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INFORMATION ON KING ODIN

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**The Oppegaard family**

NOTE

The history of the Oppegaard family is much more extensive than those of the other families in this book. The information comes from different sources of varying reliability as might be expected in an account that goes back to ancient times.

What we know about the Oppegaards starting with Sigurd Bjørnsen Bonde pa Gulsvik in the 15th century comes mainly from a history published by Milo Oppegard (sic), a now-retired high school mathematics and physics teacher in River Falls, Wisconsin. Milo is a grandson of Paul Eriksen Oppegaard who was the brother of my grandfather John Oppegaard.

Milo writes that his book relies heavily on the research of Erling Bjørke (or Bjerke) for the material on the family in Norway. Bjørke was a native of Sokna, Ringerike, Norway, was distantly related to the Oppegaard family and died in 1965.

Milo says the primary recorder of the American portion of the history was his cousin, Roy Oppegaard, a high school history teacher in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, who was born in 1904 and died in 1958.

Roy Oppegaard's work eventually found its way to Bert Narveson, a professor of Greek and Latin at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota, and a grandson of Paul Eriksen Oppegaard.. He organized the information and added to it, but was unable to complete the history during his retirement because of failing eyesight. He passed the material to Milo who produced his book in 1989.

Incidentally, Milo was born in Albert Lea, Minnesota in 1938 when we were living just 25 miles south in Joice, Iowa. In 2003, he showed me a clipping on the 1935 funeral of his grandmother Maria reporting that my dad Lodver helped officiate.

We learned more about Oppegaards in the McIntosh, Minnesota, area and about Johannes Oppegaard in particular from a visit by David M. Scheie with Parnell Oppegaard, my second cousin.

In 2002 through Milo, I met by e-mail Karen Haukedal of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, who has compiled and meticulously documented a mass of data on Oppegaards in Norway and the New World. Karen’s husband Jerry is a great- grandson of Inger Thorine Oppegaard, a sister of Paul and Johannes Oppegaard. Karen says she hopes to write a Haukedal-Oppegaard history and I have encouraged her.

In the spring of 2003, Karen discovered the website http://www.elsrud.com/Slekt/surnames.htm which traces the family backward in time from Sigurd Bonde to Frøy “Yngve-Frøy” Njordsen or Ingve Frøysen or Freya Ingvesen or some other variation, born 65 BC. The site is operated by a Nils Elsrud of Norway. We do not know the sources of Elsrud’s information on Oppegaard ancestors.

In 2004, Karen discovered another site with a few different names tracing the same line–from Sigurd Bonde to Frøy Njordsen.

We also discovered Internet sites which traced Frøy Njordsen’s ancestry back three more generations: to Yngve or Njord or Niord to Odin to Fridulf, a king of Scythia in central Asia. One notable site was http://www.stavacademy.co.uk/mimir/moere.htm which showed the connection cited an 1879 book “History of King Odin: King of Scandinavia” by Albert Welles, President of the American College for Genealogical Registry and Heraldry.

Welles’ was also the author of a study showing a line from Fridulf and Odin to George Washington.

A few weeks later we came across the site http://www.genpc.com/gen/gen\_files/main.htm

It shows Niord, Odin and Fridulf and then continues back in time 34 more generations–to Jacob and Isaac of the Old Testament, with extensive footnotes to most entries. The author does not give his name but offers the disclaimer: “all of these files are a WORK in PROGRESS not all have been personally verified by me.”

So, how do we regard all this?

I feel quite confident of the data since the 15th century.

However, during the 14th and 15th century, when the Black Death was the pandemic throughout Europe, including Scandinavia, the collection of data became less important and therefore less accurate. So the link between Sigurd Bjørnsen Bonde pa Gulsvik back to Harald Harfagre, born 865, is more open to question.

The lineage from Harald Harfagre to Frøy Niordsen is described in depth by Snorri Sturluson (c.1179-1241) in the Heimskringla, a history of the Norse kings of the first millenium, and in other sagas. It is understandable that records of the royal family would have been preserved, but it is not so clear where history leaves off and mythology begins. I am still trying to determine how historians view these sagas.

The line from Isaac and Jacob to Fridulf, Odin, Niord and Froy seems to have been recorded in several places, hence all the footnotes, but I can’t vouch for their accuracy.

Then, of course, just one generation back from Isaac is Abraham and ancestors back to Adam. Abraham is believed to have lived in the second millennium B. C. but most scholars say Biblical dating before that is questionable.

With those caveats, here is the story as we now understand it.

