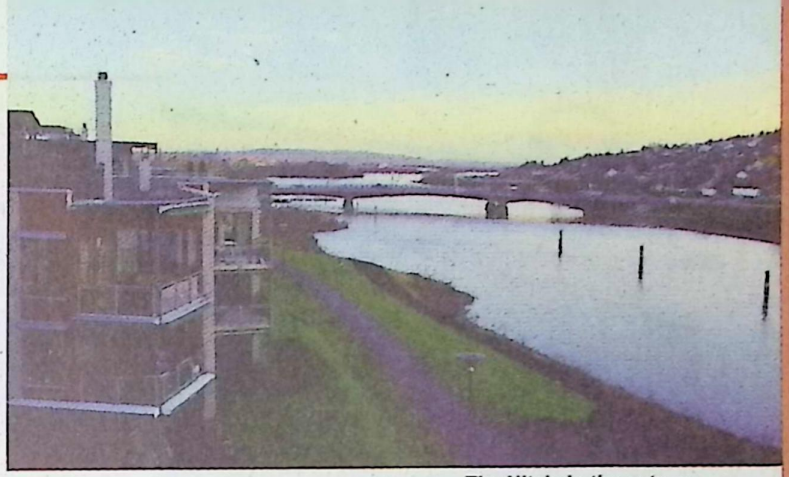
me. And I don't know what their son thought because I was sullen and consumed in thoughts about what bad and probably Australian thing I might've unthinkingly done. It was only when we went down to their tennis court on the next day that it properly dawned on me, that they thought I would enjoy the change. Their son's wife Frøydis asked, 'Didn't you bring your tennis shoes? Didn't they tell you we'd be playing tennis?' So I played tennis, embarrassed, in bare feet.

From the kitchen table at the Rælingen house was a view across houses, fields and a minor river, the Nitelv. Beyond the river was Lillestrøm where my Norwegian classes were held. Each morning I'd resolve to walk to class across the frozen river instead of using the bridge. I'd seen it done in movies. But I was worried about falling through a hole in the ice and drowning as also happens in movies.

Eventually with courage built I followed footprints through the snow covering the ice of the Nitelv, thinking I could turn back if the tracks suddenly stopped by a hole; yet without incident I reached the far side. My Australian parents would've been more than a little concerned; but Gunborg had watched calmly from her kitchen



The Nitelv in the autumn.



Autumn sunrise over the Nitelva River outside Oslo.



Autumn's oak.



The oak in winter.