

Neighbors¹

A Collection of Legends and Stories for Flekkefjord and Nearby Districts

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19th year

Lineage Stories From Gyland

There is an old story that Sigbjørn Sigbjørnson Tesaker , who is still living today (1933), is the 9th man with the name Sigbjørn² who owned the Tesåk farm one after the another. This may be quite probable,as demonstrated in old court documents.

1. Sigbjørn Sigbjørnson Seland owned the holding for a time and is therefore nr.1. At a probate dated 11 March 1686, recorded 5, March 1692 7½ english³ in Tesaker was sold to:

2. Sigbjørn Torson Øvre Sandsmark⁴, Bakke (an adjacent bygd) who thus became Sigbjørn nr.2. This person has also on May 9, 1701 purchased two and one twelfth english in addition for Tesaker from Torje Tronson Feed so now was the holding altogether nine and seven ninetieths english. Sigbjørn Torson married Bergitte Tollevsdatter Tesaker who lived until 1695. They then had 2 children, Corsmis and Dårthe. Sigbjørn Torson remarried with a widow, Bergitte Gundersdatter. Sigbjørn became widower for the second time in 1704. At the probate on June 4, 1704 it is mentioned that Bergitte had several children from her first marriage, one named Eirik, the other names are unknown. Of Sigbjørn Torson s two children Corsmis died young and Dårthe married:

3. Sigbjørn Torstenson Homma⁵. This Sigbjørn thus became number 3. Sigbjørn and Dårthe were deceased in 1751, and it appears that they died soon after one another (communicable disease?) because they were buried the same day. Sigbjørn was then 75 and Dårtha 66. They had six children when the probate was done, two boys, Corsmis and Sigbjørn, and four girls: Magnild, married to Ole Johnson Løvåsen⁶ from Nes. Bergitte, married Ola Salveson at Kleiva in Gyland, but dwelt at Tesaker. Bergitte, the younger, 23 years, and Anna 20 who were yet unmarried in 1751. Corsmis, the oldest inherited the entire farm, but sold (next page)

1. Neighbors A local culture magazine. 2. Bearslayer . 3. English =a unit of tax value=2 calfskins. 4. Upper Sandfields. 5. Little Valley 6. Leafridge .

half to his brother Sigbjørn 4 years later with “conveyance” of December 12 1755, recorded 11 July 1756. Corsmis married a widow in 1759, Anna Tollaksdatter Kongevoll¹, but they were childless. The 26th of June 1778 there was probate of Corsmis’ estate. The heirs were the widow and 5 siblings. Magnild, wife of Ole Johnson Løvås² now lived on Drangeid. 2nd sister Bergitte, the elder, is now dead; her children are a) Sigbjørn Olson Kleven³, age 18, b) Darthe, married to Isak Kjostelson Klatten⁴, c) Malene Olsdatter age 23, d) Ingeborg Olsdatter, age 20, both as yet unmarried. The third sister of Corsmis, Bergitte, the younger, married Borger Olson Løland⁵, Bakke, and the fourth sister Anna is married to Lar Gunderson Løland. The estate value was 4 and 9 twelfths english (the half-holding) assessed at 12 Riksdalars (money unit) per english.

The widow Anna Tollaksdatter provided a pension for her husband’s brother Sigbjørn nr. 4 and he was to have 2 english for a pension. The remainder of her inheritance went to her only surviving heir, a niece. Anna Tollaksdatter lived until 1787 and became 85 years old. Sigbjørn nr. 4 got, as mentioned above, half the holding (in 1755) after his brother died he got the other half too. Sigbjørn married in 1755 to Marthe Gundersdatter Litle Eigås⁶, but he died a year after Corsmis in 1779 and became only 58. His estate was settled 26 November 1779. There were five children, 2 sons and 3 daughters: Sigbjørn 23, Salve 19, Darthe 20, Berthe 15 and Anna Malene 12. They were in good circumstances in that there were 614 Rdr. for distribution. There were guardians appointed for the children, “as curator for the summer their maternal uncle Tønnes Gunderson Mydland⁷ (“Rich Tønnes”), also guardian for the youngest daughter. For the eldest daughter served John Toreson Kongevold who was a near cousin to the ward’s father. For the second daughter served Lars Gunderson Løland. Salve later moved to Meland⁸ in Fedå. Berthe married Gunnar Olson Øyset. One son of theirs, Sigbjørn Gunnarson was killed in a crowd panic in a church in Vanså in 1818. Anna Malene married an innkeeper Johannes Tollakson Øyset⁹. They were the last bridal pair Pastor Langhorn united from Gyland before he retired in 1788. (They are great grand-parents to Hans Seland among others.

