

THE DISTRICT THE FAMILY HAILS FROM AND THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME.

It is going on three hundred years since GERT MEIDEL, the oldest known progenitor of the Norwegian family Meidell, is mentioned as having entered the service of the Danish-Norwegian King. He is met for the first time in 1626 as a young second lieutenant in the army of King Christian IV during the Thirty Years' War, a few years later attached to the court of the successor to the throne, and after his death as a customs official in Norway. After this, finally as a very old man and impoverished, died about 1696 at the home of his oldest son, who was a minister in Telemark.

However, already several hundred years before the appearance of this Gert Meidel, the family had flourished in the present Russian, but earlier Danish, later Swedish ESTONIA. From there strong branches were sent out to other countries. However, it is not originally Estonian, but is assumed having immigrated during the Danish victory marches at the beginning of the thirteenth century. This is confirmed by GUSTAV VON LODE, known for his deep knowledge of Estonia's law and history. In his COLLECTANEA, written towards the end of the seventeenth century, are listed the families that came to Estonia with the Danes. Among them the family Meidell (Maidel, Maydell) is specifically mentioned. However, apparently it has not come from Denmark proper. Instead, it is assumed that its original home has been located in Northern Germany. The Estonian historical writer on the family Maydell, Baron Carl von Maydell, who will be discussed later on, considers the area where the river Elben runs out into the North Sea as the family's cradle. There are others who put this place somewhat farther west, namely on the east side of the Bay of Jahde in the present Great Duchy of Oldenburg, where the town of Meyde and the old place name of Mellum or Midlum (Meidelheim?)¹ could seem to tie in with the family name and origin. It is, however, impossible with any degree of certainty to decide exactly where the original home was located. And the darkness of the Middle Ages does not help much in this matter. However, for reasons of language, there is much that speaks for it being North German. There will be more about this later.

When Denmark's warring king Valdemar Seir (Valdemar the Victor), who also reigned over considerable parts of Northern Germany, in the year 1219 undertook his famous "crusade" to Estonia, under which the Danish

¹ G. von Bevern: Liber Census Daniae, Dorpat, 1858.

flag according to legend fell down from heaven, besides many Danes also many North German knights accompanied him. Among them it is assumed that the progenitor of the Estonian Meidell family came along. Estates were given to the victorious knights in the parts of Estonia, that were won in this and subsequent battles. These estates were often named after themselves or after the estates or places in their homelands. There are many examples of this. Already in Estonia's oldest cadaster called "LIBER CENSUS DANIAE", assumed completed 1239/40², there are two estates in Estonia's eastern province, Wierland, given the name "MAYDALAE". It is also noted that this name really lacks any meaning in the Estonian and the Latvian folk language. On the whole it does not have any meaning in any other language other than the German language. There will be more about this later on. In the course of time other estates were also given the name of "MAIDEL" or "MAIDLA" after the Maidel family.

From this their chief country, Estonia, where the family even at the present time is the strongest and most powerfully represented, the family Meidell (there usually written as Maidel, later on Maydell) spread out first of all to the neighbouring country Lifland, where there among others in the Acts of Revision of 1630 is mentioned an estate called "MAIDELSHOF" in Camby parish. It is said "from ancient times" to have belonged to the family Maidel³.

In Lifland's southern neighbour, Kurland, the first known immigrant from this family, namely Hermann v. Maidel, President at Pilten, was known to have died in 1639. Also, the names of his sons, their fate and descendants are known. Estonia, Lifland and Kurland have often had a very changing destiny. In the following portions they will often be mentioned as the homelands of the MEIDELLS" as well as for the related families BARCLAY DE TOLLY and DE ROCHLENGE. Denmark sold in 1346 Estonia to the Order of the Brothers of the Sword⁴, who already for some time had occupied Lifland and Kurland. When the Order lost its power in 1561, mostly caused by the violent attacks by the Russian Czar Ivan the Terrible, Estonia came under Sweden and Lifland under Poland. The Order's last Army General, Gotthard v. Ketteler, got Kurland as a hereditary duchy under Polish fief arrangements. It remained as such with its own dukes until it was eaten up by Russia in 1795. In 1629 Lifland also came under Sweden, who in turn had to relinquish it as well as Estonia to Russia at the Peace

² Hagemeister's Estate History, Riga, 1843 - II, page 29.

³ Bütcuings Magazin für Historie & Geographie III, page 137.- Winckelmann: Oldenburgische Chronica, Bremen 1721, pages 13, 123, 393, 512. - Lappenberg: Hamburgisches Urkundenbuch I, page 374. Here are mentioned the castle Mellum or Midlum washed away by the sea and the monastery built later, Medelem or Midelhem.

⁴ This clerical Order of Knights was founded in 1202 by Bishop Adalbert in Riga. On the breast of their white uniform of the order the knights had pictures of two red swords laid crosswise. This was the reason for their unusual name. In 1337 they established a connection with the "Order of the German Knights", founded in Palestine in 1190, but later had their seat in Prussia. This connection was broken at the beginning of the sixteenth century.

at Nystad in 1721. The three countries now are the lands of the three Russian Baltic governments, also called the Baltic Provinces. The population is mostly Lutheran Protestants. The language of the upper classes is chiefly German, whereas the peasants have retained the old Estonian and Latvian languages. The Russians are now attempting to suppress both their religion and the German language.

From 1493 on one meets the Meidells in Poland, where quite a number of them attained positions among the magnates of the state.

One should also assume that also very early they found their way back to their original homeland, Northern Germany. Ever since the thirteenth century it seems to have been without any Meidells residing there. Their German origin and German language must have made it easy for them to reenter. One should especially expect to find them at the courts of the princes or in the armies or in the large northern Hanseatic towns with their multitudes of many nationalities. However, we do not know any branch of the Meidell family until the seventeenth century⁵ with certainty that had returned. No doubt it is documented as having returned from Estonia. It died out again at Isenhagen, Hanover in 1869 with the deaths of a retired officer and a nun, the children of a brother of Lieutenant General CARL AUGUST v. MAYDELL, died 1802⁶. He was the well known officer from Hanover, who participated during the wars one hundred years ago.

At the time that Estonia and Lifland were under Sweden, and during the years closely following, it is seldom that one meets any Meidells in the service of the Swedish king. Some of them were introduced at the Swedish House of Knights. They did not take root, however, in Sweden. Either they died out or returned to the Baltic provinces. None of the Meidells have emigrated from Sweden to Norway or Denmark. Only one happened to be temporarily in Danish hands, namely Volmar "Medel" (Maidel), young nobleman at the court of Duke Carl (the later King Carl IX), having been taken a prisoner⁷ in January, 1568 during the Seven Year's War by Daniel Rantzau when on his famous raid through the inner part of Sweden.

With the exception of the Norwegian Meidells and the Danish Meidells descended from them, to be mentioned in this book, the branches of the family that emigrated from Estonia directly or indirectly are now to be considered as having died out. However, in Estonia, the seven hundred year old home of the family, it is still flourishing and does constitute one of its most important families of nobility. The Russian government acknowledged its title of baron as late as 1854. There in the east are

⁵ However, in the sixteenth century there is mentioned a young nobleman from Meklenburg, Heinrich v. Maidel, married to Helena Brunckhoff. Their daughter Martha married the Swedish Captain (Cavalry) Jon Planting, progenitor of the Swedish family of nobility, Planting-Gyllenboga.

⁶ From him the brothers JACOB GERHARD and CHRISTIAN GARUP MEIDELL (from Flesje in Sogn) received family greetings and an invitation while in Holstein as young officers during the previous century.

⁷ Dr. H. F. Rørdam, Monumenta Historiae Danicae, III, page 78.

found quite a number of reports about this family, and its family archives in the country's capital, Reval, are provided to a great extent with old documents and letters⁸, but the family's actual historian is the late "Russian Artillery-General BARON CARL VON MAYDELL, who in 1868 in Helsingfors published his exhaustive and considerable works: "Das freiherrliche Geschlecht von Maydell". Anyone wishing to know more about the family's oldest history and about the later Maydells in the present Russian Baltic provinces as well as in Germany is referred to this literature. The Russian writer has not had any luck in obtaining information about the Polish and Norwegian lines. Therefore, he has had to pass them up in his book.

The first Meidell one comes upon in the Danish-Norwegian monarchy was JURGEN MAIDEL from Lifland⁹ who in 1537 served King Christian III.

[*Ed. Note: in the original document there is a footnote without a reference in the document. This footnote is now number ¹⁰.*]

In 1626 one runs across the next one, namely in the service of Christian IV. It was the beforementioned GERT MEIDEL, the progenitor of all Norwegian and Danish Meidells now living. He will be discussed later on in detail. Whether he was descended from above or was only by chance a descendant of him, has not been decided.

In 1645 JOHAN MEIDEL entered at Altoona the Danish army and was on active duty under General Harmens. What happened to him later on is unknown. He must not be confused with his contemporary OTTO JOHAN MAIDEL to Wredenshagen and Tockumbeck in Estonia, who according to ANREP was killed in Germany in 1648 as a major with the Swedish Cavalry Regiment leaving a ten weeks old son, the later well known Swedish Lieutenant General, Baron GEORG JOHAN MAIDEL. He became known for his deeds at Narva, etc. In 1693 he was introduced at the Swedish House of Knights under No. 102.

In King Fredrik III's time one again meets some Meidells in Denmark. Lieutenant ANDREAS MEIDEL¹¹ received along with some other officers on the 28th of July, 1658 40 dalers - apparently when retiring - and is not heard of again. On the other hand HANS MEIDEL appears more often in the records covering officers on duty in Copenhagen in the years 1663-69 as a "landburs" in the artillery.

