

Memoir



HANS TOLSTRUP CHRISTENSEN

Foreword by Translators

In the 1950's this memoir was handwritten by Hans Tolstrup Christensen, our paternal grandfather. Along the way, it has gone through some iterations.

Around 1970, it was typewritten, manifolded and bound. That version was treasured by Hans' children and grandchildren.

In 2001, it evolved into an electronic version, which made it searchable and suitable for web publishing.

In 2014, we had the luck to get connected with Harlan Rosacker, who urged us to translate the memoir into English – and Harlan courageously offered his assistance. The need for a translation was obvious since *none* of our father's twenty-one paternal cousins were Danes (our father was Hans' son, Emil).

The project would have been impossible without Harlan's deep interest, clever reflections, profound linguistic skills and – not least – extensive patience.

The translation task has been quite enjoyable and very instructive, too, as it has given us a valuable knowledge of the history of our Danish ancestors and of the circumstances that formed their lives. With that, we have obtained a somewhat deeper understanding of the conditions that have indirectly shaped ourselves. In addition, we have experienced that translation, in general, is a great way to reveal similarities and differences between the cultures. Harlan has done an admirable job of balancing the original language on one hand and the modern reader on the other hand. Working with Harlan has been a pleasure.

We have added a few pictures and corrected some obvious errors. The corrections are marked with *blue italics*. Names and place names have been changed into modern spelling. English place names are used when they are well-known.

As the translation was done 60 years after the memoir was written we came across a lot of words and expressions that we were not familiar with. We have provided a few explanations and a very brief glossary to help our readers. Further explanations may be sought in other sources, e.g. on the Internet.

Anders Tolstrup Christensen

Søren Tolstrup Christensen

Foreword by Editor

It has been a great privilege to collaborate with Søren and Anders Christensen in translating their grandfather's memoir. My grandmother and her brothers and sisters in the Omaha area were Hans Tolstrup's siblings. While my mother told me a great deal about her relatives' lives in the US, she knew very little about their childhood and youth in Denmark. Hans Tolstrup's memoir have opened those doors.

The early chapters recount the increasingly hard times in which Hans Tolstrup and his siblings grew up in central Jutland – moving from one farm to another and finally to the city of Vejle as their fortunes declined. The lack of opportunity in that era eventually led eight of them to emigrate to the United States and Argentina. Only Hans Tolstrup and his brother Peter remained in Denmark. From his account we also learn about the love, mutual respect, and work ethic that were instilled in them in their youth.

My mother referred to Hans Tolstrup as “Uncle Hans” and told me that he had become a very successful and prosperous farmer and landowner. His memoir gives us a good sense of the qualities that brought him success. He was hard-working and shrewd and constantly sought to improve his lot and that of his family. He was also a deeply religious man. Many of the traits he displayed are ones we may have recognized in own parents and grandparents.

My mother's family returned to Denmark to live in 1920, but they remained for only a year. While they were there, however, Mom became acquainted with her cousin Ingeborg – one of Hans Tolstrup's daughters. After Mom died in 1994, I pursued my interest in family history, drawing on notes and family trees that she had left. I finally wrote to Ingeborg at the return address on a letter she had sent Mom in 1948 – along with a picture of her young family.

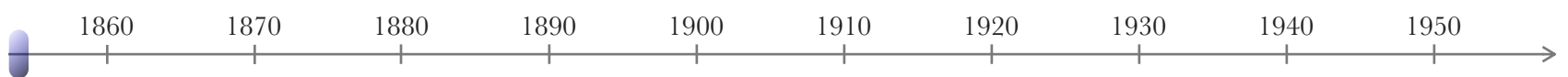
Amazingly my letter eventually reached her, she responded, and I suggested that we might visit her.

We traveled to Denmark in the summer of 1998 and spent many delightful days with Ingeborg, her sons, and their families. They also introduced us to more distant relatives – the Høgh family – who still farm the land in central Jutland where our Christensen and Madsen ancestors lived in the middle of the 19th Century. At the age of 84 Ingeborg was a charming, vivacious woman – and once her sons were out of earshot, she was happy to converse with me in English. I was deeply touched by her openness in relating both the joyful and the sad experiences in her life. I have particularly treasured a book that she gave me just before we left – a copy of the memoir that her father had written late in his life. However, since I could not read Danish, it has remained unread on my bookshelves for many years.

In June of 2014 I received an email message from Søren Tolstrup Christensen, a younger second-cousin whom I had never met. Søren, who is a very energetic and accomplished genealogist, explained that he had mentioned to Ingeborg's son Mads that he often wondered what had happened to his grandfather's eight siblings who emigrated. Mads encouraged him to contact me. Thus began a busy year in which we have exchanged extensive genealogical data and finally embarked on translating this memoir. We also established contact with Doris Ulfeldt, the granddaughter of Hans Tolstrup's brother Mads who immigrated to Argentina. My wife and I have enjoyed seeing her when she comes from Uruguay to spend time with her son and family in the Washington, DC area. There had been no contact between our families in the previous eighty years.

I must commend Søren and Anders for their determination and skill in translating their grandfather's Danish into 21st Century English. My finishing touches have been very easy as a result. We have had great fun trying to understand early 20th Century Danish agricultural practices and describe them in English terms that our relatives might understand today. We have tried not to take too many liberties and lose the color of Hans Tolstrup's prose. We hope that his memoir will help you better appreciate our shared Danish heritage.

Harlan Rosacker



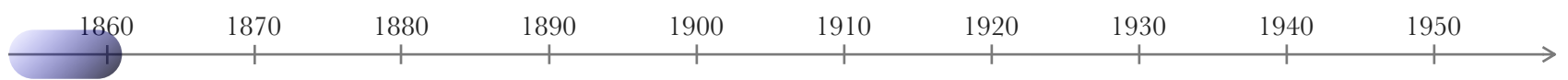
My father's ancestors

For several generations my father's ancestors lived on a spot of poor, sandy soil near Kejlstrup in Nørre Snede Parish, Vråds District, Skanderborg County. The family's old freeholder farm was situated beautifully by a little meadow near a brooklet called Frisbæk. Frisbæk flows into Holtum Creek which flows into Skjern Creek. Anders Christensen is the earliest name I have found so far. He was born in 1750; his wife Kristine Sørensen Datter was born in 1747 and died November 25, 1826. Their son, Søren Andersen, was born in November, 1771, and died May 20, 1844. One of his sons, Christen Sørensen, born April 28, 1807 – died August 23, 1868, was married to Zidsel Marie Andersdatter from Ibsgaard on November 5, 1831. She was born August 2, 1812, and died in 1865. Her father's name was Anders Andersøn.

They had 9 children: 5 daughters and 4 sons.

1. Maren Christensen, born November 4, 1832, and died July 17, 1876. She was married to Andreas Sørensen from Ejstrup Storgaard. He was born February 24, 1825. They had 2 sons. The first son, Kristen Andreasen, took over his parents' property, a little farm near Kejlstrup. Kristen married a daughter of farmer Anders Svendsen near Ikast; her mother was born in Gammel Hagelskjær. The second son, Søren Andreasen, got a farm in Hallundbæk. Both of them traded horses and livestock. Maren and Andreas had two daughters as well; the first daughter married Jens Christian Løvbjærg, farmer and trader. The second daughter, Sidsel Marie, married farmer Peder *Andersen* in Drantum near Isenvad church. Andreas Sørensen died May 21, 1905.