David L. Scheie

The Oppegaard family

The family may date from Biblical times. From the Old Testament we are familiar with the first three names on the list. But at the moment, at least, we know little about the next succeeding generations. So, for now, we merely list names:

Isaac. Spouse: Rebekah

Jacob. Spouse: Leah

Judah: Spouse: Tamar

Zara (Zarah). Spouse: Electra (One of the Pleiades)

Dardanus Darda. Spouse: Batea Asia Ilium

Erichthonius. Spouse: Astvocho Ilium

Tros (Troy)

Ilus

Laomedon

Priam (King of Troy

Daughter of Priam. Spouse: Memnon

Thor (Tror)

Vingener

Hloritha

Eiardi

Vingethorr

Vingener

Moda

Magi

Seskef

Bedweg

Hwala

Hathra (Athra)

Itormann

Heremod

Scelda (Sceaf)

Scealdea

Beowa

Taewa (Tecti)

Geata

Godwulf

Flocwald

Finn

Freothelaf

Freothelaf’s son was Fridulf and from here on we have some details, not just a list. Fridulf was the Supreme Ruler of the Scythians in Asaland or Asaheim or Asgard in what today is Turkestan, between the Euxine and Caspian Seas, in central Asia. We do not know the date of his birth but it was probably before 150 BC.

Fridulf had at least three sons; the first was given the name Sigge, but later took the name of Odin which was the name of the Scythians’ god.. Odin (the man), thus became the High Priest and symbol of his people’s religion, perhaps the personification of the god himself. He was also known as a great warrior, one who never lost a battle, and was loved by his subjects. One writer has called him both the Mars and Mohammad of the Asen or Aesir or people of Asgard.

Pressured by the invading Romans led by Pompey, Odin left Asgard in the hands of his two brothers and headed northward with his pontiffs (religious sub-leaders) and many followers. They passed through Gardarike or Russia to Saxland, subduing tribes and nations in their path.

About 70 BC, he reached the Baltic and crossed into present day Denmark to the island now called Fyn, then called Fionia. There he made his residence, declared himself King of Denmark and is said to have established the city of Odense.



Seeking to extend his rule, Odin passed over to Sweden, then ruled by a prince Gylfe. Odin built a home at Lake Logur (Malaren) near Stockholm. He also erected a splendid temple at Sigtuna for celebrating the rites of his religion.

The surrounding territory, which formed the core of Odin’s empire, became known as Lesser Svitjod or Sweden, in contrast to Greater Svitjod or Scythia from which he had come. Sometimes it was referred to as Mannheim, the home of man, to distinguish it from Asgard or Godheim, the abode of the Asen or Aesir or celestial deities.

The pontiffs took up residence in Uppsala and other neighboring districts.

Before his death about 55 BC, Odin divided Scandinavia into five more-or-less equal parts and made his five sons the temporal and religious rulers of each.

Heimdall became king of Scania, in what is now southern Sweden..

Seming or Suabone ruled in Norway. From him descended a line of Pontiff Kings whose names, but not deeds, were recorded

Skiold was king in Zealand and founded the Danish royal family. Other descendants became the Capetian royal family of France and another was George Washington, our first president.

Balder was appointed Viceroy of the Angles in Lower Holstein and became the progenitor of the Anglo-Saxon kings and princes.

Yngve or Niord, the second son and our possible ancestor, reigned in Svitjod or Sweden north of Scania and from him come the Ynglings, the name of the Swedish and Norwegian royal family. Their history is recorded in the "The Yngling Saga" of Heimskringla and The Saga of the Norse Kings, by Snorri Sturleson and elsewhere. It is not clear how much of the Sagas is myth and how much is factual.

Yngve (or Niord) died about 20 BC.



*There are many variations of Old Norse names. Many would apparently sound the same but have different spellings. Sometimes “sen” and “son” and “sonn” and other variations are used to mean son. Sometimes the order in multiple names is scrambled.*

Yngve’s son was Frøy Ingvesen or Frey-Yngve or Ingve Frey Njordsen who was born in 65 BC and died in 10 BC..

Frøy succeeded his father as King of Svitjod and probably lived in Uppsala. He was married to Gerd Gymnesdatter.

Their son was Fjalne (or Fjolnir or Fiolner) Froysen, born in 32 BC and died in 14 AD in Sweden. He had a son Svegde Fjalnesen, born in 1 BC.

The Saga tells the story of Fjalne’s visit to Frode, King of Denmark, his second cousin.. Frode prepared a great feast in Fjalne’s honor and invited many guests from throughout the country.

A large vat was put into the floor in which strong alcoholic mead was prepared. Fjalne and his party had rooms in a gallery above the vat.

During the night, Fjalne felt “nature’s call” and, very drunk and sleepy, left his room to relieve himself. Returning, he slipped, fell from the gallery into the vat of mead–and drowned.

Svegde succeeded Fjalne as King of Svitjod as well as of a place in Russia where his wife, Vana, came from.