One can hardly avoid thinking that it is possible that from the time of the first mentioned immigrant, Jürgen Maidel, there might have

⁸ The oldest parchment kept mentioned an Estonian squire named Maidel, is from 1389.

⁹ Monumenta Livoniae antiqve V, 483-84

¹⁰ Found in the Danish Geheime Archives

¹¹ Zealand Sketches No. XXXIV, vol. 622

been a Meidell family in Denmark, possibly it only had a few members, living near the southern border - periodically unnoticed, but at other times again known for its special individuals entering official positions according to documents of those days. It seems strange that all the recorded Meidells should have been immigrants from far away. This is especially so considering the written sources in abundance in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In particular one had the church records to refer to. There one finds all the Meidells certainly having been born in Norway or Denmark or - in one instance (WOLFGANG MEYDEL) - there was only a probability of this. However, such a possible continuity of generations all the way from 1537 cannot be proved. GERT MEIDEL mentioned above is therefore in this book considered the oldest known progenitor.

On the 2nd of January, 1668 GOTTER FRIEDERICH VON MAIDEL passed through Copenhagen's Custom Office. He was followed by the noblemen from Kurland, JOHAN and DIDRIK V. MAIDEL in 1629. Probably they were only ordinary travelers. Finally one must mention the "MEYDEL", who according to Deichman's notations - with several others - was sent to Eidsvoll's Iron Works by Duke JACOB OF KURLAND at that time, it being owned by the duke from 1664 to his death in 1682. In March of 1665 he sent thirty workers from Kurland to the Works¹². It is possible that Meydel accompanied them. However, it does not appear that he was one of the managers of the works. The government's archivist in the capital of Kurland, Mitau, JOHS. HEINRICH VOLDEMAR (now dead) has shown the family Meidell the courtesy of letting them go through lots of papers concerning Duke Jacob's so unfortunate operation of Eidsvoll Works. However, they have not found any Meydels mentioned. On the other hand, they found several others, especially FRANTZ WILHELM VON FOLCKERSAHM (Fölcker- or Völcker- sahm) and FRIEDERICH PÖPPING, the first mentioned as the head manager, and the last mentioned as its "factor" (superintendent) in Copenhagen. The duke complains strongly and bitterly¹³ about their poor administration, misconduct and embezzlement.

This Eidsvoll MEYDEL, who in the first issue of Daae's "The Old Christiania", page 126 was called the progenitor of the Norwegian family Meidell, has no doubt existed, (the notation does not appear in the last

¹² Kraft: Southern Mountainous Norway, 2nd edition, I, pgs. 242 and 43

¹³ The count made efforts repeatedly to convince the Danish-Norwegian king to have the embezzlement thoroughly investigated. Even tried to influence the queen to get interested in the matter by sending her gifts, among others a crown of amber. In 1674 he sent his "kammerjunker" (a court official), GERHARD V. KOSSKULL to regent GYDENLØVE in Norway to give his oomplaint concerning Folckersahm more weight. The regent, a party-going friend of Folckersahm, "held his hand over him" and appointed him a captain in the Norwegian Army. After a while he was promoted to major general. He explained the embezzlement this way. It was his intention only to liquidate 10,000 thaler, that he claimed the count was owing to "those close to him"(?!). Folckersahm belonged to an old family of nobility, originally from Brunswick (Braunschweig) for years domiciled in Lifland and Kurland. His father GOTTHARD FRIEDERICK v. F. was a Kurlandian major, and his father's brother, MELCHIOR v. F., born 1601, died 1665, chancellor for Count Jacob.

edition). This is reinforced by the fact that during the first part of the following century there appeared in the neighbouring parish Nannestad a Catholic shopkeeper by the name of WOLFGANG MEYDEL¹⁴. One cannot associate him with any other branch of the Meidell family. It is reasonable to assume that he is a son or son's son of the Eidsvollian Meydel mentioned from the era of Duke Jacob. WOLFGANG MEYDEL was married to a Lutheran, no doubt a Norwegian woman, and was converted in 1721 to the Lutheran faith. Nannestad's church records state about this:

"1721, 2nd of April, the fasting service was held at Holter Church, at which the former Catholic Wolfgang Meydel, accepted the holy absolution and most reverend communion, our religion accepting him, after which he was freed from his previous straying belief, being based in ours, - along with his Lutheran wife, which took place privately".

In 1738 he was still at Nannestad. In as much as he was a Catholic originally, it can be assumed that his alleged father or father's father, the MEYDEL, the immigrant who came to Eidsvoll Iron Works, also was a Catholic. It was reasonable to assume that he belonged to the Polish branch of the family, possibly as well trained in practical mining work at the mines in Galciia. However, Gert Meidel, no doubt the progenitor of the present Norwegian family, was a protestant. For that reason he could hardly have come from the archcatholic Poland, but more likely from the protestant Baltic provinces. In part this is evident from the fact that he fought on the side of the protestants during the Thirty Years' War. It is also evident from the fact that he let his two oldest sons (clergymen later on) study Lutheran theology at the University of Copenhagen. Just for this reason it is unlikely that the progenitor of the Eidsvollian Meydel should be the same person, as guessed.

The ancient seal and coat of arms are held in high esteem in Estonia. The shield shows a wide river in which three fishes are swimming. It is divided in two nearly equally large fields on the bias. In the upper one of them there are pictures of four loaves of bread, in the lower one three loaves of bread. The colors are blue, red and golden. Engraver H. R. Bruun in Kristiania has carved a reproduction of the three colors

¹⁴ Five of his children are mentioned in Nannestad's church records, among them two daughters, the oldest of which, INGEBORG WOLFGANGSDATTER MEYDEL (also called INGEBORG MEYDELSDATTER) in 1746 married a lieutenant residing there, BOYE CHRISTOPHERSEN RIIS, and had many children with him. Her sister, however, KARI WOLFGANGSDATTER MEYDEL died from dysentery at Nannestad seven or eight years old in 1742. WOLFGANG MEYDEL's three sons were:

1. JACOB MEYDELSEN, born about 1725, confirmed at Nannestad in 1743, married 1749 same place to the maid, Anne Thorsdatter Aamol. They were simple crofters living at times at Nannestad, other times at Ullensaker. At Nannestad they had in 1753 a son MICHEL and in 1759 a daughter INGEBORG brought forward to be baptized.
2. ARNE MEYDELSEN, born about 1729, confirmed at the age of eighteen at Nannestad in 1747.
3. BASTUN MEYDELSEN, born about 1731, confirmed at Nannestad in 1751, twenty years old.

Apparently also the last two have since gone over to the laboring or crofter class. In any case none of the sons have lived up to or spread the Meidell name. It appears that WOLFGANG MEYDEL has been poor and that his children from their childhood on or from their early youth on have been dispersed living on farms at Nannestad (Engelstad, Vaaler, Enger, Ingelsrud and Breen).

signified in the heraldry by signs (dots and lines running in different directions). For those not acquainted with them one gives the following information: the shield is blue, the current (river) and the loaves of bread golden, the fishes red, the helmet, the plume and the leaves have all three colors. The crown above the helmet is of gold adorned with sapphires - The family's slogan is: "Fidem genusqve servamus" (we preserve - or hold on to our faith and family).

Tradition has attached beautiful legends to the origin of the coat of arms and to the name of Meidell. According to one of them¹⁵ the German emperor Henrik I (called The Saxon or the Bird Catcher, emperor from 919-36) one day became tired of hunting making his way to the closest castle, where one was not prepared to receive such aristocratic guests. The lord of the castle, however, did not get bewildered because he had so little in his pantry. Cheerfully he brought forth for his emperor what the house could provide asking him to be satisfied with a course consisting of a fish called MAIDEL in that area, also some bread made of barley. In this instance it was confirmed also here, that hunger is the best cook and heartfelt devotion the best host. The emperor felt so pleased that he ordered the lord of the castle for the future to show the fishes and loaves of bread in his shield. This is how the family name Maidel, later on Maydell, and its coat of arms originated, because that lord of the castle is supposed to be the progenitor of the present family von Maydell or Meidell.

Maidel, Madel, actually Mägdelein, in Low German means a little girl. Among the common people it is also the name of the fish here in Norway called "Sik" (a type of whitefish), in Danish called Helt, in French Lavaret and in Latin Coregonus lavaretus. It is found in many German waters and streams, where its much larger cousin the salmon also is found. To differentiate between the two because of its silvery scales, although raised more, the two resemble each other. Therefore, one uses the name Maidel or Little Girl. In certain areas of Northern Germany the common people also call perca fluviatilis by the same name.

The author of "Das freiherrliche Geschlecht van Maydell" while he was working on his book asked the Norwegian and Danish Maydells, if they used same coat of arms and seal shown here as used by the Estonian Maydells. He indicated a common coat of arms could serve as satisfactory proof of one and the same origin, even if one cannot follow each generation one by one. Our Meidell family members, however, use quite a different seal. Whether or not they at any time in this country have used the ancient coat of arms shown in the picture has not been proved. The only document found so far (reproduction is given among the supplements at the end of this book) known to have been drawn by the progenitor, which includes a

¹⁵ One of them can be found among the supplements.

signature and a seal, only exists in copied form in a record of deed of conveyances and mortgages for 1695. It has only a (L.S.) (Loco Sigilli) in the place of the seal. After having lost his position at the court (likely in 1647 at the time of the death of the successor to the crown) and after having spent half a century nearly in a lesser position, finally in poverty in a distant corner of this world, the progenitor no doubt has not been in a position to assert his nobility, if he had such rights^{16*} or his coat of arms. Besides, it must be remembered that after the introduction of the powers of absolute monarchy in 1660 - that is, just in his days - one did not hold on tightly to the sacredness of the old inherited coats-of-arms in as much as many of them had been changed due to preferential treatment by the government, and many new ones were introduced. However, it certainly appears from the church protocols for Lower Telemark and Bamble for the years 1709 and 17, that the progenitor's oldest son, Mr. GERHARD, parson at Holden, had in his possession a gold signet ring "projected in steel" decorated with a sapphire^{17**}. It is hard to imagine that a country parson living in a remote place would fit a simple letter signet so beautifully. Therefore, there is a possibility that the ring, long lost, was an inheritance containing the Meidell family's ancient coat-of-arms. Read more about this under MR. GERHARD (died 1717) and his youngest son, GERT (died 1752), who inherited the ring from the estate of his father.