2. Inger Marie Christensen, born May 24, 1835, married bricklayer and farmer Peter Jensen (Bauensgaard) in November 1857. He was born in Grætrup in 1831. They emigrated to the U.S.A.
3. Mariane Christensen, born March 23, 1838, married January 19, 1861, to farmer Jonas Sørensen from Harrild, widower, born May 30, 1829.
4. Søren Christensen, born September 20, 1839, died February 20, 1910, married to Mette Madsen from Rønslunde, born April 25, 1850 – died November 22, 1920, in Vejle.
5. Anders Christensen, born December 21, 1842 – died March 18, 1915, married to Maren Eriksen from Ejstrup Krogaard, born December 6, 1838 – died April 2, 1877, in Kejlstrup; second time married to Adolfine, born in Rind June 20, 1857 – died January 31, 1927 – she was a daughter of Teacher Iver Petersen – Ejstrup school.
6. Christine Christensen, born February 17, 1846, married at Brædstrup Tinghus on June 15, 1869, to Mads Jensen, a farmer in Frisbæk, born August 13, 1842.
7. Bodil Marie Christensen, born October 26, 1848, married farmer Jens *Pedersen* from Nørre Snede.
8. Andreas Christensen, born March 6, 1852. *Died when one year old.*
9. *Niels Andreas Christensen, born July 28, 1854.* He emigrated to the U.S.A when he was 17 years old. There he married a Swedish girl.



My mother's ancestors

A girl was born on April 25, 1850, in Rønslunde – a little village beautifully situated in a rolling landscape near a couple of small lakes in Ejstrup parish – she was baptized soon after and named Mette Madsen. Her parents were Mads Madsen, a farmer and horse trader, and his wife Ane Kirstine Madsdatter. They owned a farm in Rønslunde. They already had a son named Andreas and later another daughter, Anna, and 3 sons, Mads, Christian and Rasmus.

The servant's conduct book of Ane Kirstine Madsdatter is extant. This is my transcript:

Servant's conduct book of Ane Kirstine Madsdatter of Bjørnskov, Nørre Snede Parish, Skanderborg County.

The rectory of Nørre Snede, March 30, 1842. E. S. Wolf, pastor.

Ane Kirstine Madsdatter, born September 20, 1827, eighteen hundred and twenty-seven, vaccinated [against smallpox] by Grik on July 21, 1833, was today examined in Ibsgaard and graduated from the school with the average of her marks: Very good.

On behalf of the Education Committee and myself.

The rectory of Nørre Snede, March 30, 1842. E. S. Wolf

Ane Kirstine Madsdatter was confirmed in Ejstrup church on the Sunday after Easter 1842 with her grade in knowledge and manners: Very good; she had her first communion the

Sunday after; she thereafter has regularly worshipped the blessings of the church and now she leaves the congregation with very good marks and with the intention to go to Copenhagen.

Nørre Snede rectory, February 15, 1844. E. S. Wolf

Produced at arrival. Copenhagen, March 29, 1844. Breuning.

The servant Ane Kirstine Madsen has served me from April 1 until September 15 and during that time behaved honestly, willingly and faithfully, so that she has my highest recommendation, as she gained my utter satisfaction.

Copenhagen, September 19, 1844. N. C. Kjersgaard

Produced on November 18, 1844. W. Petersen, policeman.

The servant Ane Kirstine Madsen has served me from November 1, 1844, until May 1, 1845, and during that time behaved faithfully and willingly, thus I want to give her my highest recommendation.

W. Hytting, butcher.

Produced at departure on May 2, 1845. Rothe, policeman.

Accession to Nørre Snede 134/16 1845. E. S. Wolf

During her stay at her parents' home in Bjørnskov the above-mentioned servant has displayed a fine state of things and regularly worshipped and received the blessings of the church. Lately by confession.

Nørre Snede rectory, April 27, 1846. E. S. Wolf

Entered in the accession list of Bording Parish, fol. 18,7 ff R 3,15

March 1, 1846. S. Bentsen.

The above-mentioned servant Ane Kirstine Madsen has served me from May 1 until November 1, but now leaves this her duty to return home to her parents, even though I would have liked to keep her. I acknowledge her devotion to her duty and testify that she has served satisfactorily. Darling. Guldforhoved, October 26, 1846.

As for the above-mentioned servant Ane Kirstine Madsen, her state of things in the congregation have to my knowledge been very good, she took communion in Bording church, the 20th Sunday after Trinity; she is entered in the accession list of the parish, fol. 53,10 ff R pag. 3,15 to her home in Nørre Snede parish.

Bording rectory, November 1, 1846. J. Bentsen, pastor.

It is interesting to notice that a young girl of age 16½ years had the courage and desire to travel to the capital at a time when travel was only possible either by mail coach pulled by horses or on foot. Similarly, one notes that at the time there were strict controls on how often the young people went to the Lord's table.

Anyway – back to my mother's parents. On May 10, 1860, Mads Madsen died in an accident; he was as far as I can judge a skilled man particularly in trade, but sadly he was probably addicted to strong drinks.

Now Ane Kirstine Madsdatter was a widow with 6 infant children and on her own with a large farm. However, a suitor immediately introduced himself, Rasmus Christensen Høgh. He received a Yes, and then entered the farm as a husband. It was said that "The Hawk [høg(h) is hawk] has taken the fattest hen in Rønslunde." However, their marriage became a happy one. They had six children, of whom three died as infants. The son, Mads, and the daughters, Ane Marie and Kirstine, lived and grew up.

Rasmus Høgh became one of the most successful men around; not only was he an exemplary farmer, but he was chairman of the community parish council in the large Nørre Snede–Ejstrup community as well, which at that time had 10 schools and 3 churches.

When Rasmus Høgh moved to Horsens, he was succeeded as chairman of the community parish council by his step-son, Farmer Mads Madsen Bjørnskov. However he was chairman for only 3 years; he was succeeded by his younger half-brother, Mads Høgh, who had taken over the family farm in Røns-lunde.

1860

1870

1880

1890

1900

1910

1920

1930

1940

1950

My father's adolescence

My father was born in Kejlstrup on September 20, 1839. He walked nearly 4.5 miles to school in Nørre Snede, but otherwise he stayed home where he helped his father on the farm. They worked diligently, as grandfather demanded much.

As to how things were at home as far as the practice of religion was concerned, I do not know anything specific. However, a remark that Uncle Anders once made about his mother – that on one occasion when there was talk about the holy she exclaimed “God forsake us to be holy” – makes a statement about the spiritual position at home. My father apparently worked as a hired farmhand only once – for his brother-in-law Peter Baunsgaard. Peter was married to my father's sister and had a farm near my father's home. There, in addition to taking part in the farm work he was trained in three different crafts: bricklaying, carpentry, and clog-making – occasionally he did make a few pairs of clogs.