According to the Saga, Svegde and his men had been drinking excessively one night. They were about to retire when Svegde looked outside the house and saw a large stone with a dwarf sitting under it. He rushed out to the stone. The dwarf opened a door and urged Svegde to come inside so he could see Odin. Svegde entered, but never came out.

His death occurred in 34 AD.

Svegde and Vana had a son Vanlande (or Vinlande or Vinlandi) who followed him as King of Sweden. He spent a winter in Finland where he met and married Driva, daughter of Snow the Old. When spring came, Vanlande returned to Sweden, but left Driva behind after promising to return within three years.

After some months, Driva had a son, Visbur. Ten years later, she sent Visbur to ask his father to return. She also hired a witch named Huld to either bewitch him into returning or to kill him.

While pondering options presented by Huld, Vanlande had a “nightmare” and was reported trampled to death by a Mara, a female ghost. The date of his death is not known.

Visbur Vanlandsen then became King of Sweden. He married a daughter of Aude the Rich and they had two sons, one of whom was named Domalde, born about 110. But after a time, Visbur sent his wife and sons away so he could marry another woman.

The wife sent the boys back to Visbur demanding he return her dowry–three large farms and a gold ornament–but Visbur refused.

During the night, the sons and a group of their men burned down Visbur’s house with him in it. Part of the dowry figured in later events.

Domalde succeeded his father as King of Sweden at a very bad time--when the country was ravaged by drought and famine. Sacrifices to the gods did not bring rain. After three years, a great number of people gathered in Uppsala and decided Domalde was the one the gods were angry with and therefore they must sacrifice him, which they did in 130.

Once this was done, rains came, good crops returned and the people lived in peace and plenty..

Domalde’s son was Domar Domaldesen who reigned as King of Sweden from 130 until his death in 162. His reign was peaceful and long.

He married Drott Danpsdatter, whose father was King Danp and whose brother was King Dan Mikkillati, after whom Denmark was named.

Domar and Drott’s son was Dygve (or Drygve) Domarsen. His reign, too, was peaceful and he died in his bed in 190.

His son was Dag Dygevesen sometimes called Dag-Spaka or Dag the Wise who was king from 190 to 220.

The Saga reports Dag had a special gift: he could communicate with birds. He owned a sparrow which he would send to other countries to spy for him.

On a trip to Reidgotaland, the sparrow was killed by a peasant. When Dag heard of this, he plundered the country in vengeance, killing many people.

While walking back to his ship for the voyage home, a peasant threw a hay fork at Dag riding with a group of his men, hitting him in the head and killing him.

*Up to this point, various sources generally agree on the dates for the kings’ births, reigns and deaths. But from here on until the tenth century, they tend to disagree widely. The dates which follow seem to be most reasonable.*

Dag’s son was Agne Dagssen who became king in 220.

One summer, he took an army to Finland where he defeated and killed the chieftain Froste and captured his son Loge and daughter Skjalv. On the way home, he married Skjalv who persuaded

him to hold a great burial feast in honor of her father.

Dag became very drunk at the feast and fell into a stupor while wearing around his neck the gold ornament that his great-great-great-grandfather Visbur had refused to hand over to his wife when she demanded return of her dowry.

Skjalv fastened a noose around Dag’s neck under the ornament while he slept and, with the help of her men, threw the rope over a tree branch and hanged him.

Dag’s son was Alrik (or Alrek) Agnesen who was born in 240 and became King in 260. He married Dageid Dagsdatter and had two sons, Yngve and Alf.

One day in 280, Dag and his brother Erik rode out into the fields and did not return. In time, their bodies were found with their heads crushed. However, neither had a weapon.

The official conclusion was that they had used the bridles of their horses to beat each other to death.

Yngve Alrikssen became King of Svitjod in 280, on the death of his father. His brother Alf became king of some lesser kingdom and was very jealous of Yngve. Alf’s wife fueled his jealousy by demeaning him and by flattering Yngve and openly preferring his company.

One night Yngve and his wife were at a party that turned into a drinking orgy. The guests were said to be so intoxicated they did not see Alf enter the room, approach the high seat where Yngve sat and stab him. Yngve reacted by stabbing Alf and both fell dead

Yngve was succeeded by his son Jorund Yngveson who became King in Uppsala in 302. Jorund went on many plundering expeditions, but they ended suddenly when he was captured in Denmark and hanged in 312.

His son Aun hinn Gamle (Aun the Old) Jorundsen, born about 360, became king. He was not a warrior but stayed “quietly at home.” He fled from invaders several times, but returned when they left..

Aun wanted to live a long life and to encourage the gods to let him do so, he sacrificed nine of his sons. He sought to sacrifice the tenth, but the people of Sweden refused to allow it. Aun died peacefully in 448 at the age of about 88 and after a reign of 68 years.

