaboka* (1980–1987), which provides histories of the farms and families. A new edition of *Spind, en bygdebok* (1966) by Jakob Birkenes is also available.

Moving next to the Mandalen and Audnedalen area, Tarjei Liestøl published two volumes of *Åseral, gard og ætt* (1975–1987); they are helpful to the genealogist. Magnus Breilid published *Grindheim* (1966); a year earlier he had published *Bjelland*. Tore Bergstøl published a two-volume *Konsmoboka*, with the first volume devoted to farm and family histories; he also published *Vigmostadboka*, again with the first volume covering farm histories. Paal Sveinall published *Øyslebø, gard og ætt* (1976) in two volumes. Nils Vigeland published *Sør-Audnedal bygdebok* (1970) with volume two devoted to farm and family histories. Bjørn Slettan published *Holum, gardshistorie* (1977).

The city of Mandal has attracted attention of several authors: Jørgen Ørbech Bugge and Christian August Bugge wrote *Mandal, lokalhistoriske optegnelser* (1887). Christian August Bugge also published *En sørlandsby* (1924). Arthur Nielsen in 1941 wrote a history of seafaring in Mandal. In 1969 Øyvind Drotninghaug published *Det tidlige Mandal prestegjeld*; a new edition was published in 1981. None of these provide genealogies, but they may be of help on some family histories.

Finally, in the Kristiansand district, several histories have been published: Jon Åsen published three

volumes of *Hægelandsboka* (1951–1967); volume one provides farm and family histories. (A new edition was printed in 1985.) He also published the first volume of *Øvrebø-boka* (1957), with farm and family histories. A later volume covers cultural history. Volume one of *Finsland* (1959), has farm and family histories. Stein Tveite published two volumes of *Vennesla* (1956–1986); volume one (reprinted in 1981) includes farm and family history.

Johan Tveite published *Tveits historie* (1973); volume one contains the history of the farms; volume two, the history of the families. Kåre Rudjord published a two-volume *Oddenes bygdebok*. Kjell Bråstad published two volumes of *Søgneboka* which covers farms 1–75 and 83. Stein Tveite published volume 2 of *Randesundboka* (1981); it also includes farm and family history.

Extensive histories have been published for Kristiansand, but they don't help genealogists. Worthy of mention are *Kristiansands historie* in three volumes (1941–1974), and Karl Leewy's *Kristiansands bebyggelse og befolkning i eldre tider*, in 12 volumes (1956–1985). The county has two bibliographies of local history: *Agder-bibliografien* by Berit Andreassen (1983), and volume 10 of *Norsk lokalhistorisk litteratur*, covering 1946–1970 (1978).

Most of these volumes are found in the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While that library has restricted the lending of genealogical materials, it may be worth trying to borrow them on inter-library loan. More information can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 415 W, Main St., Madison, WI 53703.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Researching Your Ancestors in Aust-Agder

The county of Aust-Agder in earlier times was called Nedenes. Like Vest-Agder, it has fascinating and beautiful seaports and boasts a remote valley—Setesdal. In fact, let's begin with Setesdal. The valley is the subject of *Gamalt or Sætesdal*, a series of folk tales and stories by Johannes Skar. Starting in the north with Bykle, we find that *Bykle bygdesoge*, a cultural history, was published in 1974. *Valle Kommune*, by Alfred Ryningen, was published in six volumes during 1985–1987. With its nearly 3,500 pages, it's a thorough history of the area's farms and families. Despite the fact that *Gards—og ættesoge for Bygland*, published in 1952 by Reidar Bolling, is short, it has a surprising amount of family history. In addition, *Byglands soge* is a general history, with a second edition published in 1970.

In 1914 A. Aavitsland published a small but helpful volume called *Slægtregistre for Evje hovedsogn med tilstødende gaarde af Vegusdal*. More extensive is *Gards—og ættesoge for Hornnes*, published in a first volume in 1969. When completed, it should cover both Hornnes and Evje. Finally, from 1955–1962, Aslak Fjermedal published Iveland. Volume one covers farms and families; volume two is a cultural history.