5. Sigbjørn who was oldest got the farm. He married Ingrid Torjusdatter Nuland¹⁰ in 1779. This married couple joined each other in death in 1791. Pastor Emanuel Lund¹¹ writes: “Farmer

1. “Kingsmound”. 2. “Leafridge” 3. “Steep cliff path” 4. “Small amount” 5. “Leaf land” 6. “Little oakridge”. 7. “Bogland”. 8, “Sand bluff country”. 9. “Dipper”. 10. “Land of knolls” 11. “Glade”

Sigbjørn (Number 5) Tesaker and his wife, 38 years; They were lost in Lake Komlevoll¹ while they hauled hay in a flat-bottomed boat (pram)”. People talk of this happening yet. Sigbjørn and his wife and a hired girl had been on Grottelands Island to chop leaves; when they were on their way homeward with the load of leaves Sigbjørn sat at the oars, and the two women were working with their knitting. The pram was leaky and heavily loaded as it was, it took in water. It is said that when the boat was full the wife tossed her knitting and said: “Syben, you have always said you could swim, now can you save us?”. And thus she threw her arms around her husband, quite probably this was the cause of the disaster, he was unable to use his arms because she constrained him and they both drowned. The servant girl got herself up on the bottom of the pram which had overturned, and was saved. This Sigbjørn had been a skillful smith. They left 4 children: Sigbjørn, Tønnes, Marthe and Karen Malene. Tønnes went to Grotteland² where he married Tori Olsdatter Grotteland on 24 February 1816. Martha was married to Lars Johnson Kongevoll; they moved to Fedjestad³. In 1819 Karen Malene married Knud Kiddelson Fedjestad.

6. Sigbjørn, Nr. 6, bivouacked out as a soldier for 10 years during the years of conflict (Norway was separating itself from Napoleon and Danish control). In 1841 he married Siri Asbjørnsdatter Bakka⁴, daughter of sheriff Asbjørn Asbjørnson Bakka and the produced 6 children: Sigbjørn, Asbjørn went Konstald⁵ in Bakke, Kristian (married Sara Tønnesdotter Gyland⁶ and went to America). Karen (married Lars Jakobson Store-Eigås⁷), Anne Dorothea (married Torjus Voilås⁸), and Inger Sofie (married Sven P. Nedland). Sigbjørn reached 69 and died 21 October 1849. Siri Asbjørnsdatter died 3 March 1875 at 89.

7. Sigbjørn, Nr. 7, had a wedding on 18 October 1849, aged 34 marrying Bolette Brynjulsdatter Sandsmark from Bakke, age 22. They had 7 children all who reached adulthood. Severine (married to Tollak Knutson Eigeland⁹). Karen (married to Fredrik L.Nuland), Bendikte (married to Søren Johanneson Kroslid¹⁰) Katrina (married Ola K. Nuland). Brynjulv, medical officer in Oslo. Søren went to America. Sigbjørn remained on Tesåk. Sigbjørn (7) died in 1881 or 1885. Bollette survived to 1915 and became 88.

