

Strolling through Skjolden

Route:

Wittgenstein Part II

- 5 Odden
- 6 Bryggjehuset
- 7 Nyekaien
- 8 Eidsvatnet
- 9 Ishustomten
- 10 The old BP-station
- 1 Fjordstova

THE ICE IDUSTRY IN SKJOLDEN

In 1894 Sogns Iskompagni (Ice company) started their ice industry in Skjolden. Over the years they built an efficient system for transport of the ice blocks from Eidsvatnet where they were cut out, to Odden where they were loaded on to boats and barges for transport to destinations in Norway and abroad, mostly to England. The huge icehouse halfway between the lake and the fjord served as a storehouse for the ice blocks during the winter. The house was 100 meters long 30 meters wide and almost 20 meters high. The house was probably the largest wooden building ever built in the county of Sogn og Fjordane. The transport system was powered by a steam engine. The factory was completed in 1898. It had similar factories in the USA as models. Wittgenstein's landlord in 1913, postmaster Klingenberg, was the manager of the ice company in Skjolden. The company was however short-lived, it went bankrupt in 1915 and the icehouse was torn down in 1919. After that time ice was only cut occasionally and in small scale. This went on till late in the 1950's.

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Oil painting from 1917. The white building to the left is Skjolden Hotel. The brown building behind the big white house is Drægni's juice- and jam factory. (Safthuset) Wittgenstein had a summer job here in 1921.

5 Odden (continued):

From the point at Odden is a good view of the Lusterfjord, which is the innermost part of the mighty Sognefjord, the longest fjord in the world. The fjord used to be the main route for the transport of goods and people until the 1950's. On his travels back and forth between Bergen and Skjolden, Wittgenstein would go by steamboat, or he would hire a private motorboat to take him part of the way.

6 Bryggjehuset (The Warf house) was moved to its present location around 1880. It came from Dalsøyra in Luster where it had served the "Lyster company" at their drill ground Ekservollen. In Skjolden the building was a storehouse for goods sent by steamers to and from Bergen. The expedition was closed in 1962 when the regular ship route ended. From 1887 to 1924 there was a grocers shop in the building and a café. There was always a lot of people gathered at the wharf when the steamboat from Bergen arrived. During the summer season thousands of people and farm animals travelled across the Sognefjell mountain on their way to the market in Bergen. They all embarked here. The road along the fjord was opened in 1925, and gradually the traffic shifted from sea to land. In 1962 the regular boat traffic ended. Wittgenstein came here from time to time. Some times to send or receive post and goods, other times just to relax from his work.

7 Nykaien (The new quay) was built for the construction of the hydroelectric power plant at Fortun in the 1950's. The crane can lift 60 tons.

8 Eidsvatnet (The Eide lake) From Nymoen Leirplass (camping) we can see the foundations of Wittgenstein's house in the steep mountainside across the lake. A flagstaff with an Austrian flag marks the site. The house was built in 1914 and taken down and rebuilt on another site in Skjolden in 1957. (The house is still there.) The farm beneath the mountain to the right is Eide. Wittgenstein often visited the owner Anna Rebni. On his last visit in 1950 when he was ill from cancer, he stayed at the farm.

9 Ishustomten (Site of the icehouse) In 1913 there was a large storehouse for ice on this site to the east of the BP filling station. The ice was stored here in sawdust during the winter, and in the spring the ice was shipped on boats and barges from Odden.

10 BP-stasjonen The BP-station dates back to the 1950's and is now scheduled as a monument from that period.