Moving to the forest communities, or *skogbygder*, Torgils Hodne published *Åmli, ætt og heim* in 1978–1981. Volume one covers Tovdal; volume two, Gjøvdal. A third volume may cover Åmli itself. In an effort lasting three decades, Torleif Kveim, with later contributions from Magnhild Hagelia and Andreas Vevstad, published *Gjerstad, av bygdesoga*, printed from 1962–1991.

Hallvard Tveiten has published much for *Vegårshei*: first, *Vegårsheiboka*, in three volumes, published from 1965–1971; then *Vegårsheislektstavler*, containing information on more than 250 families. Knut Mykland in 1967–1970 published two volumes of *Mykland, ei bygd i Råbygdelaget*, which also contains family history. Birger Dannevig in 1979 published a history of Froland. This was followed in 1989–1991 by three volumes of farm history by Egil Fiane. *Herefoss bygdesoge*, published in 1981–1988 (with two volumes by Hans Herefoss and a third by Andreas Holm), provides good material on Herefoss. Volume one is devoted to farm and family histories. Johan Tveite in 1969 published the first two volumes of *Birkenes*, which is devoted to farm and family history. A third volume provides a cultural history of that community.

Finally, we look at the coastal communities, beginning with *Søndeled*, published in five volumes from 1952–1979. This set seems a bit difficult to use, but with patience, one can turn up a lot of family history. Sven Svensen published *Holt, en bygdebok* in 1940. Nearly 20 years later, he published more than 600 pages of corrections and additions. Despite that, both are worth examining, in part because apparently the 1801 census for this community has been lost. Volume one has been reprinted. Svensen also published *Tvedestrand, bidrag, til stedets historie*.

Daniel Danielson and Sophus Jenssen published *Dypvåg, gårds—og slektshistorie* in three volumes in 1958–1963. There are two separate histories for Øyestad, a fact that suggests a duplication of

effort. Three men combined efforts in 1981–1982 to publish a *Gamle gårder i Øyestad*, while Kjell J. Bråstad in 1981 published two volumes of *Øyestad bygdebok*, devoted to farm and family history. Published in 1892–1901, *Grimstadstadslægter*, a book of family histories by J. Landgraaf, can often be of help. S. H. Finne-Grønn's *Risør-slegter* is also useful. Arne J. Myrdal in 1983 published a two-volume work, *Øyestad—Hiiss historie*, which includes a history of Hisøy. Johan Tveite's *Landvik*, published in two volumes in 1964, offers much genealogical information. Birger Dannevig published volumes one and two of *Sagaen om en sørlandsbygd; Eide sogns historie* from 1972–1984. Volume two covers farm history up to the year 1900. It is likely that there will be a later volume.

If the above summary is not sufficient, it may be helpful to use two bibliographies. One of them, edited by Tom Arbo Høeg and published in 1979, is simply called *Aust-Agder*, a small volume in a series. *Norsk Lokalhistorisk litteratur 1946–1970*. The other, by Sølvi Kaastrup, is volume two of *Agder-bibliografien*—again called *Aust-Agder*; it provides more than 300 pages of bibliographical references.

Most of these volumes are found in the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While that library has restricted the lending of genealogical materials, it may be worth trying to borrow them on inter-library loan. More information can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 415 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Reasearching Your Ancestors in Vestfold

Some years ago, Norway's prime minister visited Madison, Wisconsin. I had looked up his biography and discovered his roots were in Nøtterøy in Vestfold. During a question period, I asked him why so few emigrants had come from Nøtterøy. His answer: We didn't have to! He probably meant employment and economic conditions in Vestfold—several important industrial establishments and estates are located there—had made it unnecessary to search for work elsewhere. Even so, many did leave Vestfold, suggesting a review of that county's *bygdebøker*, starting with the northern area, would be helpful.