The son who succeeded him was Egil Tunnadolgi Aunesen, born about 400, who, like his father, preferred staying home to fighting. But he was forced to fight when other kingdoms attacked him and eventually he was forced to flee to Denmark. There, he enlisted an army which helped him regain his land and authority.

But, three years later, back in Sweden, Egil was gored by a bull and died. He is buried in a mound at Uppsala.

Egil’s son Ottar Egilsen Vendelcrow, born about 440, became King of Svitjod but got on the outs with Denmark’s King Frode.

In 460, Frode attacked, killed Ottar in a battle and left his body for the ravens and wild animals.

Succeeding him was his son Adils Ottarsen. who ruled Svitjod for 45 years. Adils went on many Viking expeditions and became very rich.

On one voyage, Adils and his men plundered a king’s house on the coast of Holstein. They also captured a large herd of cattle and the people tending the herd. Among them was an attractive girl named Yrsa who became Adils’ wife.

Adils died in 505 when his horse stumbled and threw him so his head struck a stone.

Adils and Yrsa had a son, Oystein Adilsen, who was King of Sweden from 505 to 531. His reign ended when a marauding sea king named Solve came upon the house in which Oystein, his family and court were sleeping and set it afire. All inside were killed.

Oystein’s son Yngvar Oysteinsen ruled Sweden from 531 to 545 when he was killed in a battle with the Baltic nation of Estland.

His son Onund Braut Yngvarsen “Roadbuilder” succeeded to the throne and was one Svitjod’s most loved kings. He cleared land and brought it into cultivation, and, as his name suggests, built roads.. In 565 Onund and a party of people were passing through a deep, narrow valley after heavy rains had fallen when a landslide buried them all.

He was followed by a different sort, his son Ingjald Illraade “The Untrusty” or “The Evil” Onundsen.

Ingjald was King of Sweden from 565 to 623. He reportedly was fed the roasted heart of a wolf when he was a young boy and thereupon became ferocious and ill-tempered.

On one occasion, he invited many of Sweden’s important leaders, including six kings, to his house for a feast. When the guests became adequately drunk, Ingjald and his men set fire to the house, killing all those inside.

He did this several times. On the last occasion in 623, when he found himself facing defeat, he and his men got drunk in a house, set it on fire and all died.

Ingjald’s wife was Gauchild and their son who succeeded him as King of Sweden was Olav Tretelja (“Tree Heaver” or “Tree Feller”) Ingjaldsen.

After his father’s death, Olav fled to Varmland and married Solveig, the daughter of Halvdan Guldtand. His reign ended when famine struck the land and the people set fire to Olav’s house as he slept in an effort to appease the gods.

He was succeeded as King of Sweden by his son Halvdan Olavsen Hvitbein (“White Legs”).

Halvdan was brought up by his uncle Solve, his mother’s brother, and became King of Denmark about 710.

Some of the Swedes, meanwhile, had decided they had been wrong to blame Halvdan’s father Olav for the famine; the real problem was over-population. So they sent an army against Solve, killed him, brought Halvdan back to Sweden as a prisoner then made him king.

Eventually, he became a great king in Vestfold, in what is now southeastern Norway. There he married Åse of Oppland, the daughter of Oystein the Severe, King of Oppland and Hedmark (where the Scheies and Myklebys, respectively, came from).

Halvdan lived peacefully and died in his bed as an old man in 740.

Halvdan and Åse’s son was Oystein Halvdansen Freet, born in 710, who married Hild Eriksdatter, the daughter of King Erik Agnarsen.

Oystein’s reign ended on the return voyage from a Viking raid when he drowned after being hit by a boom from another ship and knocked into the water.

Oystein and Hild had a son, Halvdan Eysteinsen Milde (“The Gentle” or “The Mild”) born in 760.. He was also called “Bad Entertainer” because he did not feed his men well.

Halvdan married Liv, the daughter of King Dag of Vestmare, and became King of Vestfold in about 780.

He and Liv lived at the Holte farm and had at least two sons: Oystein and Gudrod. Oystein died in 802.

So the crown passed to the second son, born about 790, who became known as Gudrod Den Gjeve Halvdansen Veidekonge (“The Noble King” or “The Hunter” or “The Magnificient”).

Gudrod became king of Vestfold and Romerike. His first wife was Alhvilde who died soon after their marriage.

Gudrod then sent a delegation to Harald Granraude (Red Beard), the King of Agder to ask for the hand of his daughter Åse. But Harald refused.