In 1864, the war came, and my father was called up for military service even though he had not been drafted. He was 24 years old and had received no military training. That was remedied within 4-6 weeks, and he went into the line of fire. Many of the soldiers did not have uniforms – just caps and coats to cover their own clothes. My father was in only one battle. It was fought in the rain, and he and some others were cut off from their division. They sought cover in a clay or gravel pit but were surrounded by “the spiked helmets” [Prussians], who aimed their guns at them. Facing superior force, the Danes laid down their weapons. As prisoners, they were led to Rendsburg and later along with a larger group to Magdeburg, where they were held captive for more than six months.

My father told me how they had to do forced labor in captivity. They worked under supervision, but so long as they could foresee to complete their assigned jobs within the stipulated time, the prisoners were in a good mood. Otherwise, if the workload was too great, the tools were heavily worn; hoes, spades, and shovels broke into pieces in large numbers.

As for the food, it was very plain – a kind of meal gruel or thin soup was the regular diet. Those who received money sent from home were allowed to buy what they wanted. However, when they were in town shopping, they were followed by a Prussian with a loaded gun on their heels.

My father's health suffered a great deal during these hardships; he got a disease they called pleurisy – it returned several times later in life, so I have only known him as a somewhat puny stooped figure.

Before my father's call to military service, he was engaged to a young girl, Mette, daughter of Mads Bjørnskov. In the Ejstrup school at the same time, there was a parish clerk, who was a widower – Pedersen was his name – who also had his eye out for Mette of Bjørnskov. When my father was led away as a captive, the parish clerk found the time convenient to make up to Mette. He went courting and hooted warnings to Mette: "That Søren, you will never ever see again! The Germans have certainly done him in." And the siren song had its effect. Mette reached a similar conclusion: One bird in the hand is better than ten on the roof, and being a parish clerk's wife is a respectable position. So she accepted, and they were married immediately. That was the state of things when my father came home from captivity in Germany.

However, my grandfather, Christen Sørensen, was aging, and when my grandmother died in 1865, he was alone and wanted my father to take his place on the farm in Kejlstrup. My father thought he would have to have an assistant, and when Mette Bjørnskov had grown tired of waiting, he had to look for another. He found another Mette in Rønslunde – Mette Bjørnskov's stepsister's daughter (daughter of Rasmus Høgh and Ane Kirstine Madsen). She was indeed very young, probably only about 15 years old, but beautiful and fully grown-up. My father perhaps thought that young age is one of the shortcomings that improve over time. A party was held to celebrate the engagement. They were married on July 13, 1866, in Rønslunde, and the little more than 16-year-old bride went to their new home in Kejlstrup.



My mother's adolescence

My mother was born at the farm “Højgård” in Rønslunde on April 25, 1850, as the second oldest in a family of nine children. From an early age, she had been helping to care for her younger siblings. She went to school in the village. The family economized at the time, including school supplies. When they had to purchase a new slate pencil, it was cut in half and divided in two. It was out of the question to sharpen it, as it should be worn down to the last bit.

My maternal grandfather sometimes went fishing at night with neighbors, possibly for eels in the nearby lakes and streams, and my mother had to bring food out to them in the early morning hours.

My mother told me that it was not unusual for her father to come home drunk, and once in such a state he kicked in a door panel – the door hinges may have been stuck. To be sure, my mother did not have just bright memories from her home. She only worked away from home once, it was in the Nørre Snede rectory with a minister called Mygdal – she was certainly glad to be there.

Incidentally, her short youth did not give her much time for many experiences and any significant education was out of the question at that time. Her younger brothers found themselves at Vallekilde Højskole [a folk high school], but that was not until several years later. My mother was, as mentioned before, married at the young age of about 16 years.



Our home in Keilstrup

Neither my father nor my mother were raised in Christian homes. They lived their lives like people in general. A year after their marriage their first child, a boy, was born and given his maternal grandfather's name, Mads. A couple of years later a little girl came along who received her paternal grandmother's name, Sidsel. Everything seemed to go well for them. About a year later, however, they met their first great sorrow, when the little Mads approximately three years old got diphtheria – a dreaded disease which ravaged the country from time to time and took away dozens of children and also little Mads.

At about that time a religious awakening swept the entire region, prompted by the Baptists. My father recounted that a man of their acquaintance, who had himself experienced the great wonder of gaining the certainty of salvation, came to them and told them of the need to repent in order to gain the peace of God. My father listened to him but had a strong desire to throw him out of the house. Well, the Spirit of God was at work, and they bowed down beneath the chastening of the Word. They were baptized and joined the Baptist church where they later became vigorous, active members. The Baptists built a community hall on my father's land, and it became a gathering place for a wide area.

The family increased regularly with new members: Mads in 1871, Christian in 1873 and Peter in 1875. In 1876 the farm in Kejlstrup was sold; the reason was probably a debt incurred from having guaranteed another person's loan that could not be repaid, probably a loan made by his father's brother-in-law, Peter Baunsgaard.

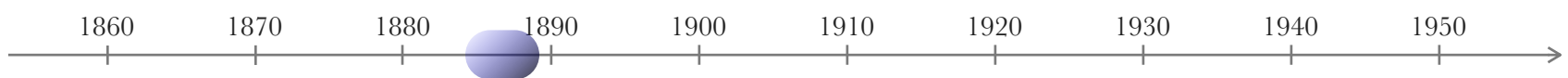
After the farm was sold, my parents moved with their four children to the city of Vejle and lived there a short time. Quite soon they bought a small farm on the island of Funen, just outside the city of Odense – it appears to have been

a great disappointment to them, and they kept it for only a short time. They sold it and bought another farm in Hover near Vejle. It had 37 acres of rather good soil – my father tried to make bricks from the clay in the soil.

My brother Rasmus Anker – two years older than me – was born in Hover. He was named after my mother's stepfather and my uncle.

After three years the family moved again, now back to the parish where my father was born, Nørre Snede, in a small scattered settlement called Leret, near the road to Horsens – to a small farm with about 27 acres. My father and mother kept this land for only one year, but it was here that the author of these lines was born – according to the church records on February 26, 1880 – and was named Hans Christian Tolstrup Christensen. Hans was after an old man named Hans Larsen who lived with my parents at the farm in Kejlstrup. The names Christian Tolstrup were after my mother's half-brother, who was probably the twelfth child in that family [“tolv” – with a mute v – in Danish is “twelve” in English]. He died at a young age, approximately three-years-old. My mother probably thought that the name was too good to be wasted.

A year after my birth the family moved to Gludsted Mark in Ejstrup parish – a property with over 110 acres, half of which was uncultivated moorland and the rest poor, sandy soil – it had a land value of only one quarter of a barrel of hartkorn. The farmhouse was built of brick with a thatched roof, and the living rooms had clay floors; the hallway and the kitchen were paved with gray stone. Only the eastern outbuilding was in a fairly good state. As seen from the North and beginning from the portion closest to the farmhouse, the outbuilding was arranged as follows: a two-bay granary, a two-bay threshing floor (with a flail), a one-bay feeding barn where my father cut chaff with a cutting box for both cows and horses, then a two-bay stable and finally a four-bay cow barn and pig-gery. An apartment for the hens was established above a pigsty. To the South was a small house for peat, a sheep barn, and a carriage gateway. To the West, there was a small but rather useless building that was demolished. In its place, a few rows of different hardwoods were planted, which served both as an adornment and a valuable resource.