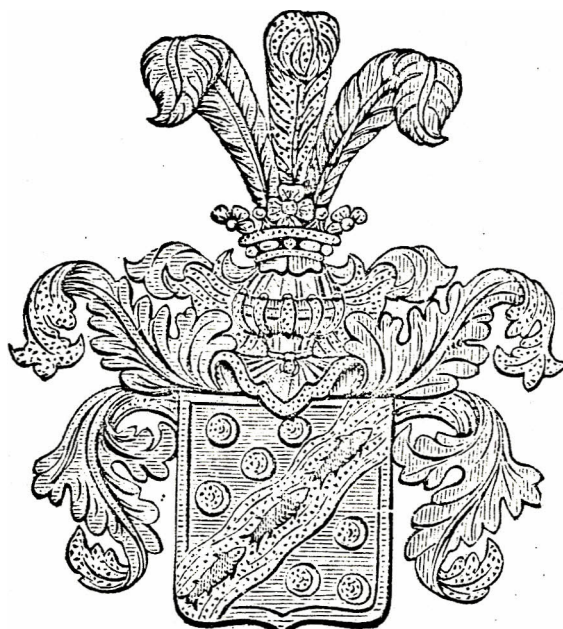
Now that the Meidell family, especially since the middle of the eighteenth century, became a pronounced family of officers and had a need for a coat-of-arms (seal), it borrowed the main emblem for the seal from the Scottish, afterwards also from the Liflandian and Norwegian family BARCLAY de TOLLY, from whom all presently living agnatic Norwegian and Danish Meidells descend on the mothers' side. These BARCLAYS carried red spades on a silver field, encircled by three paté crosses¹⁸, as well as a crown and a cross above the helmet. See more about this in the supplement about the Barclays. Our Meidell seal is not that simple. Generally three deer are added shown in a leap. Generally three deer are added shown in a leap. Either they are positioned on the outside, generally above the shield, or divided by a vertical middle wall in two halves with the deer in the right division and generally three deer are added shown in a leap.

¹⁶ While at court he was considered to be a nobleman. It was only he, not his equal colleagues, Rensberg and Hoxstall, who got the "von" shown in the court records preceding his name. Otherwise the family Meidell in Norway has never claimed any nobility.

¹⁷ Blue gem.

¹⁸ A cross, the arms of which are widest at the end.

1.



Meidellslægtens reldgamle Vaaben.

**The ancient coat of arms of
the Meidell family.**

Either they are positioned on the outside, generally above the shield, or divided by a vertical middle wall in two halves with the deer in the right division and the Barclay spades with the paté cross in the left one.¹⁹ On the title page there is a reproduction of the seal belonging to the Norwegian Major General Jacob Meydell.

The various ways of spelling the family name Meidell should not be given much weight. In a letter from the Russian author, Baron Carl v. Maydell, mentioned above to a Norwegian name-sake, he says "In our old documents one finds our name written different ways, such as MAYDELL, MAIDELL, MAIDEL, and at times even as MEIDEL or MEIDELL, because in the good old days the main mission of the hand was to use a weapon, not a pen. Therefore, one did not pay too much attention to spelling." In Estonia the usual way of writing it these days is Maydell or Maydel. Here in Norway one has followed the more closed pronunciation of our language, always having used "e", the Estonian principal line writing "a".

The family name of the Norwegian progenitor is found in contemporary protocols being spelled different ways. In the recently mentioned copy of 1695's record of mortgages for Lower Telemark his original signature is shown as "MEIDEL". His son, Mr. Gerhard, the parish pastor to Holden, whose own signature is available many times for the years 1680 until his death in 1717, always wrote MEIDEL²⁰. The same was done by both of his brothers as well as by his sons, at any rate for most of their life time. It was quite a bit out in the second half of the eighteenth century before this simple way of writing was discontinued after having been generally used in this country through four generations. This came about because of the tendency to geminate the ending letter. In the nineteenth century it was the practice to geminate just about without exception. And the whole family has written it as "MEIDELL". However, the following exceptions of a different kind have appeared: About during the shaky period 120-130 years ago the progenitor's son's son's son's son, later on the District Judge STEPHAN BARCLAY MEJDELL, when of age, started to exchange "i" for "j" writing it as "MEJDELL". His two oldest sons, District Judge JOHAN ERNST and Colonel, Army Quartermaster Corps, GLØER GLØERSEN MEJDELL, used the same spelling, his descendants doing the same thing. On the other hand, his youngest son, Major General JACOB GERHARD MEYDELL, exchanged his father's and his brothers' "j" with a "y". He did not want to get involved in giving a reason for this. The general's descendants have stayed with his spelling, "MEYDELL". In this book one has used the spelling of the person concerned whenever it is known. Where a person in the course of time has changed the spelling of the name, the latest known form is used. When the family is mentioned as a unit, the author always writes "MEIDELL". The reader ought to keep this in

¹⁹ Based on heraldic way of expression. One imagines oneself standing behind the shield turned towards it at the sign indicating right and left.

²⁰ Where his name is written differently, his signature is not his own.

mind, as the various ways of spelling will seem strange otherwise.

Depending upon the time and the place the progenitor's first name is written GERTH, GEERT, GIERT or GERT, even GERHARDT. The simplest form GERT always is used in this book when not quoting word for word. His oldest son, the pastor at Holden, had just the same name, and his bishop is seen to have written "GIERT". However, but he latinized it according to the customs of the times writing it as GERHARDUS, GERHARD or GIERHARD. The names GERT, GERTKEN²¹ and GERHARD as well as several other usual given names for the Meidell family, especially JOHAN and ERNST, have been used much. This also applies to the Estonian Maydells particularly in olden times.

There is no doubt that all the Meidells, wherever they happen to reside and regardless of how they write the family name, belong to the same family. There is all reason to assume, that the Norwegian and Danish Meidells descend from the Estonian one. However, to show evidence - generation after generation - so far has been impossible. The Danish legal councillor, who died in 1891, CONRAD BARCLAY GRAN MEIDELL did extremely much work trying to make it clear that there was a connection, however, he did not succeed in completing his research - also one of the reasons was that he did not have at his disposal the considerable amounts of money found necessary to search in the archives in the present Russian and Polish countries. Also his compatriot, the historian Captain Fr. V. B. MEIDELL has studied these conditions. With his permission this author has made use of his collections in order to write this chapter.

It has been guessed²² that the Norwegian progenitor Gert might have been a son's son of one of the two brothers Maidel, namely TØNNIS²³ and GERTKEN known to have emigrated from Estonia when the Swedes in 1561 took possession of the country. After that time they disappear into obscurity. Still, even if the time period and the name of one of the brothers might fit well, it is not more than a guess. This is even weakened considering that they supposedly emigrated to archcatholic Poland, where they would have found for themselves as well as for their descendants it rather difficult to assume (or in case, keep) the Protestant faith²⁴. The Norwegian progenitor no doubt was a Protestant from his youth on - as previously noted. However, the brothers, or one of them, could have rambled farther away from Poland eventually ending up in another country, for instance in the Protestant Northern Germany. During the sixtyfive years that passed since the brothers emigrated, as mentioned, until one meets for the first time the family's Norwegian progenitor in Northern Germany, then a twenty year old second lieutenant in the Thirty Years' War, it has been

²¹ Gertken means little or young Gert.

²² By the author, Baron Carl v. Maydell in letters to Norwegian Meidells.

²³ It has been assumed that he might have been the very same one as the Polish Captain, Quartermaster Corps, TØNNIS MAIDEL, who according to OLOF DALIN was in command of King Sigismund's artillery at the Battle of Stangebros in 1598 and was taken prisoner there by the Swedes. His identity, however, is doubtful.

²⁴ In 1554 the Protestants freely practiced their religion in the lands of the Brothers of the Sword. Therefore, Tønnis and Gertken Maidel possibly were Protestants before they emigrated.

impossible to make a tie-in linking the last mentioned to the two brothers, who were sons of Johan Maidel, the heir to Sutlem in Estonia. Therefore, it will have be undecided whether the progenitor came directly from the present Russian Baltic provinces or belonged to a branch that emigrated much earlier in time. Possibly this family tree might encourage someone in the family at an opportune time to continue the search, not letting himself be frightened by the considerable difficulties involved. It can be added that there is a resemblance in appearance, especially as far as characteristic features are concerned, between the Russian and Norwegian-Danish Meidells. This is still the case. Much has been talked about and written about this in the family circles.