When the delegation reported back to Gudrod, he launched a large fleet of ships and slipped into Agder undetected. Harold fought back but was outnumbered. He and his son Gyrd were both killed in the battle. Gudrod seized Åse, as well as a large amount of loot, and returned to Vestfold where they married and soon had a son, Halvdan.

In 821, when Halvdan was about a year old, Gudrod left on a party-tour. At Stivlesund, he got very drunk. When he tried to go ashore, a man rushed at him on the gangway and ran him through with a spear. The attacker was killed and identified as wife Åse’s footman. She made no effort to rebut charges that she planned the attack.

Åse then took over as Queen of Vestfold and Romerike and immediately set off westward with one-year old son Halvdan to her home kingdom of Agder where she also took the throne formerly held by her father Harald Granraude.

*When Åse died, she is believed to have been buried in the Oseberg Viking Ship, excavated in 1904. Another Viking ship buried at Godstad is believed to have held the body of Halvdan’s half-brother, Olav Gjerstad Alv, a Viking king. That ship was excavated in 1890. Both ships are now on exhibit at the Viking Ship Museum on Bygdoy in Oslo.)*

Halvdan grew up in Agder, becoming strong and black-haired and known as Halvdan Svarte Black. He became king in 839 and married Ragnhild, a daughter of Sigurd Hjort, King of Ringerike (where later Oppegaards came from), and his wife Thorney who was daughter of a king in Jutland.

In 865, Halvdan and Ragnhild had a son whom they named Harald, who became king on Halvden’s death. (Studies are now underway to determine if he was buried in a mound at Stein in Hole farm in Ringerike.)

Harald’s reign, from 865 to 933, was one of the longest–73 years–and one of the most significant in Norway’s becoming a nation.

Early in his reign, Harald proposed marriage to Gyda Eiriksdatter, a beautiful noblewoman, who refused to accept him as a husband until he had united all Norway. Harald vowed that he would not groom his hair until he had met Gyda’s demand. His hair remained uncut and uncombed for ten years during which he became known as “Lufa” which means “with rough, matted hair.”

Starting with Vestfold, Oppland and Viken, which he had inherited, Harald with the help of his friend Earl Haakon Grjothardssen, conquered Trondelag. He made alliances with some of the jarls (earls), ruthlessly waged war against others and suppressed those under his rule..

The first major sea battle in Viking ships was fought between Harald and his followers against seven rebellious nobles at Hafr’s fjord in 872. To prevent raids on Norwegian shores, he attacked Viking camps in Scotland and England where he formed an alliance with King Athelstan.

Many prominent and wealthy families fled Norway, often to Iceland. Trying to stem the tide, Harald imposed an emigration tax. The sagas tell of one jarl, Herlaug, who refused to submit to Harald, choosing rather to have himself buried alive in a funeral mound instead..

In ten years, Harald brought Norway under his rule. As he made plans to marry Gyda, his friend Earl Ragnvald cut and dressed his hair for a feast at More–and gave him the name Harald Harfagre (Harald Fairhair).

He also acquired eight more wives. Among them was Snefrid or Snofried Svasedatter.

*When Harald tried to make Ragnhild, princess of Denmark, wife number nine, she refused, demanding he first drop all the others. And he did. He and Ragnhild had a son, Eirik, in 895 who, although he was the youngest of at least nine sons, was named by Harald to succeed him in 933, five years before his death. He became known as Eirik Blodoks (Blood Axe).*

*Although Norway had become a single kingdom under Harald, many of the deposed jarls and their subjects wanted to remain independent.*

*Harald’s successor Eirik had married Gunhild Gormsdatter, the daughter of King Gorm the Old of Denmark. With her encouragement, he sought to eliminate all threats to his rule by brute force and intimidation. He had two of his half-brothers killed, earning him the name Blodoks (Bloodaxe)by which he has since been known.*

*But his youngest brother, Haakon Adalsteinforstre “The Good,” forced Eirik Bloodaxe out of the country. Eirik fled to Northumberland in Brtain and later became its king. He was killed in a plundering expedition into England in 954.*

*Harald’s fourth wife was Svanhild Oysteinsdatter. They had a son, Bjørn, who had a son, Gudrod, who had a son Olav 2 Haraldsen who was killed in the battle of Stiklestad in 1030 and was canonized as St. Olav.*

Harald’s third wife was Snefrid or Snofried Svasedatter. They had a son named Sigurd Haraldson Rise, born about 910.

Sigurd and a wife we have not identified, had a son, Halvdan Sigurdsen, (930-960), who, like his great-grandfather was called Halvdan Svarte or Halvdan the Black.

Halvdan became King of Oppland and with his wife, Ei Randesdatter, had a son, Sigurd Halvdansen Syr, born about 960.