My first memories

One of the first things I remember is that one winter we hired a joiner, Søren Nedergaard, with a few apprentices – they were doing joinery in the so-called eastern room, as flooring was laid in some of the rooms, panels were put up, doors were moved, a couple of beds were made, a new table etc. We got the boards completely raw, unplaned and without tongue and groove, so it required a lot of work.

Cement floors were laid in the sleeping room and pantry, but in the eastern room the earthen floor remained; it was the boys' bedroom where we slept three in one bed, but there was another, small bed, with room for only one boy.

My father always got up very early – in the winter at 4 a.m. He cut the chaff for fodder for an hour or two, got hungry and went to the pantry to get a piece of food. Since the pantry was immediately next to the living room where we slept, we often heard my father going in there and cried out: “Dad, can we get a piece of bread?” Then we usually were handed a piece of dry bread without butter or anything else, but it tasted great, we really enjoyed it and it never occurred to us to complain about the food. We were very poor like most people, but we never missed daily bread; we learned frugality, and, of course, we also were involved in the daily work as soon as we could be helpful.

We also hired a painter named Andersen from Vejle to decorate the living rooms. A midwife named Hansen also came to visit. It was probably on such an occasion that our dog, Wabs, was with me in the living room, and I said [with local dialect] when I passed wind: “Oops, I just let a stinky one. Get a whiff of that, Wabs!” That remark was one I regularly had to hear repeated.

I clearly remember my first day at school. I had to accompany my two brothers, Peter and Anker, four and two years older than I. They were not particu-

larly fond of me accompanying them. I was not able to keep up, so I began to cry; they grumbled and called me a minister because I ‘sang’ – well, we eventually reached the school, about a mile away, and I walked boldly into the classroom wearing a knit cap [bobble hat], gloves and clogs and said “Howdy” to the schoolteacher. The school was full of children; they ranged in age from 7 to 14 years all in the same class. The teacher held school every other day for Gludsted and the other days he went to another village, Fruergaard, and taught there.

From my first years of school, I remember a Christmas tree in the school where the parish minister, the Rev. Schiøler, later bishop of Aarhus, spoke to the school children about the psalm verse “The child that rejoices piously and beautifully, must keep that joy forever.” The Rev. had arrived in a sled – it was furious snow weather – and I remember that one man, Forester Pedersen from Gludsted plantation, asked the minister: “Father, how will you find the way back in this weather?” “Well, now I have a track,” said the minister. After the minister’s speech, there was dancing in the school hall with music from a peasant’s accordion – one perhaps cannot denote the joy as pious and beautiful.

The first teacher I remember from Gludsted School was called Søndergaard – he was something of a drunk and had a habit of giving the children nicknames and making them rhyme: “Mads præst and Kræ hest, Peter Kejl and Thomas Brejl”. But he retired before I began my schooling and was replaced by a teacher named Jensen, who just stayed a few years and then became a folk high school teacher in Sinding near Silkeborg. Then we got a teacher named Andersen, young, talented and very organized. He had unusual abilities as a teacher – he could play along with the children during recess but nevertheless gained their respect. He rarely slapped us, but when he did, he hit hard. In the winter of 1891-92, the new church in Gludsted was under construction. It was built on a plot near the school, so we boys often went there at recess, as there was always something for boys to look at. The church was roofed with slate and to attach them to the battens two holes were punched in each slate. A perforator machine was used. It was tempting. At an opportune moment, I and another boy wanted to try it with a plate, but alas, the plate broke and we slunk back to the school. Surely no one had seen what we had done. Not so. The

teacher had been informed and he probably boxed our ears, so we did not want to try again. And afterward, we asked the pardon of the slate thatcher.

Unfortunately, Teacher Andersen died of tuberculosis at a young age. I remember clearly his long illness, death and funeral and remember him also with a star in his buttonhole – this one I would love to have – as the star indicated that he was an avid teetotaler.

When playing in school or at other children gatherings we initially had some counting-out rhymes, which were used to decide who should be “prisoners” when we were playing “tag” or “take in the chain”. Two examples: I. ”Inkel kinkel køs, kufer i ane, irke bam, ø bø bøf.” II. “The apothecary’s girl, she passed by, she had a bowl of gruel, the bowl burst and went into pieces, and all the gruel poured out.” The participants stood in a circle or line; one of them said this series of words [the words in I. are nonsense syllables] and with each word pointed at the next person. Whoever was hit by the last word would begin the game.

In the winter when there was ice on ponds and marl pits, we enjoyed sliding – we had no skates or even boots, but our clogs were iron-clad and were not so bad for sliding on the ice. Some also made small sleds with iron rails and by using a stick as a goad, they made good headway. It brought special joy when we got permission to tie a sling or swing up in the barn at home, where we leaned back and forth alternately to make the swing go higher and higher. From time to time one or another of us tumbled down, but it did not decrease our desire. On the contrary, it just increased the excitement.

There were many of us boys at home, and it was difficult to reconcile us. Especially my two-years-older brother, Anker, and I often was at loggerheads. He punched me with his fists for no reason. Only by holding him tight could I usually keep him from hitting me; but as soon as I let go, I got the fists again. This was among the reasons I was keen to get away and work away from home.

A very favorite pastime was driving to the mill. We usually did this with oxen. We were not allowed to use the horses since we were not always able to resist speeding. In winter, we used a sled, and it was particularly intriguing when we were allowed to run a little one-bullock sled. It was great fun. The freight we took to the mill was rarely more than half a barrel of grain and was at most a whole barrel of grain.

We lived mostly in good understanding with our neighbors – though there was one called Ole Bredlund who caused some difficulties. The border between his and my father's fields was a narrow green area with a small ditch or creek, and Ole wanted to use this stream to irrigate his pasture. So he put an earthen dam in the stream so that the water could rise and irrigate a part of his meadow. It appeared to him, however, that some boys had fun by lifting the turf a little, which allowed the water to pass by the dam more easily. I do not remember if any of us had been involved, but Ole had a strong suspicion that we had. He went to our father and wanted him to lend our clogs so that he could see if they fit in the footprints. Because of that story, he earned the nickname "Fep"; the reason was that when we saw him at a distance only his head was visible, and when he was running, it looked as if his head bounced (was "fep"-ing), hence the name Ole Fep. There were a whole lot of nicknames around us. It was probably the aforementioned Teacher Søndergaard, who was the author of names like Anders Pjat, Jens Pik, Niels Knævn, Stolt Henrik. Many nicknames were based on the cities people came from: Lars Brejl, Søren Keilstrup, Andreas Hvillum, etc.

A regular Sunday school was held in our home in Gludsted, probably every other Sunday; I remember three different men who came to speak. There was first an older man named Peter Boel, also called Per Kok, who had arthritis and a limp. He was Danneværn's father, lived next to us, and was probably the one who came most often. Then there was Jens Lærke, who lived in Frisbæk, about 3-4 miles from our home, and finally Grocer Kristensen who came from Kejlstrup. He came from a slightly longer distance and was married to my mother's cousin.