The Norwegian progenitor of the Meidell family spent his last years in Bratsberg county and died there. His oldest son did the same thing (the other progenitor). For the next one hundred years a small, not prominent branch of the family stayed in the towns of Skien and Brevik (same county). It is long gone. Only a few of its members were alive at the beginning of the nineteenth century. One of the youngest and last living fell at the Battle of Copenhagen's Harbour on the 2nd of April, 1801 as a twenty year old seaman. The main branch of the family, however, moved farther westward and mostly during the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries the principal location for the family was the western part of Norway, especially the diocese of Bergen. Now it is found in all dioceses of the

[Ed. Note: In the original, this is where and how page 14 ends. Below is the start of page 15.]

When the separation from Denmark took place, two officers of the family remained in that country. At one time it appeared that it would take strong root there. But after having produced capable men the Meidells now seem to have-disappeared from our sisterland in the course of the following generation. There is always a chance that one of the branches that emigrated from there might return. Otherwise Meidells of Norwegian and Danish origin are found residing in America as well as in Africa. Yes, even on the islands of the Pacific. The family is still vigorous. One hopes that it will continue to flourish for centuries.

THE GENERATIONS OF THE FAMILY

I.) GERT MEIDEL, progenitor of the Norwegian and Danish Meidells, born about 1606²⁵, uncertain where he died, without question at Holden's parsonage in Telemark, is met - as far as it is known to this date - for the first time in the fall of 1626 in the standing army consisting mainly of German recruits commanded by the Danish-Norwegian King Christian IV at the time stationed at the Lower Elben in Germany. As a Duke of Holstein the king was chosen to be a Provincial Colonel (the highest war lord) for the province of lower Saxony. Just before (on the 17th of August, 1626) he had lost the battle at Lutter am Barenberge (southwest of Wolfenbüttel in the present Brunswick) against the army of the Catholic league under Tilly. In "the war accounts for His Royal Majesty and the Lower Saxony Province the honorable and well born man, Axel Arenfeldt, has explained to highly known War Commissioner of His Royal Majesty for Baszne on behalf of His Majesty covering the records for one year on New Year's Day, 1627..." it is seen that Second Lieutenant "Gerth Meidel" on the 6th of October, 1626 had received military pay for himself and for his corporal. From the same war accounts²⁶ it is reported that Colonel Wilhelm von Lohusen in charge of the regiment²⁷** had the company in which Gert Meidel served as a young (about twenty years old) second lieutenant under the command of Captain Siwert Hellemann. This was all under Johan Philip v. Fuchs to Beimbach, Knight, Lord of Möhren, etc., "General and Highest Commander of the infantry and artillery".

When it was close to the end of Christian IV's participation in the Thirty Year's War (the final peace for Lübeck was made not until the 12th of May, 1629), Gert Meidel effective the 9th of April, 1628 started to serve as a young nobleman for the Danish-Norwegian successor to the throne, King Christian IV's oldest then living son Christian, the "chosen prince". However, already on the 14th of November of the same year he left this position²⁸ - apparently once more to try his luck in war in Germany under other banners. It is unknown whether (reasonable to assume) he was advanced to a higher officer rank. But in 1634 - that is, the same year that the successor to the throne married Magdalene Sibylle, the Saxon princess -

²⁵ Died about 1696

²⁶ Found among material of the War Ministry in the Danish Archives.

²⁷ This took place in the Battle of Lutter am Barenberge in the first of the three ranks, in which the army was positioned, twice having repelled large attacks by Tilly's cavalry.

²⁸ Reports from the Danish Exchequer, 1871-72, page 148, by Joh. Grundtvig.

he again is found to have entered the service of the court for his previous lord. In the Salary Regulations for the Danish court in 1634 the following are mentioned serving Prince Christian: 1 private tutor (Heinrich Taube), 1 "Kammerjunker" (nobleman of the chamber) (Christopher Bille) and the three young noblemen Rensberg, von MEIDEL, and Hoxstall, each responsible for four horses (for whose care they were allowed ten "daler" per month), still being furnished with clothing for the court at a rate of 8 "daler", 3 "mark" and 8 "skilling" per month. - It could seem reasonable that in 1643-45 (then hardly forty years old) he participated in the war against the Swedes, that ended with the Peace of Brømsebro on the 13th of August, 1645 (in Norway this was called the Hannibal Feud). The need for experienced officers was so great at the time²⁹, that a large number were mobilized from abroad. However, he cannot be found among the poor records of that time as a participant, unless he is the "Major Geert" mentioned in Hannibal Sehested's copy book for 1645³⁰. The regent did not consider it important to show the surnames of the officers. He mentioned for instance the captains Christian, Lucas, Philip, Poul and Powl as well as Master Kjeld (Stub), but left out their family names. It is most likely, however, that he was on the staff of the successor to the throne in that period of time.

After this lord who was not held in high esteem and was of the dissipated kind was dead (2 June, 1647, in other words before his father, the King), most likely the now unemployed nobleman made a claim - well founded according to the understanding of the period - to be given a position, that he could retreat to. And he is found again as a customs official in Norway, probably first in the Tønsberg area, where he married for the first time. However, in 1661 he was stationed at Langesund³¹, where he stayed for more than thirty years, first as indicated as a customs

²⁹ Just to Norway 272 were mobilized in the years 1640-44.

³⁰ Collections for the Norwegian Language and History III, page 134.

³¹ By Royal Resolution of the 17th of January, 1661 a commission in Norway was ordered appointed to consider how the royal revenues could be increased. Actually it was made up from the majority of special working commissions: one for each higher court. The commission for Skien's higher court gave its findings 27th of August, the same year. It reported about the royal minor public servants "out in Skeen higher court."

1. Mayor and Council in the town of Skeen have absolutely nothing for their great effort and inconvenience based on the report.

2. His Royal Majesty's City Judge enjoys yearly (here the revenue is listed).

3. Other clerical and secular minor public officials of the town are paid by the town and its citizens.

4. The Customs Officer, Hans Lucht, in charge of Langesund's customs office (also including fees from the skippers, considered uncertain) enjoys from His Royal Majesty a yearly salary of 420 "daler".

Two customs officials, Peder Jacobsen and GJERT MEIDEL, besides confiscation of one quarter of the skipper fees, both have from the administrator of the customs office 160 "daler". (See the usual Land Commission of 1661 in reports from the National Archives I, page 152).

official, but after that continuing as such or as a sideline he was a ship owner and lumber dealer. In this area he is still to be found in the years 1663, 1666 and 1694 according to three probates, namely after his two wives and his youngest son Thomas. In August and November of 1695 one meets him at Holden.

At one time he seems to be in a good financial condition in this country in as much as he could keep his two oldest sons at Roskilde School and at the University of Copenhagen, both at the same time. However, finally he was so poor that he had to turn to his oldest son, Gerhard, parish minister to Holden in Lower Telemark, "where he is so much in debt, that in spite of a life time of saving, whatever he has earned or can earn for many years hereafter, will be paid to the creditors of his father to release him of his gamble, yes, to keep his half dead father out of jail..." More can be read about this in the supplement at the end of the book showing the letter of 11th of November, 1695, from the customs officer of that time, Jørgen Erboe from Flensburg, written to the gentlemen deputized in the Royal Commissariat General's office. In this it is reported that the last blow causing total ruin to old Gert Meidel were the irregular affaires of his son Thomas, something they were well prepared for, namely bankruptcy and death in 1692. Also his ship Neptunus destined for France was seized by the English during the war going on between England and France.

Gert Meidel especially was in debt for a considerable amount to the Langesund Customs Office, Its customs official, Jens Rasmussen, had taken a lot of his household goods as collateral. His son, the parson at Holden, redeemed this by personally holding the material mortgaged with eventual right of ownership for 100 "riksdaler". This was verified by the father's mortgage records dated at Holden's parsonage 8th of August, 1695, recorded 29th of October following, see supplement.

When Gert Meidel in November, 1695 was considered to be nearly dead and must have been close to ninety years old, it is reasonable that shortly thereafter, apparently in 1696, he did die at Holden's parsonage after having lived a rich life that had been full of changes. It has not been made clear whose son he was, or where he came from when he appeared as a second lieutenant during the first period of the Thirty Years' War in the army of Christian IV. It is learned from the war accounts quoted that the company he was attached to did the recruiting on the battle field, no doubt from several European countries. His company's officer in charge, Captain Siwert Hellemann, has in this manner on the 27th of October, 1627 been sent

"loepgeldt" (recruiting money) for three hundred soldiers recruited by him. The assumption as stated in the family papers left by deceased Major General, J. G. Meydell, that the progenitor "during the civil unrest that took place in England at the time of Cromwell" might have fled along with two comrades³² from that country or from Scotland to Norway has not been possible to confirm based on searches at the archives recently. Surely it must have been a desire to fight for the Protestant religion or simply the pulling power of war that lured him as well as other younger or older men to the battle fields in Germany, so that they could participate in the Thirty Years' War. There is also no doubt that his ancestors are from the Baltic countries, not from Great Britain.

GERT MEIDEL was married twice, namely:

1) to OLUF HOLCK's widow from Tønsberg, who during her marriage to Holck had the children, Iver Holck, citizen of Tønsberg, married to Lisbeth Henriksdatter, died 1722, and a daughter, Hargrethe Holck, married to Lieutenant Jacob Navoroschy, more about him later on. During her marriage to GERT MEIDEL she had the sons GERHARD and CHRISTOPHER, both of whom were ministers, and a daughter ANNE SOPHIE, married to CHRISTEN HANSEN RAFN in Telemark. One is not sure about the Christian³³ and family names of this first wife of GERT MEIDEL. Her estate was settled on the 26th or 27th of May, 1663. However, it is assumed that she was a sister or close relative of the town magistrate (scribe) at Tønsberg, BENT GERHARDESEN WINGE, who was a father and a grandfather respectively of the two Gerhard Wings, parish ministers for Sande in Jarlsberg for many years. See more about this under her grandson, GERT MEIDEL, as well as under his wife and first cousin, MAREN WINGE.

