

GYLAND

(Translated from Lars Fr. Nuland's BYGDBOK FRA GYLAND Second Edition -1973)
[original translation by Olga Nuland Nelson, transcribed here by Ken Larson]

On I. Beiner Eikeland's survey map, one sees that Gyland, Urdal, and Hamar were in the same ownership and has in olden times been one combined estate. In the east and north, the boundary goes toward Kvinesdal and Fjotland.

The name of the farm (gard) was spoken as "jylann" and is written "Gyland" both in 1594, 1612 and 1619. In 1668 it is "Gylland". In "Grågås" (The Wild Goose - Stavanger's official Church Book) 1626, it is "Gylland" or "Gioland" church. Prof. O. Rygh maintains that it was called "Gyja" in olden times. Lector (teacher) P. Kydland believes that Gyland comes from an adjective "gy" which means a steep, precipitous mountain or valley. Gyfjell (Gy mountain) is an odd steep mountain which could have given name to both farm and river. By the farm also is Gytjørn (small lake or pond) and Gyhellaren (slope?).

In the landbook of 1618, Gyland is listed "5 huder i skjyld" which is 5 huder¹ adjoining plus one "wasteland". The latter is surely Hamar. The farm is divided in two: the front farm and the lower farm.

The Pastor's Way (Prestevgegen) comes over Libakken (Li hillside), goes over the river at Skeismonen (spoon rise), and meets the valley road from the south on the other side. The way goes further up over Naervdalsmonen (rise) and over the river as Radå. There was a log bridge to Skohaugen (shoe hill), and further on towards the church, where there was a gathering place called "Loddmarkja". There were stakes for tying the horses to, and there stood "hammesternen" (). There was also an opening through the churchyard from this side, which was never walled up until the church was moved in 1929. The way went forward toward the farms where it split with one route going west through the lower farms, and up through the Åtland ravine and up to the Mydland valley. The lower farms were, therefore, the west farm with the houses on both sides of the road which went across the valley. The front farm was the east farm which was the first one people came to, and therefore, was given the name "front farm".

The Pastor's Way (Prestevegen) was never changed before Emanuel Lund's time. In 1812, he wrote about the "sick to the stomach bad way to the Gyland annex". But when it was finished, he is said to have said, "Now it is for sure not difficult to get to Gyland." The road was built by volunteer work of the farmers, and on Gyland it was a very big job because they had to do a lot of fill in work against flooding. It was added on to and repaired several times because in Søren Gaseson's archive I found an accounting that the bailiff had with Knut Fedjestad who was the township treasurer in 1841, where he wrote that he had paid the county official Sigbjørn Sande from Feda for overseeing the work on "bridge and dock". So there was work on the road in 1830's. Before they got this road,

¹ Note: 4 huder = 1 full farm

during flood times he had to go way under "kallfossen" (the mill falls) in order to get home to Gyland.

From the bridge, the road across the middle of the valley goes until it turns at right angle toward the church. It did not get built further through the farm to the east until after the reapportionment in 1865. The new road through the valley became then the dividing line between the "front farm" and the "lower farm".

There is an old letter from 1624 that gives good information about the people and the circumstances on Gyland at that time. The letter reads as follows:

"We, the aftersigned, Knut Sandvatten and Halvor Voilås, know and herewith give witness with this, our own letter, that in the year 1624, the 4th of February, we were at Gyland for the settlement of an estate and agreement between Svend Alvsen and his co-heirs. We were asked and agreed to be at the assessment of their estate; that we would have the authority based on what was done before. And so the beforementioned Svend, got two parts of Urdal, and two parts of Hamar, the wasteland with the property; and Jakob, his brother's son, with two sisters named Guri and Turi Olsbørn, received for their part two "englesker" in Gyland with property.

The aforementioned Svend inherited after his brother 2 1/2 eng.² in Gyland with property, and Magla Alvsdotter with her sisters, Karen and Magnihild, received for their part 4 1/2 eng. in Gyland with property. The wasteland in Gyland was distributed into 4 parts. In the southwest Repen, in the northeast Krågeknuden, in the northwest Dabesteenen, and in the southwest the western side of Gyland ridge. Then the aforementioned Svend offered the aforementioned Jakob Olson if he thought there would be any problem if they traded so he (Jakob) would have free access with his sisters to the 2 parts and Hamre and therefore would get the 2 (?) eng. in Gyland that they would trade. To this the aforementioned Jakob answered that with his sisters, they would prefer to keep the 2 1/2 eng. in Gyland which they had received.

Even so, Svend traded with Jakob land he had inherited after his brother Jakob Alvsen, 2 1/2 eng. in Gyland. For this Jakob gave him a third part of a farm, Netland, lying in Birkrem sogn in Stavanger Lehn with its property and thereby the aforementioned Svend deeded(?) to his sister, Magla Alvsdatter, five eng. in the aforementioned Gyland, which part Karen with her children as well as Berg Røynesdall with his former wives and children, on their behalf, and this agreement is binding (unchangable) and will stand together in good and bad but he can get it back through forfeiture or purchase under his inheritance.