Sigurd Halvdansen Syr became king of Ringerike and married Åse Gudbrandsdatter. He died in February of 1018 in Bonsnes, Ringerike, and is sometimes known as Sigurd Halfdansen Syr Bonsnes.

He and Åse had a son, Harald Sigurdsen Harade, who was born in 1015. Harald had at leaast two wives. The first was Tora Torbergsdatter Giske with whom he had two children: TorBjørg Halvdansdatter (sic), born 1040 in Oppland; the second was Olav Haraldsen Kyrre, born about 1040.

Harald’s second wife was Yelisaveta Elisabeth av Kiev, probably a royal. They were married in Ukrainia in 1045. Their daughter was Ragnhild Maria Haroldsdatter, born in 1047.

But our family line continues with the son, Olav who married Tora Johnsdatter. Their son was Magnus Olavsen Barfot, born about 1073 and died about 1103 in Ireland.

Magnus married Margrete Fredkula Ingesdatter and their son, born in Ireland about 1103, was Harald IV Magnussen Gille.

Harald IV married at least twice. His first wife was Tora Guttormsdatter and their children were Sigurd II Haraldsen Munn, born about 1130, and Oystein Haraldsen, also born about 1130. We do not know if they were twins.

Harald’s second wife was Ingrid Prinsesse av Sveriga and they had a son, Inge Haraldsen Krokrygg born about 1135.

Harald died December 13, 1136.

Our line continues with Sigurd II Haraldsen Munn (1130 - October 6, 1155) whose wife was Kristin Sigurdsdatter. They had two children: Hjarand Hvite, born about 1150, and Cicilia Sigurdsdatter, also born about 1150.

Hjarand married Helga Sigurdsdatter Munn and their son, born about 1190, was Gunnar Hvite Hjarandsen.

Gunnar, with an unidentified spouse, became the father of Toralde Hvite Gunnarsen in about 1240.

Toralde was the father of Halvard Toraldsen, born in 1270, but is more notable for his long life. He died in 1345 at the age of 105.

Halvard Toraldsen was the father of Sigurd Gulsvik Halvardsen, born in 1300. This is the first time the Gulsvik name is used among the ancestors and perhaps it indicates when the family moved to that area.

Sigurd became father of Bjørn Gulsvik Sigurdsen about 1350.

Bjørn was the father of Sigurd Bonde (Farmer) Bjørnsen pa Gulsvik who until the discovery of the material above, was our earliest known ancestor.

*The new data, based on the elsrud.com website, and the old, by Erling Bjørke, overlap on Sigurd and the next three generations–and they disagree as to dates, as follows:*

*elsrud.com                  Bjørke*

*Sigurd Bjornsen                      1412 - 1482                1430 - Feb. 7, 1483*

*Guttorm Sigurdsen                 c1430 - 1511               c1470 - 1542*

*Helge Guttorumsen                1480 - pre 1563          c1500 - aft 1563*

*Jon Helgesen                          1520 - 1591                c1540 - bef Aug22, 1591*

 *Note that they come to agreement on the date for Jon Helgesen’s death.*

*Because the new data provide the easier way to reconcile the conflict, we will use that data in this account.*



Sigurd was born in Gulsvik in 1412 and died in 1482. He married Eli Guttormsdatter Kirkeberg and they had three children: Guttorm Sigurdsen, about 1430; Torgund Sigurdsdatter and Erlend Sigurdsen til Trommald. Eli died in 1475 and Sigurd re-married twice. We do not know the name of the second wife, but the third was Un or Unna Vebjørnsdatter.

After Sigurd’s death in 1482, Guttorm became the owner of the Gulsvik property.

Before his death in 1511, Guttorm had four sons: **Helge,** Gunnar, Fredrik, and Thorgeir, and a daughter, Torgun.

Helge married Ingrid Monsdatter Rud. They had nine children–five sons and four daughters. The fourth son was **Jon Helgesen Gulsvik,** born at Gulsvik in 1520. Helge died some time after 1563 and Ingrid died 1594. A letter states her sons "acted in a Christian and affectionate manner toward her after she became a widow."

The Gulsvik farm during Helge’s ownership included about 10,000 acres; it was one of the largest in Flå but was divided after his death. The upper farm went to son Jon who acquired many additional farms including the one known as Oppegaard, near Sokna about 20 miles away. Erling Bjørke speculates that Jon got Oppegaard with his first wife, Tarand Halvorsdattter, as part of her dowry.

Oppegaard and Sokna are about 15 miles southeast of Gulsvik and 35 miles northwest of Oslo, in the area known as Ringerike. (We traveled on the train through the area during one of our trips to Norway. The terrain is hilly to mountainous and is mostly forested.)

The name Oppegaard first appears in a letter of 1524 in which it is written "Opgordhin i Soknedal." In 1574, the name is written Oppegardt. The spelling Oppegaard first appears in 1604.