At home, we also had regular meetings with speakers visiting from other communities or the local man named Dalgren who lived in Kejlstrup. When they were going to have a meeting, we boys were sent out as inviters. Normally many people attended the meetings. – At that time there were few diversions; newspapers were unknown, the only printed messages we received were "Ugens Nyheder" [The Week's News] and a magazine called "Evangelisten" [The Evangelist], which was a Baptist community periodical, published once a month. We had the Bible and Brorson's hymn book, and the first was read extensively. I have read a lot in these two books, too. I was petrified both by the

introduction to the book of Job and by Brorson's song about the giant Goliath, who came up from Gath to put Saul under taxation. I have read the latter so thoroughly that even in my old age I remember it almost verbatim.

When Sunday school and meetings were held we had to provide seats for many in our home. It was arranged by laying a board over two chairs. This was not comfortable seating, but we were not fastidious in any respect. Even in the school, the benches had no backrest.

One quirk that I noticed: when a line of women were sitting on such a bench and were singing, they swayed back and forth with the song.



1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

My first job on a farm

I had just turned 9-years-old when I got my first job away from home with Ole Poulsen, a farmer in Kejlstrup, who owned my father's birthplace. They were people of faith. They also had a son aged 16, Niels Peter, and a 13-year-old daughter, Kirstine. I was the only outside assistant and had to lend a hand when working both inside and outside: milking, threshing with a flail, churning butter, but I was always addressed in a good and friendly manner. Ole Poulsen was a highly-skilled man with a lot of drive; I was at his farm for two summers. The first summer the whole house was completely renovated inside. The craftsmen always had their meals at the workplace.

The craftsman Søren Nedergaard was the same man who had worked in my home two or three years earlier – he was a bricklayer, carpenter, joiner, and thatcher. The following year the stables were remodeled and a (manual) centrifuge for separating the milk was obtained. It was the first of its kind in the district.

Ole Poulsen had quite a few sows and sold the pigs. He was also good at housework – I remember once when we picked up potatoes in the field. We were all together and it was the husband who went home and made dinner while his wife stayed in the potato field. He could, in fact, make it quicker, and they agreed to it. I also remember that he made shirts and a cap for himself. It was while I was at Ole Poulsen's farm that I attended my first open-air meeting. It was at a bazaar, probably to support the foreign mission. The speaker stood on a wagon, but I no longer remember his name.

The Poulsens' daughter was not a nice girl – she annoyed her parents by unchristian speech and behavior. Later she married my cousin Martin Jensen

from Nørre Snede; they had a grocery store in Brædstrup. She has now been a widow for many years.

During the two summers, I was in Kejlstrup, I attended Frisbæk school with a teacher named Jesse. He was an accomplished man with an unusual sense of order – entering the classroom with your clogs on was not an option.

Just behind the school was a house that was used for the poor people. Here lived an old couple: Per Grøn and his wife Maren – she said about Per [in local dialect]: “Per, my Per can’t smoke anything but ‘De Volle Knaster’” – it was probably the only thing he did do!

One day at the farm the son told me that a man could stand in Herning and speak to someone in Silkeborg. “No, that is certainly a lie,” I said. “They are 25 miles apart and he could not shout that loud!” A bet was made – 10 øre – and I lost. At that time, I had not yet heard about a telephone.

A few small events of a personal nature have to be mentioned. I do not remember any more whether they took place during the first or the second year in Kejlstrup, but both of the events occurred on a Sunday at four weeks’ interval.

Early one Sunday morning in early summer, I had been inside for something when I was called. It was probably something to do with getting the cows out. I hurried and in moving I bumped against a coffee pot. It may have been a little too close to the edge of the stove. It overturned and I got some of the boiling contents on my pants – causing me to wail. As an immediate cooling measure, I was plunged into the water trough. I still have scars on my left leg from the involuntary hot bath.

Four weeks later, and thus on a Sunday, I was in the field – probably to move the cows and horses. A foal lay and stretched playfully, and I ran and pulled it by the tail. It mistook my kindness, jumped up and forcefully planted one of its hind hoofs in my forehead just above the right ear. So I came home with an open wound and had the blood washed off my face. Doctors were an almost unknown thing in those days – at least for minor things. But we lived next door to a midwife and she was not too bad; she put an adhesive plaster on the wound. A scar still reminds me of the event.

When I think back to the two summers at Ole Poulsen, I rejoice; there was a good spiritual drift, devotions were held and a short prayer was offered daily. Ole Poulsen was later engaged as an evangelist and then he sold the farm.



1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

My second job. “Faurholt”

Shortly after Christmas in 1891, I began my second period of service away from home. It was with a farmer named Frederik Jensen, in the community of Faurholt in Vrads parish. It is no exaggeration to say that it was on the Jensen farm that I spent my most difficult times. The man cursed and swore: saying that he would @*!% make me move. His farmhand Martin and I shared a room and a bed located behind the horses. We could barely pass by the horses when getting into the chamber; the chamber itself was a small square room with one wall occupied by a double bed. Against the opposite wall was the farmhand’s chest – only a narrow passageway separated the two. The floor was laid with small pebbles in sand; the walls were probably plastered and the window was only a small rectangular peephole of about 10 inches on each side. As neighbors, we had the chickens on one side and the horses on the other + two outer walls. After some time, I went home and it appeared that there were lice in my shirt. Then my mother wrote a letter to the man, complaining about this situation, and the farmhand was ordered to change his shirt more often. Later that spring, it turned out that we had gotten scab or scabies. Ugh! Green soap was rubbed on our skin and we had to eat flowers of sulfur to drive out the scab. It was a very unpleasant time; all of my skin fell off and a crust was formed at my joints, so I could hardly walk.

The spiritual influence was not any better; the farmhand filled me with ugly stories. Well, indeed it was a bad time in my life.

There were many sheep in Faurholt – they came in at night, and went out again in the morning, and it was my duty to take them in and out. The sheep had to be tethered, and a double tether was used, shared by two sheep. When I got 10-12 sheep together to drag them onto the field, they ran among each

other, got tangled up and were almost impossible to untie. It was a severe test to my composure, and unfortunately, it once went wrong, as my composure did not last. I had a mallet with me to fix the stakes. Alas! One day a sheep teased me, and I raised the mallet and let it fall on the poor sheep's head – the sheep fell and never got up again. Alas! What was a poor boy like me to do? Fortunately, as the man was not home, I had an opportunity to tell his wife, but I lived in fear and trepidation of what would happen when the angry man came home. Fortunately, it went better than I had dared hope. He did not kill me. He just scolded me, but I was so used to that so I thought nothing of it.

A peculiarity in Faurholt was that a boy like me did not have to sit down when he ate – he could stand up.

The days were long – the working day did not end until sunset. Well, I remember once in the harvest, when the wife and I put up sheaves. I had to move the cattle and sheep once in a while and whatever else might be there. It seemed that the woman thought it took too much time. When we reached the time when we normally stopped, the amiable woman said to me: “Well, Hans, now finish here before you go home!” I do not know what time it was when I was finished, but nice moonlight lit the field. I could see well enough to find the sheaves, even if they were not particularly close.