8. Sigbjørn, Nr. 8, attended the teacher’s college in Flekkefjord during the 1880's and was a substitute teacher in his home area for some years. Otherwise he was a farmer

1. “Round hill bank”. 2. “Gravel land”. 3. “Loamy soil place”. 4. “Hill”

5. “Meadow”. 6. “Steep mountain land” 7. “ Big oakridge”. 8. “Ford ridge”.

9. “Oakland”. 10. “Cross meadow”.

on Tesåk. He married Tonette Kristiansdatter Sandsmark. Children: Bolette, Sigbjørn and Kristian. Sigbjørn (8) lived from 1852 until 1921.

Sigbjørn, Nr.9 was born in 1905 and attended a course at the Sogn Agricultural College. He took over the family farm when his father died in 1921 and lives there yet.

Lars Fr. Nuland

Finnshtot in Bakke.

A man from Oksendal narrated: Once upon a time in his grandfather's time there had been a haystack stolen from his upper pasture: they saw the marks in the snow left by the thief and these demonstrated which way the hay had traveled.

It so happened a Finn came to Oksendal, he took lodging with the grandfather and they became the best of friends. When the Finn was about to take his departure again he asked the grandfather if there weren't anything he would like an explanation for or something he could present him as compensation for his friendly hospitality. Grandfather then remembered the hay he lost and said it would be fun to find out who the thief was. — Ja, that would be possible said the Finn. Then he got out a piece of paper, cut out the figure of a man and set it up as a target. He loaded his gun with 9 buckshot; but before he loaded the 9th pellet he took a knife and made a little cut in his left little finger and put some blood on the pellet. When the man was going to shoot at the target he asked first: Where shall I hit him, in the foot or the hand? — Å, answered grandfather let him have it in the foot which he used so cleverly to steal my hay.—Then the man shot the paper target in the hip, and then buried the target in the ground along side a stone and said: When you think he's had enough you can burn the paper and the pain will cease.

When this was done grandfather took off for the pasture and there was the thief he had suspected. When grandfather reached the pasture he heard screaming and crying: the thief had experienced such terrible pain in his hip that several men had to carry him away on a litter.

When grandfather saw what the situation was, he hurried home and burned up the paper man; then the pain went away! But the thief got such a disability in his leg that after that day limped as long as he lived.

L. F. N.

Uncle Sam comes to visit

When I was 12 years old, my father, for the first time, took a bus and went to northern Minnesota to visit his uncle. They had known each other in Norway but had never met in America. Søren Sigbjørnson Tesaker was born in Gyland in about 1860. He was trained as a medic (sanitets corporal) in Christiania (now Oslo).

He emigrated to Minnesota and for the most part worked in the woods. At the time of my father's visit he was widowed and lived in Max, MN. He'd been married and had two children, Sigrid and Lawrence. He lived in a cabin in the woods.

His daughter was unmarried. She was trained as a nurse. she had enlisted in the nurse corps of the U. S. Navy. After World War II she, too, came to Deerfield, WI where my father farmed. It was a nice visit that I recall well.

Shortly after my father's visit, I believe it was 1943, uncle Søren, he went by Sam in the U. S., decided to return the visit. He stayed a week as I recall. He had minimal baggage as he had only one suit of clothes.

This suit had an interesting history. It was the only suit he'd ever owned. It was a heavy worsted wool suit he purchased for his wedding, which I believe occurred in Norway. He had kept it until he came for our visit. It had worn and the outside was mildewed. He had taken it to a tailor who had carefully dissembled the suit, cleaned it, and reassembled it inside out, in its mirror image so...it was like new!

He gave it some rough wear helping on the farm. I drove the horses, my dad "loaded" the loose hay and Sam and the hired man pitched the hay onto the wagon ("no bales in them days"). He was a small man of eighty who still fit his wedding suit but he still had "pluck". He didn't use coat or tie while haying but had his white shirt buttoned to his neck to avoid the chaff.

When I look at his picture (page 438) in Gyland bygdebok it reminds me of a sentimental connection from the first Sigbjørn on Tesåk in 1686 to my childhood and a "visit from uncle Sam".

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