2). to ELSEBE PEDERSDATTER, whose father was Peder Thomesen from Porsgrund, and whose brothers were called Jørgen and Peder Pedersen. With her Gert Meidel only had one son, the unfortunate businessman in Porsgrund, Thomas Meidel, who in 1691 married AARSELE (AASHILD) PAULSDATTER of the Arneberg family. Her estate was settled on the 11th or 12th of September, 1666. The estate consisted of, in addition to a house in Langesund valued at 280 "riksdaler"³⁴ and a saw mill, gold and silver pieces worth 114 Rb.

³² BARCLAY and BUTLER, captains in Norway in 1645. The three leaping deer in the Meidell coat-of-arms is supposed to remind one of the flight. If such friendship existed, it probably started during the Thirty Years' War in Germany.

³³ Not improbable that her Christian name was Elen in as much as two of her sons (from the first and second marriages), whose sons are known, each had a daughter named Elen.

³⁴ Everywhere in this family tree one "riksdaler" consisting of 4 "mark" and each "mark" consisting of 24 "skilling" has a value of 3.20 kroner.

2 Mark, some household goods, timber and uncollected claims. Its assets totaled 1,040 "Riksdaler", 2 "mark", 22 "skilling" (of which 60 "rikdaler" to be collected from her father was disputed). The liabilities amounted to 684 "rikdaler", 2 "mark", 15 1/3 "skilling", of which his third born child of his first marriage inherited on his mother's side 175 "rikdaler", 1 "mark", 13 "skilling". The capital remaining, approximately 356 "rikdaler", was divided between the widower and his little son Thomas, the latter receiving about 178 "rikdaler" as well as 52 "rikdaler" clothing (appraised value).

II. 1) GERHARD (GERHARDUS, GIERT) MEIDEL, the progenitor's oldest son, parish minister, born about 1657 (more likely somewhat earlier, not later), died at Holden's parsonage in Telemark 1717, 17th of March³⁵, with his younger brother Christopher and his relative Gerhard Bentsen Winge (later-on parish minister to Sande) he attended Roskilde School and was graduated with them and admitted by University of Copenhagen in 1677. Before Christmas 1680 he had completed his theological studies. And the parish minister Michael Nielsen Thone (Thune) at Holden, who praised him for "erudition (good education) and being gifted on the pulpit", wished to have him as his chaplain and eventual successor³⁶. This was granted in a royal letter Concerning the opening dated 28th of May, 1681³⁷. When Thone died after that at Christmas time, 1683, G. Meidel submitted his application, dated Christmas Day, 1683 based on the letter mentioned, asking to be given the Holden parish. This was granted in a royal letter of the 12th of January, 1684³⁸. He is praised much for his honesty and uprightness.³⁹ In contrast to his younger brother, who bounced around in various ways at home and abroad, gaining little advantage thereby, he lived peacefully in Holden's beautiful parish keeping it for more than thirty-three years until his death. No doubt, it was especially difficult and unpleasant when his brother Christopher in 1702 came as a Quaker preacher from England converting people in the area. He was arrested for this at the beginning of the following

³⁵ After Series pastorum in Holden's church records.

³⁶ Gerh. Meidel's petition of 18th of December, 1680 to the bishop concerning a certificate of character and endorsement of the same date as well as Mr. Thone's application to the King dated 13th of March, 1681, see supplements.

³⁷ See the supplements.

³⁸ See the supplements.

³⁹ See previously quoted letter from customs officer Erboe as well as a letter included in Bamble's and Lower Telemark's Ministerial Probate Records (letter dated 12th of July, 1709) from three of his colleagues to Council of the Chancery, J. Borse.

year. Parish minister G. Meidel did not get to be old (about sixty years old), but outlived all his brothers and sisters and became the guardian or representative for all the minor children left by his brother Christopher and his sister Anne Sophie, When in 1715 he and his two deceased brothers and sisters came into a small inheritance ("brother" inheritance close to 24 "riksdaler", "sister" inheritance one half of that) left by their childless half sister, MARGRETHE NAVOROSCHY, maiden name HOLCH⁴⁰.

In spite of the sacrifices described so colorfully by the customs officer, Erboe, that Mr. Gerh. Meidel had shown towards his father, two probates at Holden parsonage, namely for his first wife (1709) and one for himself (1717) showed that he was prosperous, and that his house was well furnished. Most likely, the property tax and possibly other income from Holden Iron Works⁴¹ that was started in 1652 on the property of the parsonage, and since 1672 run by water power, had been of great support. Among the gold pieces mentioned in the estate "a signet ring engraved in steel" was of particular interest, decorated with sapphire. There is some possibility⁴², that one has here the old signet showing the coat-of-arms belonging to the Meidell family, but since lost by the Norwegian line. It is possible that the initials G.M. found in the signet (besides the coat-of-arms possibly) originated from the youngest son, GERT, from whom it was inherited, not from the oldest son Jacob, (at that time a captain, later on a colonel, who preferred other inherited valuables). These initials matched those of the youngest son, who had his father's and father's father's name without any change or addition. Read more about the ring under the son, GERT, mentioned above. Of the silver pieces attention is called to a silver tankard with a decorated cover and three lion heads weighing 70 "lodd" (a metal weight). This is also mentioned in 1666 among the progenitor's personal property in the estate of his second wife. This silver tankard as well as the progenitor's rapier were inherited by the minister's oldest son in 1717, JACOB MEIDEL, who became a colonel later

⁴⁰ She was still alive in the year 1700, in Tønsberg, but died before her husband, "Lieutenant to horse", JACOB NAVOROSCHY, who was buried eightyfour years old in Tønsberg, 1715, 25th January. In 1693 they had made a will, according to which the one living the longest should keep the entire estate. After this it should be divided among the heirs of both of them. Personal Historical Periodical, 6th volume, pages 91 and 251.

⁴¹ Later on called Ulefos Works after the waterfalls running the machines.

⁴² That it is only a possibility, at that only a very little one, follows from the fact that so far in this country no impression of the seal from such a signet showing the coat-of-arms has been found. Mr. Gerh. Meidel's seal with his signature (an ornate intertwining on the coins of that period of G. and M.), however, is not found often in the tax records. It might be that it was not the gold ring, but a simpler signet (possibly with another die) that was used daily in the office, therefore, the seldom used ring signet still could have contained the coat-of-arms.

on. His house was well furnished with copper, brass and especially with pewter (32 pewter dishes, several dozens of pewter plates, several tankards, etc.), as well as with everything else usually owned by an affluent country parson. The livestock belonging to the parsonage in his days consisted of 3-5 horses, 20 head of cattle, 30 sheep and lambs as well as some pigs. Found in his book collection were 174 books in folio, quarto and octavo formats.

They were mostly religious, but also partly geographical, agricultural and medical. The many musical instruments emphasized that the family was very musical. They were listed in the probate records. Also, one of the sons in time chose music as his vocation. Mentioned are: 1 Clavi-cymbal (a kind of piano), 1 Viola di gamba (a kind of violoncello), 1 zither, 1 violin, 1 harp, 1 symphony. The most expensive instrument, however, was 1 "positive" (hand organ!), which apparently because of its newness and rarity was valued five times higher than the piano and twenty times higher than the harp. Settlement of Mr. Gerhard Meidel's estate was originally scheduled to be held the 14th of June, 1717, but when the oldest son and the only heir of legal age, then a captain, Jacob Meidel, "could obtain a furlough from royal service", it was postponed until the 5th of July, the same year, at which time all the children and the widow, with her lawyer, the well known Peder Christensen from Skien, were present. Captain Jacob Meidel was appointed guardian for his oldest brother, then a student, later on a pastor in charge of several parishes, Søfren Meidel. Guardians for the children of others were to be appointed at different times. Taking into consideration the low prices of that period (1 horse on the average 8 "riksdaler", 1 cow 4 "riksdaler", 1 full grown sheep 2 "mark", etc.) it will not surprise one that the net value of the estate in 1717 only amounted to about 1364 "riksdaler", of which one half or approximately 682 "riksdaler" was awarded the thirty year old widow, whereas the father's inheritance for the children was close to 100 "riksdaler" as well as a part of the father's books and clothing for each son and about 50 "riksdaler" for each daughter.

Mr. Gerhard Meidel was married twice, namely:

- 1) to ANNA JACOBSDATTER BORSE, born ?, died at Holden, probably in 1708 (daughter of Jacob⁴³ Søfrensen). Without doubt the wedding took place after he became a parson at Holden. She was closely

⁴³ From him the much used name of JACOB got into the Meidell family.

related to the largest owners of mines in the area⁴⁴. "At the request of parish pastor to Holden and the annexes Helgen and Romenaes for Hr. GERHARD MEIDEL, probate was held (e.i. the ecclesiastical one) the year 1709, 11th of July, for his departed beloved, the God-loving and virtuously honorable matron ANNE JACOBSDATTER BORSE", and was completed the following day. The request was made rather late after her death most likely to permit the widower to settle some financial matters with his churches. Therefore, there is reason to believe that she had died the previous year. Her nearest male relative, her cousin JOCHUM HALVORSEN BORSE, Councilor of the Chancery, who was advised to attend the meeting to look after the needs of the children, reported that he was unable to come due to storms in the North Sea. His home was located at the lower end of the North Sea and was called Fjaeregaard. He was not appointed guardian either. Instead her father was given the guardianship and became responsible for the inheritance from the childrens' mother and for the debt of the estate. The total net assets of the estate was then (1709) 634 "riksdaler", of which the widower retained one half, each son got 63 or 64 "riksdaler" and the daughters got 31 or 32 "riksdaler" besides the clothing of their mother according to "old custom". There were four sons and two daughters from this marriage.