During the spring while I was in Faurholt I was engaged in the planting of the state plantation in Lille Hjøllund south of the road between Vejle and Viborg. I was paid the exorbitant sum of 80 øre per day while providing my own food, but of course, the money went in my master's pocket. I was paid the good sum of 15 kroner, from midwinter until the following November. Now one should also bear in mind that I was a schoolboy and at the same time had to attend classes in Hjøllund school. There was a disabled teacher named Agger. He manipulated his way forward by using two crutches. The schoolmaster had his own way of punishing us. He forbade us to go out on the nearby ice ponds during breaks, but nevertheless we – probably all of us – could not resist the temptation. When we were called in, the master himself stood outside the door with his back against the wall – as we came within reach, he used a long switch to give each of us a rap on the nape of the neck.

The teaching did not amount to much. The teacher always sat at the desk, and when we were heard during the lesson, the children used to have their books lying open in front of themselves and read from them.

It was a long walk to school and I went alone for most of it. I remember that I was often very depressed and unhappy with myself. I cried and prayed to God that I would be a good boy and not play pranks. But when I reached the school and was together with the other boys, my resolve was blown away, and I was probably one of the worst.

Well, bad times will also come to an end – and so did my service in Faurholt. I was glad when we reached November and I was going to be at home for the winter.

After all, I had at least one very happy experience while I was in Faurholt: my father's and mother's silver wedding anniversary on July 13, 1891. It was a great day of celebration in our home, and on this occasion, I had the day off and participated. The crowd of children in our family had reached 12, of which, however, three were dead. The eldest brother was a journeyman tailor in Kibæk – he rode on horseback the nearly 32 miles. The youngest sister Deborah was only just over a month old – and the siblings in between were all ready to celebrate the feast day with our parents.

From my summer in Faurholt, I remember a bishop's visitation to the Vrads school in which we students from Hjøllund school participated. The bishop was an old, white-haired man named Clausen and was from Aarhus.



Siblings born in Gludsted

Andreas, who was born in 1883, died of diphtheria at age 6 – he was oddly enough the only one of us who caught the disease though he was kept at home, because there were no epidemic hospitals at that time. In 1885, yet another boy was born – on April 8, King Christian IX’s birthday. Upon application, he was named after the king and received a royal christening present of 50 kroner. Unfortunately, Christian died by drowning in a pond in the garden. It was on his exact second birthday in 1887, and the event imprinted itself deeply in our minds. I still remember clearly that my mother sat with the little dead child on her lap and tried to bring him back to life. My mother was crying and all we siblings stood around her and wept over the unimaginable thing that had happened to our little brother. Ten minutes earlier he had been running around briskly, and now he was dead and cold. It was for us (me) a spur to turn our minds upwards. My mother told us – it was her own belief – that an angel of God had taken little Christian home to the paradise of God, where there is no sorrow, sin or disease.

In 1887, Marinus was born as the ninth son of the family. In 1888, Anne Kirstine was born. I remember her especially as a little songbird – particularly one small verse I remember: “Are you happy and joyful, then sing by heart – sing! A song from your heart does well, relieves many a sorrowful soul. Sing by heart, sing!” In 1891, our younger sister was born – Debora. Finally, in 1894 the last sibling was born – a boy. He was named after Andreas, our brother who had died earlier of diphtheria.



My third job

I had my third job as a farmhand with a farmer named Søren Thygesen, Storgård in Ejstrup. The Thygesens were young people from Ikast near Herning who had moved to Ejstrup 3–4 years earlier. He was a quiet, right-minded man who knew how to deal with his assistants in a good way. One of my fellow farmhands was an older fellow from Gludsted, Jens Østergaard, a.k.a. Jens Litten; he was more than 30 years old and was severely bowlegged. The second farmhand Martin Moesgård was a brother of Farmer Thygesen's wife, also from Ikast. He was something of a mischief-maker, so we used to tease and make fun of Jens Litten. It led him – one day when we were cleaning out the pig house – to throw a dollop of dung straight into my face. I got furious and scolded him; he could just wait until I grew up, he could wait to get such and such. Jens Litten became apprehensive and eased off. There were also two maids, but they did not leave anything in my memory.

I went to classes at the Ejstrup school where the previously mentioned Teacher Petersen was the schoolmaster or the clerk as it usually was called. It's not fun to arrive alone as a strange boy in a flock of big boys. I also had to suffer some humiliation in the first days, but thankfully there was a boy who showed me kindness – his name was Enevold Nicolaisen. He defended me, and it helped. The clerk was married to my mother's aunt, an older man and somewhat fond of drinking; he had his own way to keep track of things. He made a "mouse" out of a handkerchief, and sat up on the teacher's desk and threw the "mouse" down to the one he wanted to punish – that person was supposed to bring the "mouse" back to the teacher. Another one of his methods was to move the culprit to the back of the classroom. When I graduated in the spring I was ranked as no. 2 in the class, but for some misconduct was placed in the back

row. One day the teacher urged me to mend my ways and stated that he would like me moved up again, as I was one of his most talented boys. But I was impertinent and said that I had not gained my skills here. The teacher was, of course, not happy to hear that and pointed out that he was known to teach people's children well. I replied that I had not heard that. I was kept at a place in the back a little longer. On another occasion, it was during a discussion of Denmark's history, the teacher asked with pathos: "Can you tell me who Canute the Great was the son of?" And I responded very perkily: "Of his father!" That made the clerk furious, he jumped up and was going to pull my ears, but luckily my good friend Enevold was sitting beside me. He warned the angry teacher that he should be careful not to pull my ears off, because they were somewhat loose. The teacher had a few days earlier pulled so hard that the skin behind my ears was cracked. That muted his fury, so it ended up that he would report me to the school commission – that remained a threat.

My relationship with the teacher was never very good. I had a pocket watch; it was a gift from my father, which was something quite unique at that time – the teacher was now and then very unpunctual, so it annoyed him when we wanted to remind him what time it was.

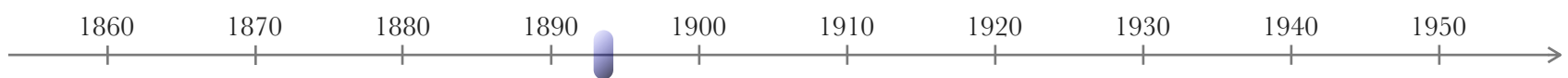
My daily work at Storgaard was to look after cattle and sheep, and otherwise take a hand at anything. We had a neighbor Laust Holm, a farmer and councilor. He had some lambs running loose, including a ram, which not infrequently came to visit our sheep. I may well have looked askance at the ram visiting our sheep – I had heard and seen how they treated an old ram by tying its scrotum and testicles and thus making it sterile. That day I caught the guy and took care of the business with a piece of twine. Unfortunately, I was not trained in the profession, so the string was not tightened enough, but it was tight enough to cause harm. After some time, Laust Holm discovered that something was wrong with the lamb. His suspicion was directed toward me, and I had to admit that I had been there. Obviously, Laust Holm got angry and demanded compensation, and the matter was closed by my Father's delivering another lamb as a replacement.

At Storgaard, I had a good time. In the winter time, we were always together as a family in the evening; the farmer and the farmhands often played cards, "sixty-six" or "skevindsel" for a 1-øre [a penny]. The diet was good, but there

was no Christianity. The first farmhand Jens Litten was paid by being allowed to feed a couple of his steers on the fodder and grass, so that he could sell them and buy a few others since he saw that he could profit by it – in addition, he got some salary in cash.