One of the early *bygdebøker* is *Skogerboken*, edited by Anton Rustad and published in 1931; although not prepared according to current standards, it has a wealth of genealogical information. *Sandeboka*, edited by G. O. Kløvstad and Andreas Mørch, was published in 1939, providing much genealogical detail. Sigfred Eier published two volumes of *Strømms historie* in 1951, with volume two being devoted to farm histories; his *Svelviks historie* was published in 1945 and reprinted in 1974. Both of these works are worth consultation by genealogists.

In 1964, Sigurd Unneberg published volume one of *Hof bygdebok* in two parts, providing more than a thousand pages of farm and family history. In 1960 volume two was published with a general history of Hof. Three volumes of *Botne bygdebok* were published from 1953–1967; volume one is devoted to farm and family history. Because the city of Holmestrand falls within this county's borders, one can often find Holmestrand family history as well. A similar

work, *Borre bygdebok*, was published for Borre in 1954. Another extensive work is *Våle bygdebok*, published in 1961, with volume one taking up farm and family history. Books about Åsgardstrand offer little family history.

Moving to the Tønsberg district, *Ramnes bygdebok* by Sigurd Unneberg in 1970 provides 1,359 pages of farm- and family-history information. In 1905, Lorens Berg published *Andebu*, a history of that community in the 17th century. More recently, from 1975–1982, Arne Gallis published *Andebu bygdebok* in three volumes; volumes two and three are farm- and family-history books. *Sem og Slagen*, published in 1945–1963 and edited by Oscar Albert Johnsen, is a good history for that community. Likewise, *Tønsbergs historie*, published in 1928–1954 in three volumes, has some useful genealogical detail for that area.

Lorens Berg published *Stokke, en bygdebok* in 1928, but Nils Steen Christensen and Olav Hagelund, from 1981–1988, published *Stokke bygdebok* in three volumes, providing much more detail. Berg also published *Tjølling, en bygdebok* in 1915. Jan W. Krohn-Holm in 1970–1974 published *Tjølling bygdebok* with volumes two and three on farm and family history. For the genealogist, Thorbjørn Engø, in 1958, published *Slektsbok over 8 Tjømø-slekter*. Berg published *Tjømø, en bygdebok* in 1920.

Turning to the Sandefjord and Larvik district, Gunnar Christie Wasberg edited *Lardal bygdebok*, published from 1973–1979. Because Wasberg is a librarian and historian, with an interest in genealogy, these volumes offer much to genealogists. He also

contributed to Larviks historie, edited by Oscar Albert Johnsen and published in three volumes from 1923–1963. Lorens Berg published *Hedrum, en bygdebok* in 1913. From 1978–1982, Jan Krohn-Holm published a more detailed *Hedrum bygdebok*, with two volumes of farm and family history.

Lorens Berg published *Sandeherred, en bygdebok* in 1918; this was reprinted in 1988. More recently, Vilhelm Møller published *Sandar*, a three-volume history of the farms from 1850–1970. In 1911 Lorens Berg published *Brunlanes, en bygdebok*. This was edited and revised by Gunnar Christie Wasberg and was published from 1970–1979 in two volumes, with the second volume being a revision of the earlier work by Berg.

This survey does not include some yearbooks and similar publications devoted to histories of individual communities. However, in 1930 Helge Sem Jacobsen published *Gamle slekter i Vestfold* that could be of help for some families.

For more recent information, it is sometimes helpful to use the two volumes of *Norske gardsbruk*, which are devoted to Vestfold; and *Det norske næringsliv*, a 1949 volume telling of business activities in Vestfold. Volume 7 of *Norsk lokalhistorisk litteratur 1946-1970* also is devoted to Vestfold.

Most of these volumes are found in the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While that library has restricted the lending of genealogical materials, it may be worth trying to borrow them on inter-library loan. More information can be provided by the Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 415 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703-3116.