² Note: 4 huder = a full farm; 1 huder = 12 kalvskinns (calf-skins) or englsk. Englsk is used as the exchange listed as the years go on. Tax rolls figured 4 huder for a full gard or farm. Each hud. Was equal to 12 calfskins. Later English money was paid for a calfskin so 1/12 of a full farm = 1 englsk (eng.) In 1668, naval conscription for Gyland was 12 Rdr 1 ort 6 sk. Work money was 20 Rdr 2 ord 12 sk.

In witness that the truth which has been written stands, have Svend Gyland, and Berg and Alv Anonsøn and Jakob Olsøn, for their own and their sisters' sake, place their signatures and witness that the signatures are true.

Date

Six Signatures

When one reads this letter, one gets the understanding that Gyland and Urdal-Hamar has been owned together as a family estate which is not yet divided among the heirs, but they have divided so and so many eng. without trading specific units of land.

In the tax records of the 1600's, many of these names go back, and when a researcher works forward, you can trace all the descendants who later have lived on Gyland back to the forefather, Alv Gyland.

In 1603-35 there is Sven Alvson. In 1633-39 there is also Tore. In 1649 there is a more complete census. Gyland is registered in 4 huder in relationship (1 full gard or farm) and the farmers are: Johannes 1 hud, Tore 1 hud, Nels 8 eng., Jakob 8 eng., Tormo and Tron 4 eng. each. The residents each own their part plus the buildings.

Poll tax 1645, Jakob paid for himself, wife and one daughter; Tore paid for himself, wife, one son and daughter; Johannes paid for self, wife, one son and two daughters; Tormo for self and wife.

In the land record of 1661, "Jakob owns and uses 10 1/3 eng. Tor Birkeland owns 6 eng. which Nels Jakobsøn uses. Jiohannes owns and uses 11 1/3 eng. Ole Alvsøn with his sisters owns 5 1/4 eng. and uses it. Nels Torgiesøn owns with his brother and sisters 5 1/2 eng. Tormo owns and farms 5 3/4 eng. Turi Olsdatter owns and uses 4 eng. Each provides buildings for his own."

In the census of 1664, which only lists menfolk over 12 years and women who own the land, there is on Gyland: "Farmers Jakob Olsøn, Tron Wermundsn, Oluf Alvsøn, Niels Torgrussøn, Niels Jakobsøn, Torgrim Tronsøn, Turiel Ollufsdatter, widow. Sons: Kiddel Jakobsøn, Sigbjørn Nilssøn.

In 1668, there are new entries in the land register. Gyland is farmland with "4 huder i skjyld." There is "firewood, 160 kilo grain, kand sand TD, ferd 200 cattle, 3 horses, 32 sheep, Gifver udi Leding, 2 1/2 Rixart, work pay 1 Rdr.³ Korntiende, 3 rd, cheese and cattle tiende 1 ort 8 sk. (From this time the old accounting is gone)

In 1723, there was another registration but it is not set out. The one from 1668 stood in the district until 1838. "the farmers owned lands, woods, households and firewood; no summer dairies, no fisheries. Farmland in Sollie and Tungvuden, sharp ground, kand saal 16 td, mixed grains, feed 1 horse, 22 cattle, 48 sheep, 1 sk.p. tunge or 4 huder. Farmers:

³ Riksdalar = about 1 dollar. It was a silver coin used until 1875. It equals 4 kroner.

Jakob Svendsøn, Ole Nielsøn, Kiddel Knudsøn, Guttorm Gundersøn, Torkild Olsøn, Niels Johannesøn, Niels Olsøn, Anders Thorsøn, Niels Hoschuldsøn"

One sees that the woods are better now. Also there are households. They have gotten 3 mills. There is only 1 horse compared to 3 in 1668, but more sheep and cattle. One wonders though that summer pastures are not counted as saeters (summer dairies) and fishing in the river has been from early times very good at Gyland. Another thing is the count of farmers, which in 1649 was 6. Two of them owned 1 hud each, 2 had 8 eng. and two 4 eng. each. In 1664, there are 8 farmers and in 1723 there are 8. In the extra tax in 1743 there are these farmers: "Niels Johannesson, 4 1/2 eng. owes 50 Rdr.; Ole Kiddlesøn 8 eng., without debt; Jakob Svendsøn 6 eng. owes 56 Rdr; Lars Guttormsøn 4 eng. owes 50 Rdr; Niels Anderssøn 4 1/2 eng. owes 22 Rdr; Niels Olson 6 eng. owes 60 Rdr; Gunders Olsøn 1 eng. owes 10 Rdr; Torius Anderssøn 4 1/2 eng owes more that he can pay." There are 9 farmers. In 1900 there were 6 houses with folks in.

In 1960 there are 17 houses but 2 stand empty.

We shall now try to chart some of the later descendants on Gyland. The first forefather we recognize is Alv. From the letter of 1624, we learn that he had 5 children: Sven, Ola, Magla, Karen and Magnhild. Sven Alvson moved to Mydland and was a tenant farmer there his whole life, even though he owned 8 eng. in Gyland. In the reckoning of 1677 on Mydland, he and his wife, Gura Olsdotter have 4 sons and 4 daughters, and own 8 eng. ancestral farm on Gyland.