2) likely before the end of 1709 at an age of more than fifty years

⁴⁴ Her father's brother, County Assessor of Mines HALVOR SØFRENSEN BORSE, married 1675 to MARGRETHE JOCHUNSDATTER LOBES, a pastor's daughter from Kristiania, owned Holden's and Bolvig's Iron Works, of which the latter on the 19th of July, 1692 was given royal permission to go into operation. Their son, Councilor of the Chancery, Assessor in the Commercial Commission JOCHUM BORSE, residing at Fjaeregaard outside of Skien, also was an owner of Holden's Iron Works. However, it was sold at an auction in 1724, 24th of April, because of guaranties made covering taxes, etc. Therefore, there was a shortage of 22,050 "riksdaler". At the same time they had the Josten depression. His widow, CHARLOTTE AMALIE, maiden name ARNOLD (a half sister of Field Marshall HANS JACOB ARNOLD, died in Kristiania Christmas Eve. 1758) was still alive in 1748 at Fjaeregaard. They were the parents of Major General HANS JACOB BORSE in Bergen, born 1715, died 1793, married 1739 to Anna Dorthea Geelmuyden, born 1711, died 1793. - HALVOR BORSE's daughter INGER, died 1714, 5th of September, was the ancestor of the NORWEGIAN LØVENSKIOLD's, was in 1700, 2rd of May, married at Fjaeregaard to Secretary of the Chancery HERMAN LEOPOLDUS, born 1677 in Kristiania, entered the nobility in 1739 under the name of LØVENSKIOLD, died 1750 as Councilor of the Conference, Knight (i.e. of the Great Cross) of Dannebrog, was also the owner of Holden's, Bolvig's and part of Fossum Iron Works, landed property in Denmark, etc. In the settlement of the estate of Mr. Gerhard Meidel he was named as "Brother-in-law of the House" and became the guardian for both daughters. After INGER BORSE's death he married in 1716 at Arendal KIRSTEN BRINCK, died 1736, who was the female progenitor of the DANISH LINE OF LØVENSKIOLD. - Another daughter of HALVOR BORSE married the well known enterprising businessman and mine owner of consequence NILS HENRIKSEN JOSTEN, who roughly treated by Regent DITLEV VIBE, died 1729 in prison in Kristiania; see more about him under Mr. Gerhard Meidel's youngest son, Gert, whose guardian and foster father he was.

to the twentytwo year old KAREN ANDERSDATTER STENBERG, born 1687, buried at Skien 1741, 12th of June. As a young wealthy widow she did not stay unmarried for long. However, she was still a widow the 11th of May, 1718, when at Holden she was a godparent for the son of the new pastor, Nils Stabel. But she must have got married a short while later on to seigneur Jens Høst at Skien, because already the 21st of September, 1718 they had their son, Gert Meidel Høst, for baptism at Skien. Her marriage was neither recorded in Holden's nor in Skien's church records. She was a daughter of Anders Halvorsen Stenberg at Skien, died there 1713, and had a brother Jacob as well as the sisters, Margrethe (married to Jacob Johannesen) and Magdalene Stenberg. Their father's house in Skien, was bought at an auction in 1714 for 350 "riksdaler" by his son-in-law, Mr. G. Meidel, in whose estate settlement in 1717 it was only valued at 300 "riksdaler". Mr. Gerhard's widow then was named as having the greatest part listed. She also outlived her second husband. In her marriage to Meidel she only had two sons: Christian and Anders.

All Norwegian and Danish Meidells are descended from Mr. GERHARD MEIDEL, who for that reason can be called THE SECOND PROGENITOR OF THE FAMILY.

III.1) JACOB GERHARD MEIDEL, the above mentioned's oldest son, Colonel, born at Holden the summer of 1686, died at Aurlandsvangen in Sogn 1768, buried there 16 August "82 years 14 days old". In 1709 he was a student at the University of Copenhagen, but at the outbreak of war with Sweden the same year he entered the army as a volunteer, became a second lieutenant the same year, 1711 a first lieutenant with the Bergenhusian Regiment, 1717, 26 April, a captain, 1718, 15 August, in charge of the Aurland Company of the Bergenhusian Regiment⁴⁵, 5 November a major and - for a short while - in charge of the Voss Company succeeding Major Barclay, 1742, 19 November, a lieutenant colonel with the same regiment and in charge of the Aurland Company, 1750, 4 March, he was made a colonel in the infantry. 1763, 23 March, his resignation was accepted having been able to transfer the Aurland

⁴⁵ In 1718 during the war Bergenhus Regiment was divided into two parts, namely: First or Northern and Second or Southern Bergenhus Regiment. The present Southern Bergenhus county as well as Aurland and Lyster Company Districts of Sogn came under the Second Bergenhus Regiment. In 1789 both regiments were again combined.

Company to his son of the same name⁴⁶. According to information of 1720⁴⁷, no doubt, his own report, his earlier career was as follows: "Cadet with the Norwegian Company (active) for ½ year, second lieutenant 1½ years, adjutant for the Akerhus Regiment ½ year, served at the Bergenhus Regiment as a first lieutenant 6 years and as a captain for 3¼ years." During the war against Charles XII most of the time he was stationed at or by Fredrikshald (now called Halden), where his oldest son, Johan Ernst, was born as early as 1711. In 1715 he served with the Bergenhus Regiment in Copenhagen, where his second son, Fredrik, was born. Towards the end of 1717 we find him in Sogn, perhaps only in recruiting work or some other service requiring travel, but in 1718 again at Fredrikshald, where he participated in the war activities. The fall of 1719 he and his family are found residing at Aurland in Sogn, where he owned a house⁴⁸, first at Ambjørhaugen on the property of the farm Venjum, later on at Aurlandsvangen itself. He lived at the latter place until his death in 1768. After that his widow lived there for 54 years, several of his children as well, as late as 1822, when his last living daughter, Benedicte, widow of landed proprietor, HANS LEM at Frønningen died there. The house then was purchased by the local parish minister, OLE AABEL⁴⁹, who had it torn down. On the lot he built a new house, an old peoples' home for himself, and his youngest daughter, Miss OLINE C. AABEL, born 1814, lived there all the time until her death, 5 February, 1900. It might seem odd, that Meidel for so many years could stay in this off-the-way settlement, which it could be said only had a connection with the neighboring settlements by boats on the fjord. To make it even worse the fjord was frequently unusable because of ice during the winter. There he had no other property except for the property the house was on. However, as the most prominent man of the place he felt quite comfortable there. The parish minister, Mr. Brun, became his son-in-law in 1759. Besides he was surrounded by several officers of lower rank as well as by a large family. Moreover, his relatives came to visit staying a long time. Another reason for not leaving was that he advanced to high military ranks while there. His signet only had the intertwined letters J.G.M. with a five-pointed crown over it.

⁴⁶ Also colonels and lieutenant colonels at that time had charge of a company. However, the officer in charge of a regiment was always a (lieutenant) captain. It was usually permitted that senior officers transferred their post to others - often involving a sizable sum of money - this was a method to save the national treasury expenditures for pensions, (Partly according to H. Munthe.)

⁴⁷ Military rolls in Bergen's Diocese Archives.

⁴⁸ He suffered fires twice, once at Venjum, the other time at Aurlandsvangen.

⁴⁹ About the family Aabel, see the family trees prepared by Lassen.

From him all the presently living Norwegian and Danish Meidells are descended. Therefore, he can be regarded as their THIRD PROGENITOR and the youngest of the family's three patriarchs. He had thirteen children, of which one daughter and two sons died early. Three married daughters did not leave any children. One son (an officer) and one daughter remained unmarried throughout their long life. However, the other five sons (all in the military) left a great number of descendants - from FREDRIK and GERHARD actually only on the female side. Gerhard's descendants, some of them, have taken the Meidell name (the so-called HAAVIK-MEIDELL's). But from the colonel's other three sons, JOHAN ERNST, JACOB GERHARD and FRANTZ HENRIK numerous agnates (on the male side) descend, so many that one as far as the family tree is concerned has to be content with listing the three lines under separate group names - considering the circumstances it is natural to show the farms, that their ancestors have owned and lived on. Therefore, the descendants of JOHAN ERNST or more correctly of his son, STEPHAN BARCLAY MEJDELL, are called: The SKIRSTAD LINE, JAKOB GERHARD: The FLESJE LINE, and FRANTZ HENRIK: The MOLDEGAARD LINE.

To these lines or groups, including as a fourth line the cognate HAAVIK MEIDELL'S, all the Meidell's now living in Norway and Denmark belong. The Danish Meidell's, very few in number now, do not constitute a separate line, but partly belong to the Flesje-, partly to the Moldegaard-Meidell's. Since the lines were separated in no case have they intermarried.

Colonel Meidel, just like his father and father's father, was married twice:

- 1) apparently in 1710 as a second lieutenant to ANNA DORTHEA GENSCHAU (daughter of Lt. Col. FREDRIK GENSCHAU of the Smaalen Infantry Regiment, died 1716, 7th of May, owner of the farm Røsnaes in Berg parsonage by Fredrikshald (Halden) and of his wife ANNICHEN BJØRN⁵⁰). Another daughter of this couple: JOHANNE SOPHIE GENSCHAU in 1715 married her cousin, Captain PETER NICOLAI de ROCHLENGE. There is more about him under Col. J. Meidel's son Fredrik, who became his brother-in-law. Her year of birth is unknown. Probably it is 1690. Her year of death is not stated either, not being mentioned in the Aurland Church Records as having been buried there. She was mentioned the last time there as a sponsor on the 22 Sunday after Trinity, 1727.