Oppegaard has long been one of the largest estates in the area once totaling 6,300 acres. It is now divided into three farms: Lower Oppegaard has about 3,070 acres of which 3,000 is woodland, 50 acres are cultivated and 20 acres are tillable but uncultivated; Upper Oppegaard I, commonly called Ree or Re, has 3,000 acres woodland, 20 acres tilled and 2 acres untilled but tillable. Upper Oppegaard II has 162 acres of woodland, 14 acres tilled and 2 acres untilled but tillable.



Until about 1880, the owners of Oppegaard were also part owners of another nearby wooded area of 5,000 acres called Solskinskogen or Sunshine Forest.

*For more on types and names of Norwegian farms and farmers, see Appendix D.*

Jon Helgesen Gulsvik and Tarand Halvorsdatter had a son Guttorm about 1561 and a daughter Olaug about 1562. Tarand died that same year, possibly as a result of Olaug’s birth. Jon re-married Åse Paulsdatter about 1563 and they had six children: three girls, then three boys. The name of the oldest son was Helge Jonsen, born about 1570. The seond was **Klemet Jonsen**, born about 1575.

After Jon's death in 1591, the surviving family members argued over the division of the estate. An agreement reached in 1609 provided that Klemet, then about 34, be given property in Oppegaard near Lunder and Sokna. However, the actual division of the estate was delayed another 14 years or so and a final settlement was not worked out until 1632.

But Klemet had died sometime prior to 1630, before he could take possession of his inheritance. Although he may never have lived at Oppegaard, he was known when he died as **Klemet Jonsen Oppegaard**, the first member of the family to carry that name–or address.

Near the beginning of the dispute over Jon's estate, Klemet married a woman whose name is not known and had five children with her including **Elling Klemetsen**, born about 1604.

Elling, who lived to be 92 years old, became very rich. He ended up owning all of Oppegaard, plus two other estates called East-Veme and Hovland.

Elling was married twice--first to Inger Andersdatter, with whom he had seven children. The oldest was **Helge Ellingsen Oppegaard** or **Berg** (see map), born in 1629.

We don't know when Inger died, but sometime in the 1680s, probably, Elling married Gunhild Fredericksdatter. She was born in 1667 and thus was in her late teens while her bridegroom was about 80. With her he had two daughters, Inger, born in 1686, and Barbo, born in 1688 when Elling was 84.

Elling died January 25, 1696, at the age of 92. Gunhild died January 26, 1741, at about 73.

After Elling's death, Oppegaard was divided among his nine children; but Helge acquired the shares of the others except for a small portion assigned to Gunhild, his stepmother. Some siblings did not give up their shares willingly. Helge had to sue his brother Povel (Paul) to get his portion.

In the 1660s, Helge bought the Upper Berg estate in nearby Lunder and lived there. For that reason he was sometimes called Berg.

Helge was often in trouble. He was convicted and fined for illegal moose hunting. Another time he and two other men were arrested for allegedly assaulting some Finns who were hunting, taking away their clothing and forcing them to walk home to Borgerud, three to four hours away, in their shirts; the Finns claimed they had permission to hunt. Helge was also once arrested for being drunk in church.

He married Ronnaug Eriksdatter Slevika from Krodsherad (born in 1637) and they had nine children. Their first was **Povl Helgesen**, born in 1663

Helge died in 1711 at the age of 82. Ronnaug died July 14, 1714, at 77.

Povl married Berte Jonsdatter Lower Berg, who was born in 1663 and died March 30, 1738. Povl died January 7, 1748, at the age of 85.

Of their seven children, the oldest was **Erik Povlsen Oppegaard** or **Viker**, born in 1686.

In 1731, Povl and Berte divided their property among their children, giving Erik ownership of one-fourth of Oppegaard and a leasehold on two-thirds. Not content with that, Erik purchased some of his siblings' land and eventually owned four-fifths of Oppegaard.

Erik married a widow, Ingeborg Nilsdatter Viker March 22, 1722, and thus acquired more land, eventually owning parts of three estates in addition to Oppegaard. From the time of their marriage, Erik and Ingeborg lived in Viker and were known by that name. They had three children, the oldest being **Paul Eriksen Viker**, born August 22, 1722.

After Ingeborg died toward the end of the 1720s, Erik married Joran Gunvalsdatter Strande, the sister of one of his sons-in-law.

After Erik's death October 21, 1742, Paul bought his mother's share of Lower Oppegaard and the shares of the other children, owning all that his father had owned, plus Upper Oppegaard.