The Family Tree by Gehard Naeseth

Reasearching Your Ancestors from Østfold

Although Østfold is not on the main tourist trail, it has much to offer. According to archaeologist, Østfold was inhabited earlier than any other part of Norway, making it an ideal place to visit for history enthusiasts.

Today, about one-fourth of the area's residents are engaged in agriculture and about one-half work in industry. Fortresses in Halden and Fredrikstad attest to Østfold's importance in Norway's military history. And as you drive around Østfold's, you are likely to find delightful old churches, as well as a number of large estates. Østfold was also the original home of the great explorer Roald Amundsen. A quick study of the map shows that the county lies on the eastern side of the Oslofjord.

Although no history has yet been published for Hobøl, one has been started for Våler. Einar Pedersen published the first volume of *Våler Bygdebok*, providing histories of farms 88—110, 122 and 125 in 1990. Three volumes of *Rygge*, a history of that community, have been published. Volume one, written by genealogist Ingeborg Flood in 1957, provides farm and family histories; general history volumes were published in 1957 and 1990. Incidentally, while the great Norwegian-American Civil War hero Hans Christian Heg is known to have come from Lier In Buskerud, many of his ancestors came from Rygge. Hans Bossøe's *Gårder og Slekter i Råde* is an excellent book for the genealogist.

The Askim and Mysen district is made up of the following communities: Trøgstad, Spydeberg, Askim, Skiptvet, Mysen, Eidsberg, Rakke-stad and Degernes. For some reason, few local histories have

been written for these areas. However, a few volumes have been published. For example, in 1949 Torleif Skulberg published volume one of *Spydeberg bygdebok*, with a history of churches and pastors. In 1982 he published a volume that gives the history of the southern Mørk farm. Martha Østensvig published *Bygdebok for Askim*, with farm histories, in 1965. This was followed in 1987 by Ulf Grøndahl's two volumes, with farm histories. Johan Glomvik published an index in 1989. In 1959, Helge Frøyset published the first volume of *Bygdebok for Eidsberg og Mysen*, with farm histories; in 1986, he published volume two. Sigurd Senje in 1970 published volume two of *Bygdebok for Eidsberg*, a general history. In 1989, Øystein Johansen published volume one of *Rakkestad bygdebok*, which is devoted to prehistory; and Aage-Lunde published a general history of that community in 1990. Much still remains to be written about that part of Østfold.

Things look a little better for the Sarpsborg-Fredrikstad area. In 1950 Axel Coldevin published *Sarpsborg gjennom hundre år, 1839–1939*, a general history, while Ivar Roset published a history of the war period and Martin Dehli published four volumes of *Fredrikstad by historie*. Four volumes were published about Tune in 1978—1988, with two volumes devoted to farm histories. In 1956 Olav Spydevold published *Varteig, en liten bygds historie*. Harald Bakke in 1950–1953 published two volumes of *Skjeberg bygdebok*; they are, however, somewhat difficult to use. *Kråkerøy, en østnorsk kystbygd*, published in 1857, is sometimes

helpful. Gudrun Høibo in 1980–1981 published two volumes of *Hvaler bygdebok*; with their more than 1,400 pages, they offer a great deal of detail on farms and families of that community. Hvaler is the community that produced Roald Amundsen.

For the Halden area, R. Elwin Myhrvold published a two-volume *Rødenes i Østfold, en bygds historie* in 1962. I have found it helpful on several occasions. In 1915 Ivar Sætrang published *Kirker og kirkegods i Berg, Smaalenene, med en gaardshistorie*; it has some useful information about farms.

It is apparent that many local histories could still be published about Østfold; each year, in fact, a number of new histories are written. As I write this, we have not yet received the official list for 1992; however, we have heard of some new volumes. As I write this, we have not yet received the official list for 1992; however, we have heard of some new volumes. As an example, a history of Sauland, one of the parishes in Hjartdal in Telemark, has been published within the past few months. And a new volume for Romedal in Hedmark has also been mentioned.