⁵⁰ Her father, MATHIAS BJØRN, customs official at Sponviken and Svinesund participated with fame in the defense of Halden against the Swedes, 1658-60. Her mother, DORTHEA MENG, was a daughter of the wealthy president of Fredrikshald, NILS HANSEN MENG. See personalhistorisk Tidsskrift, 4th series, 1st volume, page 287, and Øverland: Norges Historie (History of Norway), IV, pages 1097-99.

Therefore, she died (probably while visiting at Dale in Søndfjord⁵¹) at the home of mentioned sister and brother-in-law) between that day and the day of the colonel's second wedding. From this first marriage: four sons and one daughter.

- 2) 1733, 9th of October, to METTE DORTHEA BARCLAY de TOLLY, born 1704, died as a widow at Aurlandsvangen after having been sickly for a number of years in 1782, 13th of May, buried 28th of the same month, 78 years old. (Daughter of STEPHAN BARCLAY de TOLLY, born 1677 at Lifland, died at Voss 1732, 10th of September, as a major and officer in charge of the Voss Company of the Second Bergenhus Regiment. All our presently living agnate Meidell's - except for the Haavik-Meidell's - descend from him and still use his seal and quite often his name. For this reason they will be discussed a bit closer at the end of the book. Another reason for this is that the Barclay's, whose last living male descendant in this country is a 78 year old man, who had experienced a varied life and who alleged to be of high birth, genealogically is of a very interesting family. Four sons and four daughters of this marriage.

For your guidance here is a short report covering the colonel's thirteen children before discussing each one of them and their descendants.

From the first marriage:

- 1) JOHAN ERNST MEIDEL, Army Captain, born 1711, died 1745, married to Eleonore Christine Barclay de Tolly, born 1710, died 1782. Three children, of them only judge Stephan Barclay Mejdell was married and had descendants: The Skirstad line.
- 2) FREDRIK MEIDEL, Major, born 1715, died 1783, married to
 - 1) Sophie Dorthea de Rochleng, born about 1719, died
 - 2) Johanna Dorthea Becher, born 1737, died 1774.From the first marriage three sons, all unmarried, and one daughter, who had three daughters with numerous descendants, mostly farm people at Søndfjord.
- 3) GERHARD MEIDEL, First Lieutenant, born 1719, died 1784, married to Eli Hansdatter Vaage, born 1725, died 1781. Nine daughters, six of them had numerous descendants (Haavik family). The fifth daughter, Mette Dorthea's descendants partly took the name of Meidell (the

⁵¹ Older church records for Dale (Holmedal) than the one from the first Sunday in Advent, 1755 do not exist. Mrs. Anna (Johanne) Sophie de Rochleng was buried here in 1756, 64 years old.

Haavik-Meidell's)

- 4) ANNA MEIDEL, born 1722, died 1800, married to parish minister Jens Brun to Aurland, born 1710, died 1784, no children.
- 5) GUSTAV SEVERIN HEIDEL, born 1726, died 1744, nearly 18 years old.

From the second marriage:

- 6) STEPHAN MEIDEL, born 1734, died 1751, in his 18th year.
- 7) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, Captain, born 1735, died 1796, married to
 - 1) Christine Mathea de Ferry, born 1744, died 1766,
 - 2) Birgitte Munthe Finde, born 1756, died 1789,
 - 3) Mette Marie Bramdrup, born 1746, died 1834.

Only from the second marriage were there numerous' descendants: The Flesje line.

- 8) ANNA DORTHEA MEIDEL, born 1738, died 1813, married to parish minister Christian Garup to Laerdal, born 1721, died 1774. One son, died as a child.
- 9) FRANTZ HENRIK MEIDELL, Colonel, born 1740, died 1813, married to
 - 1) Elisabeth Middelthon, born 1744, died 1779,
 - 2) Gye Pritzier, born 1749, died 1810.

In his first marriage three sons and one daughter. In his second marriage three sons. His descendants named here under the Moldegaard line.

- 10) THOMAS MEIDELL, Captain, born 1742, died 1809, unmarried.
- 11) SOPHIE MEIDELL, born 1744, died 1821, unmarried.
- 12) BENEDICTE MEIDEL, born 1745, died 1822, married to landed proprietor Hans H. Lem at Frønningen, born 1757, died 1807, no children.
- 13) METTE KIRSTINE MEIDEL, born 1745, died 1751, 6 years old.

IV.7) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, the colonel's sixth son, born at Aurland 1735, baptized at Fresvik Church 21st Sunday after Trinity by dean Iver Leganger, parish minister to Leikanger⁵², (died on his farm Flesje⁵³) at

⁵² The parish minister to Aurland, Svend Scheen, had just been discharged from his position by the office of the dean. Among the sponsors were Scheen's wife Barbara, maiden name Finde, and his daughter Elisabeth as well as dean Leganger's curate, Gert Geelmuyden, his son-in-law and successor.

⁵³ Flesje, which is beautifully located under the luxuriant wooded mountainsides by the Sognefjord, surrounded by fruit-, rose- and flower gardens, is still owned by his descendants. It was originally a small farm belonging to the neighboring farm Tue, but at the end of the 17th century Hans Blix made his residence on this picturesque spot. He was the well-known wealthy tax collector in Sogn, later on Counselor of Law, Councillor of State, Member of the Slottslov (Palace Law) until its annulment in 1722, and Chief Justice of the Upper Court. In 1712 he entered the nobility under the name of Blixencrone. He constructed a salute battery on a miniture fortification á lá flèche (i. e. with only

Balestrand in Sogn 1796, 6th of December. In 1756, 4th of August, he became a second lieutenant in Segelcke's (2nd Bergenhus) Regiment, a second lieutenant with the Liv Company (the North Hordaland) of the same regiment in 1759, 4th of January. He got the rank of a second lieutenant in 1760, 1st of May, and already in 1763, 23rd of March, at the unusually young age of 27½ years he was made a captain and head of the Aurland Company of the same regiment, his father having transferred his company to him when retiring early. Later on he was moved to the First Bergenhus Regiment, and took retirement in 1786 with 200 rdlr. in pension⁵⁴. He was buried at Kvamsø Church. Was married three times.

[*Ed. Note: in the original document there is a footnote without a reference in the document. This footnote is now ⁵⁵.*]

Married 1) 1765, 25th of July, in Bergen to CHRISTINE MATHEA de FERRY, baptized at Bergen 1744, 31st of July, died at Aurland 1766, 15th of April, after having had a stillborn daughter, who was buried 1st of April, same place, and same year. (a daughter of Naval Captain Lorentz de Ferry, born 1691, died 1757 at Bergen and his second wife, the pastor's daughter from Nordland, widow of Captain Lyder Montagne Fasting, Thoma Christine Bredal, born 1706, died at Stavanger 1773).

Married 2) 1775⁵⁶ to BIRGITTE MUNTHE FINDE, baptized at Ytre Holmedal 1756, 25th of February⁵⁷, died 1789 at Flesje, buried at Kvamsø. (a second daughter of student, proprietor of the farm Hellevik in Ytre

two sides or phases running together into one flèche, arrow, point) in the present flower garden between the dwelling and the fjord. This construction place, for the time being surrounded by a brick fence with a flagpole, is still called Skansen (the Earthwork), and is supposed to be the origin of the name of the farm, Flesje, often written as Flesche, although this is neither French nor Norwegian. Tax collector Blix (later on Blixencrone) moved in 1705 to Kristiania (Oslo) and died in 1730, 1st of April, after in 1728 having been removed from office as Chief Justice and fined 10,000 rdlr. for "own usage". His oldest daughter, Anne Christine Blixencrone, born 1687, died 1753, married in 1705 the tax collector in Sogn, Peder Iversen Leganger, who died already in January, 1726, and got then Flesje as its owner. Captain J. C. Meidel purchased the farm from Hans Knagenhjelm Sunde, Judge Holtzrod having served as trustee, by giving a mortgage of 17th of January, 1774. Flesje, after which Captain J. G. Meidel and his descendants in this book are called Flesje-Meidell or the Flesje line, compared to other farms in western Norway is a farm of medium size. For the time being it has one horse, seven heads of cattle and half a score of sheep.

⁵⁴ [Editor's note: in original translation, there is an "*" but no associated footnote]

⁵⁵ His seal was the spades of the Barclay family surrounded by three crosses in the undivided field. The sign of the helm, however, was an arm with a weapon surrounded by a deer. The seal of several of his descendants matches the impression appearing on the title page of this book, having a field divided into two parts with the crown and cross of the Barclay's as its sign of the helm.

⁵⁶ The wedding has not been found having taken place neither in Sogn nor in Søndfjord. Nor can her date of death be found in the church records.

⁵⁷ The sponsors were dean Fr. Arentz, parish minister to Askvold, Bishop in Bergen from 1760, his wife Drude, maiden name Friman, the local parish minister, J. F. Tuchsén and his wife Anna, maiden name Lampe, Captain Knud Kraft, Madame Anna Ravn, married to the local judge, Jacob Ravn.

(Outer) Holmedal, Søndfjord, Henrik Pedersen Finde⁵⁸, born 1727, buried at Ytre Holmedal 1770, 15th of June, "43 years old" and of his wife Anna Dorthea Daae⁵⁹, born 1725, buried at Ytre Holmedal 1771, 9th of April "42 years old" according to the church records). Her inheritance from her parents totaled a little bit more than 1767 rdlr. Her guardian was her mother's brother, the parish minister Jonas Daae to Vik. From this second marriage were all the following three children.