**Paul Eriksen Oppegaard,** as he was then known, married Mari Andersdatter from South Hval or Semmes in Aadalen on October 10, 1744. She was baptized March 18, 1725, and buried July 1, 1806. They had ten children. The sixth child, and fourth male, was **Anders Paulsen**, baptized October 27, 1759.

Paul died March 16, 1783 and after his death, the widow and children agreed to a division of the estate without the intervention of a judge--an unusual occurrence, apparently, in those days.

It provided, among other things, that son Erik should get Lower Oppegaard and Anders should get Upper Oppegaard. Erik and his wife had no children and when they died, after some dispute, it was agreed that Anders should be allowed to buy Lower Oppegaard, which he did.

**Anders Paulsen Oppegaard** or **Strande** married Kari Nubsdatter Strande October 27, 1782. She was born in 1760 and they had eight children. Kari had no brothers and since she was the oldest daughter, Anders took over Strande, one of the largest estates in Aadalen. They must have lived there since they took the name of Strande.

Anders died November 22, 1835 and Kari in the first half of 1843.

The second son was **Nub Andersen Oppegaard** or **Strande** baptized February, 1786. His first wife was Ronnaug Iversdatter Åseth whom he married October 27, 1811. She was born in 1784 and died May 13, 1815, possibly of childbirth complications. They had a daughter, Kari, and a son, **Erik Nubsen Oppegaard**, who was born May 10, 1815, three days before his mother's death.

Erik Nubsen Oppegaard married Guri Christoffersdatter Garhammer. The dates of her birth and their marriage are in dispute. Milo's history says she was born February 18, 1810 and they married November 4, 1833. Another report shows her birth date as February 18, 1819 or 1820 and that she and Erik married in November 1838. The latter seems more plausible.

They had eleven children:

                                    Birth date                    Died

Ronnaug                     January 9, 1839          November 4, 1839

Nub                             February 9, 1841        December 9, 1919

Kristian                       May 2, 1843

Maren                         November 29, 1844    1899

Anders                        December 15, 1846    January 5, 1868

Paul                            December 17, 1848    September 26, 1932

Edvard Carl                April 13, 1851            January 22, 1921

Ronnaug                     January 2, 1854          January 3, 1854

Bernt Martin               July 21, 1856

Inger Thorine              January 3, 1859          January 14, 1930

**Johannes**                    May 10, 1861             September 24, 1904

In 1842, Erik purchased Oppegaard from Nub's second wife, his stepmother, Kari. Erik was once considered the richest man in the county, but he speculated in timber and lost everything. As a result, Oppegaard was sold at a forced sale in 1862 for 4550 specie dollars. Upper Oppegaard is now owned by Ellef Kristian Berg, the grandson of one of those who bought it from Erik.

Another of Erik's farms, Tranby, was ordered sold in 1863.

The fallout from timber speculation was not over. In 1877 it pushed Anders Pederson Oppegaard into bankruptcy and he was forced to sell Lower Oppegaard to his son Anton in 1890. But Anton was also a speculator--not in timber, but in Oslo real estate. He, too, went bankrupt in the late 1890s and sold the farm to Torlief Bache of Drammen. But a brother and sister of Anton sued Bache contending they owned the property by right of primogeniture. Bache, apparently believing they would prevail in court, sold the farm back to Anton.

Anton died April 29, 1929. His wife was Olga Loken of Osterdalen; they had no children. On December 4, 1933, she sold Oppegaard to Vilhelm Blystad, an Oslo factory owner and the husband of Anton's sister Martha, for 200,000 kroner.

The owner, as of 1982, was Arne Blystad, the son of Vilhelm and Martha (Oppegaard).

Erling Bjørke visited the farm in 1982. He reported that the home built on Lower Oppegaard in 1680 had been restored in the 1960s. The log house on Upper Oppegaard, the birthplace of the children of Erik Nubsen and Guri Oppegaard, was still standing.

So, the farm is still held in the family, but not in the male line as it had been for about 400 years. Bjørke says no Oppegaards whose ancestry connects them to the farm are known to still live in Norway.

After their loss of Oppegaard, Erik and Guri moved to Tranby. One of his grandsons said if Erik had not gone bankrupt in the early 1860s, he and his family probably would never have left Norway. But, within the decade they did.

But before then, they suffered another loss: the death of 21 year old son Anders in January of 1868.. We don’t know the cause.

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|  | [Census Records](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11565/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Vital Records](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11566/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Family Trees & Communities](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11567/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Immigration Records](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11568/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Military Records](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11569/grid1003/rd.ashx) [Directories & Member Lists](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11570/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Family & Local Histories](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11571/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Newspapers & Periodicals](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11572/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Court, Land & Probate](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11573/grid1003/rd.ashx) | [Finding Aids](http://www.ancestry.com/s33216/t11574/grid1003/rd.ashx)  |