Most volumes described here are found in the Memorial Library of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. While that library has restricted the lending of genealogical materials, it may be worth trying to borrow them on interlibrary loan. More information can be provided by Vesterheim Genealogical Center, 415 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703-3116.

The Family Tree by Gerhard Naeseth

Naeseth's Life Work

A long-awaited book has finally arrived. Volume one of Dr. Gerhard Naeseth's five-volume title, *Norwegian Immigrants to the United States—A Biographical Directory, 1825–1850*, rolled off the press in August 1993.

Publication of volume one marks a milestone—the beginning of the end, so to speak—of a project that has been more than 30 years in the making.

It was in the early 1950's when Naeseth, known to Viking readers as "The Family Tree" columnist, worked on his own family history and became interested in the early immigrants. One hundred and fifty other Norwegian immigrants had come with his ancestors on the same ship, *Salvator*, in 1844. There were other early arrivals too—those who came as early as 1825.

Knowing full well that it would mean a lifetime of work, Naeseth nevertheless set out to document every immigrant, starting with the year 1825. He determined the cut-off year to be 1850, the year of a major U.S. census.

As Naeseth dug into his project, he discovered 18,000 Norwegians had come to American ports between those years. Volume one documents nearly 4,000 of them!

At the time Naeseth began this work in Madison, Wisconsin, he was serving as associate director of the University of Wisconsin Memorial Library, a position he held for 30 years until he retired in 1978.

With the State Historical Society of Wisconsin located just across the mall from the library, this archival treasure-trove became Naeseth's retreat almost every noon hour for 30 years. What was he doing there? Copying, in his neat

handwriting, Norwegian entries in census records for midwestern states for 1850, and eventually for 1860 and 1880.

Naeseth also traveled to the National Archives in Washington D.C., to copy, by hand, ship passenger lists for the years 1825 to 1850. Later, when these lists were made available on microfilm at the State Historical Society, he continued copying there.

Naeseth spent his vacations and weekends cataloging cemeteries—that is, going up and down the rows of tombstones, copying names and dates of Norwegians buried there. Naeseth documented more than 300 Norwegian-American cemeteries in this manner. One summer he copied 90,000 names plus data from microfilmed Norwegian church records found at the Mormon Genealogical Center in Salt Lake City. All of his notebooks are in current use at the Vesterheim Genealogical Center in Madison, Wisconsin.

Naeseth also led Nordmanns-Forbundet genealogical tours to Norway, meeting archivists and examining records. On one of these trips, he stayed for three months, giving him valuable time to further his research on early Norwegian pioneers.

Immigrants listed in Naeseth's books are arranged by year of arrival, ship by ship, starting with the sloop *Restauration* that sailed in 1825 from Stavanger.

The captain of every ship bringing immigrants to America was required by law to record the name, age and home city or parish of each. From these records come Naeseth's books.

As shown in volume one, a short biography of each immigrant

is provided. This includes information found in Norwegian and American church records, censuses, cemetery records and county and family histories. Data will include; when available, names of the immigrant's parents; immigrant's date of birth, marriage and death; names of spouses, their dates and parents' names; names and dates of children; and places of residence and occupations.

Because early Norwegians changed their last names so often, Naeseth was forced to index the immigrants by their first names. In volume one alone, there are six pages of Oles! Each volume also includes a bibliography giving such sources as family histories and *bygdebøker*.

Naeseth considers writing this five-volume biography his second-greatest achievement, the first being his establishment and administration of the Vesterheim Genealogical Center and Naeseth Library in Madison. Illness prompted his retirement from the center as its director in May 1993. Blaine Hedberg, who serves as acting director, is continuing Naeseth's work at the center.

Health problems have also caused Naeseth to slow down on his mammoth writing project but work continues on the final four volumes, 1844 to 1850, with the help of several friends.

If a person is lucky enough to have an ancestor listed in one of Naeseth's books, a wealth of information awaits. Each biography provides the basic information needed for starting the search—the search in which most Norwegian-Americans are interested—the search for one's roots.