Married 3) 1790, 8th of December, at Balestrand to METTE MARIE BRAMDRUP, baptized at Leikanger 1746, 13th of September, died at Flesje 1834, 3rd of March (a daughter of the judge in Ytre (Outer) Sogn, Frantz Jørgensen Bramdrup, born 1708, died 1761, and of his wife Margrethe Marie Sørensdatter Heiberg, a pastor's daughter from Sogndal in Sogn, born 1705, still alive in 1766). No children.

V.3) CHRISTIAN GARUP MEIDELL, named after his uncle, the pastor at Laerdal, Lieutenant Colonel, born at Flesje 1780, 30 January, died same place, 1863, 19 March. In his fifteenth year he was sent along with his older brother, Jacob Gerhard, to Copenhagen to attend Army Cadet Academy. He became a second lieutenant in 1798, a second lieutenant (of somewhat higher rank) in 1803, 10 June, a first lieutenant in 1808, 2 March, a captain and in charge of a company in 1811, 3 March. Was placed a *à la suite* with Prince Christian Fredrik's Regiment in 1816, 25 January, with extraordinary pay of a captain on the staff. Obtained 1818, 10 September, after making an application, honorable discharge from the Danish army. He had served in the military in Denmark and in the duchies, but until then never in Norway. He had in 1814 sought to come over by boat, but was stopped. After retiring from Danish service he settled down on the farm Flesje, owned for eighteen years by his late father. Although there were many superfluous Norwegian officers, who had to leave active service as a result of the reduction taking place in the army, he was fortunate enough on 13 February, 1819 to be appointed a captain with the Bergen Infantry Brigade "without salary until he could get an actual number", with seniority from the date mentioned. In 1823, 4 August, he was named in charge of the Ladevig Company of the Søndfjord Corps. In 1824, 11 September, he continued as head of the Vik Company, and in 1834, 1 July,

⁵⁸ He was a son of the dean and parish minister to Innviken in Nordfjord, Mr. Peder Henriksen Finde, born 1678, died 1748 and of his first wife, Dorthea Margrethe Schreuder, died 1727.

⁵⁹ She was a daughter of Mr. Anders Jonassen Daae, dean and parish minister to Vik in Sogn, born 1680, died 1763, and of his wife Birgitte Ludvigsdatter Munthe, born 1686, died 1770.

in charge of the Leganger Company of the same corps. In 1839, 23 September, he was appointed in charge of the Nordfjord Corps with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, continuing until 1841, 13 June, when he became Commanding Officer of the Søndfjord Corps. Knight of the Svea Order – Knight of the St. Olaf Order. He placed his entire life and soul into the military, being physically and spiritually well endowed and showed a great drive as well. As an ardent friend of freedom and a patriot, a man of progress and a pioneer in many things he enjoyed a fine reputation in his locale and county. As time went on he was given many civil positions and positions of trust, acting as a spokesman for many years and was Commissioner of Arbitration until a short time before his death, member of Parliament (of the Storting) from 1827–29, and so on. He was on intimate terms with several of the prominent men of that time period. He maintained a hospitable home, which was visited by many people. During his boat trip on the Sognefjord Henrik Wergeland stopped at Flesje spending a lively summer night there, a night of music and fun. He found that his host had a splendid tenor voice and he enjoyed the strong beer of Sogn as well.

Married at an age of 42 years in 1822 to HARIE HILLE, born at Laerdal in 1799, 24 August, died at Flesje 1871, 25 February. (A daughter of the owner of Fresvik properties in Sogn, Lars Nathias Hille and his wife Jensine Byberg.) Ten children.

VI.2) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, Captain, born 1825, 27 May, at Flesje, died 1884, 21 February, in Bergen. He was a cadet in 1842, staying while attending the Military Academy at the home of his father's friend and comrade-in-arms while in Denmark, Cabinet Minister Herman Foss. Second lieutenant in 1847, first lieutenant in 1853, captain in 1865, 14 January. Served as commanding officer of the division and of the company in the Fjord Battalion. He transferred his rights to his father's farm, Flesje, to his brother, Thomas. Instead of living there he stayed on his farm, Sande, at Balestrand. After his death it was sold out of the family.

Married 1855, 1 November, in Bergen to SARA LORENTZE HOLCK, born 1834, 7 January. (A daughter of Major General, Commandant of Bergenhus Fortress, Knud Kraft Holck, born 1789, 8 July, in Sogn, died 1870, 24 January, in Bergen, and of his wife Karen Alette Holtermann, born 1790, 20 July, died 1837, 7 January. Twelve children, all born at Sande, Balestrand.

VII.1) CHRISTIAN GARUP MEIDELL, born 1856, 14 September, died 1857, 19 May at Sande.

VII.2) CHRISTIAN GARUP MEIDELL, district physician, born 1858, 27 July, university student 1877, Cand. Med. 1885, district physician at Tanen 1892, 1 July, same at Selbu 1899, 26 Sept., but only took over this position the summer of 1900.

Married at Ekersund 1888, 17 August, to MICHAELA TYBRING, born 1866, 27 April, at Ekersund. (A daughter of Søren Tybring, merchant at Ekersund, born 1835, 18 February, and of his wife Thora Lund, born 1839, 3 April, died 1884, 29 April.) The following children:

VIII.1) TRYGVE TYBRING MEIDELL, born 1889, 27 April at Nordre (Northern) Fron.

VIII.)2 BERGLJOT TYBRING MEIDELL, born 1890, 28 September at Nordre Fron.

VIII.3) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, born 1892, 15 March, at Nordre Fron.

VIII.4) THORA LUND TYBRING MEIDELL, born 1896, 10 July, at Tanen.

VII.3) KNUD KRAFT HOLCK MEIDELL, born 1859, 17 July, mate, died shipwrecked near Boulogne in France, 1880, 29 October.

VII.4) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, born 1860, 7 August, died 21 October same year at Sande.

VII.5) KAREN ALETTE MEIDELL, born 1861, 23 September, Teacher of art weaving.

VII.6) STEPHAN JACOB PRITZIER MEIDELL, born 1863, 21 September. High school graduate 1881, employed at a foundry in Chicago. Died in Chicago November 25, 1921.

Married 1893, 3 June, in Chicago to RAGNHILD HALVORSEN, born 1877, 7 June, in Kristiania (Oslo), but came to America when five years old. (A daughter of iron caster in Chicago, Hjalmar Halvorsen, died 1900, 9 March, and his wife, Jørgine Olsen.) The following children:

VIII.1) ALICE LAURA MEIDELL, born 1894, 28 January, in Chicago, died 10 June, 1937.

VIII.2) ARTHUR HENRY MEIDELL, born 1895, 28 May, in Chicago, died 26 July, 1956.

VIII.3) SARA LILIAN MEIDELL, born 1897, 9 January, in Chicago.

VIII.4) JACOB WILLIAM MEIDELL, born 1898, 21 October, in Chicago.

[Editor's note: 3 more children are not listed in this translation]

VII.7) MARIE HELENE MEIDELL, born 1866, 15 July.

Married at Balestrand 1887, 4 August, to JACOB ANDREAS SAXLUND, teacher, born in Kristiania (Oslo) 1852, university student 1869, Cand. Theol. 1875, teacher at Kristiania Kathedralskole 1889 (a son of the parish minister to Nordre (Northern) Odalen, Hans Olaus Saxlund, born 1812, 13 January, died 1872, 4 March, and of his wife Barbra Kristine Stolt, born 1820, 5 January, died 1853, 18 September.) The following children:

VIII.1) Ragnhild Saxlund, born 1888, 25 June, in Kristiania.

VIII.2) Hildur Saxlund, born 1889, 6 August, in Kristiania.

VIII.3) Ingeborg Saxlund, born 1890, 6 November, in Kristiania.

VIII.4) Helene Marie Saxlund, born 1893, 10 July, in Kristiania

VIII.5) Sara Lorentze Holck Saxlund, born 1896, 2 September, in Kristiania.

VIII.6) Barbra Kristine Stolt Saxlund, born 1899, 14 December in Kristiania.

VII.8) OLAF ELIAS HOLCK MEIDELL, engineer, born 1868, 3 October. In May, 1896 he became city engineer at Hammerfest. From 15 September, 1898 production manager for Skedsmo Saw and Planing Hill near Lillestrøm.

Married at Tanen in 1898, 23 March, to BARBRA STOLT, born 1869, 12 February, in Kristiania. (A daughter of merchant in Kristiania, Johan August Stolt, born 1837, 7 March, died 1880, 1 June, and of his wife, Elise Olava Marie Nitter, born 1839, 2 March, died 1891, 18 April.)

VIII.1) KNUD KRAFT HOLCK MEIDELL, born 1900, 9 August, at Lillestrøm.

VII.9) LAURA JENSINE MEIDELL, born 1869, 11 September, died 1870, 6 June, at Sande.

VII.10) HANS LEM MEIDELL, born 1871, 23 July, graduated from high school 1888, Inspector or Head Agent for Norway at the Swedish insurance company "Victoria".

VII.11) LAURA SARA JENSINE MEIDELL, born 1873, 7 February, Stayed with dean, parish minister to Aal in Hallingdal, Wilhelm Frimann Koren Christie as his adopted daughter.

VII.12) JACOB GERHARD MEIDELL, born 1877, 4 August, died 1878, 4 March, at Sande.