Once when we were home alone at Storgaard we got the idea that we should drink “ølhunde,” i.e., a beer glass or cup half-filled with beer and then a glass of brandy over it. We had a few more and it was not long before I got sick, had to go to bed and vomited. It was the first time I experienced that sickness – it was not exactly appealing.

I still remember Søren Thygesen’s parting words to me: “Let me see, Hans, that you are behaving well, so we do not have to hear anything bad about you!” A few years later I ended up working at the farm next to his birthplace “Hagelskjær” in Ikast parish.



At home 1892–93

From November 1, 1892, to March 1, 1894, I was at home in Gludsted helping my parents with the farming. We normally had two horses and a pair of bullocks; for plowing bullocks will do, but not for harrowing as it must be done at a certain speed so the harrow can work satisfactorily in the field.

All grain was sown by hand and threshing was done with a flail; but when serious threshing was required, we hired a fit man for the day. His name was Niels Peter Frederiksen. He certainly could swing a flail, so it was a pleasure to watch. He could also cut peat, 10,000 blocks of peat per day – normally 6,000–7,000 blocks of peat were the norm for a day's work.

It was my final year of school, and if I remember right, Teacher Andersen was sick throughout this year, but he still lived at the school. During his illness, a substitute was responsible for his work, but he was far from being up to Teacher Andersen. I was No 1 in class the last year, which probably does not say much. I remember one day we had arithmetic and were sweating over a problem; I could not figure out how to solve it; then our sick teacher came in and tiptoed around and looked at us. He came up to me, stood behind me and looked a short time at the figures, pointing here and there, and suddenly a light dawned on me, and the arithmetical problem was solved as easily as putting my hand in a glove.

Later in the autumn the health of Teacher Andersen was going from bad to worse; during his last days, neighbors and friends took turns in sitting up with him at night. That afternoon, when he died, the church bell was rung. The largest farm in the parish, Gludstedgård, was situated close to the school and was owned by a proprietor named Helms. Before his marriage Teacher Andersen had taken his meals at this place, and he also spent much of his spare time

there; two girls from the same place attended the school and, for this reason, Helms took care of the funeral. The dead body was placed in the carriage gateway on the farm. The place was beautifully decorated with spruce, and a lighted candle was placed on each side of the head of the coffin – the coffin was open. An early friend from the teachers' college gave a speech; Proprietor Helms did likewise. Virtually all school children from the district were gathered and probably most of the parents, too. We were sincerely mourning his death.

The salary of a teacher was at that time 600 kroner annually, with an additional 20 kroner for chanting and 20 kroner for ringing the church bell.

Upon the examination in the fall of 1893 I was to leave school; and on this occasion, my father showed up to talk to the minister, the Rev. Karstoft, on the subject. At that time, the minister was also the chairman of the school committee. At the same time, a forest guard called Pedersen also wanted his son to complete his schooling. The minister obviously examined us a little; I do not remember what I was asked, but I remember that my poor neighbor was asked the names of our first “parents,” because Thor did not know the answer. The minister got angry, and the boy's father tried to help his kid along, but he remained silent. Whether he was allowed to leave I do not remember; I succeeded.

We were very poor at home. There was almost nothing to sell – well, once in a while a small lump of butter. The pigs were only for our own consumption; normally we had a few sows, so there were some piglets for sale and as well some lambs. Actually, my father had worked hard at cultivating the heath and making the property in Gludsted fertile with marl, but the rewards were not proportional to the amount of his work. Sometimes my father drove to Vejle with a load of peat, but that was 26 miles – then he could get 4 kroner for a load of peat. If we needed new clothes, the tailor came with a needle, scissors, and a tape measure. Then for several days he cut and sewed from homespun woolen fabric. That lasted for a long time. We had no boots, in the winter perhaps clog boots; but in the summer only bare legs – that was the easiest as well as the cheapest.

In the fall of 1893 I tried to find a job as an apprentice at the mill, although as a young man I dreamed that something big would turn up. We had, for ex-

ample, some cards for fortune-telling that read various rhymes, including: “If you peek behind the veil of the future, I predict you will see a manor with many cows!”

This really stimulated my imagination, although that manor was marked only in the sand of the gravel pit and the cows were but a collection of beautiful field stones, arranged in long rows. Less interesting was another fortune-telling card that read: “A prediction for you is utterly impossible, I do not have the heart – it is so terrible!” But then I got sober and realized that to get something I had to start again. The mill attracted me as something exciting; so I visited a few millers, one in Thorlund and one in Nørre Snede, but they did not need me. So nothing came of it. I had to resign myself to agriculture and that I have never since regretted, as there has always been enough work.



At Gammel Hagelskjær in the parish of Ikast

On November 1, 1893, my brother Peter took a job with Farmer Anders Svendsen in Ikast (brother of our uncle Søren Svendsen in Hedegaard). When he found out that the brother of the wife at Gammel Hagelskjær needed a kid like me, he did the initial negotiations leading to my being hired at a salary of 64 kroner for the eight months from March 1 to November 1, 1894. Gammel Hagelskjær in the community of Ikast, Hammerum district, was one of the best farms in the area with a total of 110 acres of arable land and 27 acres of meadow. The farm had previously been considerably larger, but two farms, each approximately 110 acres, were separated from Gammel Hagelskjær and given to Jens and Søren, the two brothers of the owner of that time. The owner Johannes Lauritsen was a regular good man, well regarded in the community and chairman of the dairy. His wife Elisabeth Salholt Lauritsen was born in Salholt near Herning. She was an outstanding woman who knew how to manage her household with a skillful hand, and yet she was popular with the servants. On the farm were the farmhand Niels Jokum and two maids, Laurence and Line, in addition to his son Laurits age 15, the daughters Maria age 14, Karoline age 12 and two younger sons Nybo age 7 and Biehgaard age 5.

I arrived at the farm on March 1 and was assigned a bunk next to the farmhand Niels Jokum. The chamber was placed next to the stables and had two double beds. On the other side as its nearest neighbor was a feed storage room.

It was a fine home with a Christian character – grace was said and everyone frequently went to church. The wife persistently made us attend. However, the husband was certainly not a confirmed Christian. It was only a few years later, after the new minister, the Rev. Aksel Rasmus Brostrøm, had come to the parish as a curate, that he became a Christian. His preaching led to a major re-

vival, particularly among young people, but many of the older people were also saved by his clear talk about sin and grace.

You can probably surmise that the awakening had been prepared for. Some years earlier a young farmer moved to the parish from Ulsted in Vendsyssel and bought the “Frisenborg” farm near Ikast Kirkeby. His name was Christian Nielsen and he was married; he brought along a farmhand and a maid from Northern Jutland. He was a believer, a warm-hearted Christian man, talented and very musical. He began to gather young people to practice spiritual songs, and he taught them part singing – it was greatly appreciated.

Under the old minister, the Rev. Klein, church-going had by the way virtually ceased; he was very old, a freemason and also liked to go to the inn. But after the arrival of the new minister, there was a great change. The young minister was warm-hearted and unusually eloquent – someone at the time called him the Rev. Ordstrøm [the Rev. Jabber]. He soon had the church full, gathered the youth in homes for singing and conversation. During the winter, he held Bible readings in churches; and during the summer, he held meetings in gardens and on farms. He staged large joint summer meetings and excursions, including to Silkeborg on Constitution Day and to Vildbjerg near Herning, where there also was a devoted minister, named Nyholm.

The summer excursion to Vildbjerg in 1896. The town of Ikast is about 8 miles east of Herning by the Skanderborg-Skjern railway, and Vildbjerg is about 10 miles west / northwest of Herning. Since bikes were still not yet common, we were forced to use the railway and horse-drawn carriages. We pre-ordered “bench carts,” i.e., closed freight wagons, in which long benches were inserted. It was cheaper than third-class, and in this way, we came from Ikast to Herning. There we were picked up with horse-drawn carriages which farmers living in Vildbjerg-Timring-Nøvling readily made available. After arriving we all went to the church in Vildbjerg, and afterward, we were distributed in different homes. I and several others stayed with a farmer and miller in the town, dined and had coffee. In the afternoon, there was a meeting in the garden of the rectory, where both ministers spoke and the choir from Ikast did part singing. We had our evening meal with our hosts and then we went by horse-drawn carriages to Herning, the journey shortened by singing several spiritual songs. It was a great experience to be part of such a trip.

Elisabeth Hagelskjær left her mark on life in the home. It was nice in the evening when we gathered in the large living room. The husband made straw baskets – or “leap” as we called it – made of straw and willow twigs, the wife spun, the maids carded, the farmhand and I read; we borrowed the books in the library of Ikast School. At that time, I enjoyed reading stories written by C. A. Thyregod, and historical novels, such as “Niels Juel” and “Tordenskiold.”

My job was generally to take care of the cattle and participate in milking; the maids took care of the milking, but I had to help. The farmhand Niels Jokum liked to visit the inn once in a while. I remember that once he wanted me to join him, so I did so, but I made it a condition that I would not have anything to drink. However, punch was served and several encouraged me to take a glass, but Niels kept his word, defended me and said that he had promised that I could abstain and so I did. In that and in many similar situations, I see that God's good hand saved me and answered my parents' prayers.

When we reached November 1894, I was promoted from shepherd boy to second farmhand, and the farmer's son was to be first farmhand. It was meaningless to have a couple of boys aged 16 and 15 years to do work suited for grown-ups. It was, of course, very rigorous work: all the grain was to be threshed by flail and harvested with a scythe, the meadows as well were to be cut with a scythe, lots of manure had to be loaded, etc. Once in a while, we perhaps had a day-laborer, but it was rare. And then 110 kroner for wages for a full year. A farmhand by the name of Jens Jensen worked at the neighboring farm. Later he called himself Jens Hyldgaard and became the first chairman in the movement for Danish small farmers and was for many years a member of the Danish Parliament. He, his younger brother Nicolaj, and we often got together. – While I was in Hagelskjær a new dairy was built in Ikast. Another small dairy was already there, but supposedly the members of the dairy did not get along. Johannes Hagelskjær was chairman of the new dairy, and his brother Jens Lauritzen was chairman of the community parish council.

On November 1, 1895, I moved to “Flaskager” also in the community of Ikast. The owner Rasmus Rasmussen, called Rasmus Flaskager, was also a wheelwright and carpenter; he was a widower and had no less than six daughters at home and one son, Jørgen. The farm was probably about 80 acres, the buildings had been newly constructed after a fire the previous year; and there

were two horses, a pair of steers and 8–10 dairy cows. The two eldest daughters Margrete and Eliane were seamstresses and went to sew for people outside of the family; and Ane Kirstine and Laurence mostly took care of the household. I worked together with Laurence for more than 1½ years in Hagelskjær. And finally they had girl No 5 Metha, Jørgen aged 14 and the youngest Johanne 12 years old. As work inside the house did not take up all the time for the girls they helped outside doing anything: scattering manure, sheaving oats during harvest, driving the harrow, doing the milking, etc., and they also knitted and crocheted head scarves meant for a shop in Herning. Rasmus Flaskager was also a wheelwright and carpenter and did that as a business – for that purpose he had a skilled worker as an assistant. The name of the skilled worker was Søren Sørensen, and he had been an apprentice with Søren Nedergaard, when he spent six years rebuilding the dwelling of Ole Poulsen’s farm in Kejlstrup. The business consisted mainly of modernizing old wagons. When a wagon was repaired and painted, Rasmus Flaskager traded it away for another which needed repairs and in doing so made a little money. He also made desks for a school in the neighboring Sunds parish.

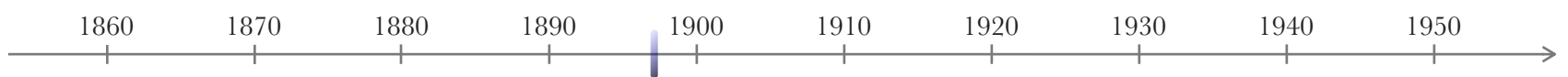
In Ikast it was very common to take turns having parties for the young people on the farms; here you played different games, but things happened to these parties – like so many other things – after the arrival of the new minister. They acquired another character; a number of songs were sung and devotions were held. While I was at Flaskager a gathering of youth was arranged at Hagelskjær, and the young people from Flaskager were invited. However, I was not invited. Usually, it was a custom that the servants were invited to these gatherings. The son Jørgen did not attend either, but he was only 14 years old. The next day Jørgen asked one of the sisters, Metha, why Hans had not been invited to the party yesterday. She replied, “Oh no, do you think it would be right for a heathen to be amongst so many believers?” Jørgen told me what his sister had said. I was hurt to hear it, but probably it contributed significantly to the fact that I seriously considered being baptized. At the first opportunity I had the eldest daughter, Margrete, tell the Rev. Brostrøm that I wanted to be baptized. A few days afterward I was summoned to a meeting at the rectory to be examined on religious knowledge by both ministers. Straight away, a day was fixed when I was to meet in the church. It was a week-day March 20, 1896, and

no one was present except the minister, the parish clerk, and my two sponsors: the master and his oldest daughter. The baptism took place with my kneeling down on a stool by the font and answering the questions myself. In baptism I was given a new name – I had thought of the doubting Thomas, and that was the name I chose. After the baptism, we walked or drove back to Flaskager, and after returning home, I went into my little room and knelt and prayed. I do not remember the words or prayer – but when I got up again, I felt an inexpressible joy in my mind and a firm conviction that now I was by the grace of God a child of God. This state of happiness did not last, of course. The devil is the enemy of our soul and still active – he will succeed in taking us down and making us believe that the knowledge of salvation is just wishful thinking. But it is nice that we have the word of God and that we may come to the communion table and the holy community, giving us new strength in the struggle.

Generally, it was an instructive job in Flaskager. I learned to paint wagons, make putty, straighten nails and use them again. We plowed and harrowed the field by ourselves. I was a sort of first farmhand, who saw that the plowing was started and finished properly. Actually, we worked with joy and delight, as Rasmus understood how to praise us, so we went ahead with cheerful spirits.

The eldest daughter Margrete had been at Haslev Højskole about a year before, and she was full of praise about what she had experienced. After that, she had had a job with a minister at Jyllinge near Roskilde. Her enthusiasm for Haslev infected me, so I felt like giving Sjælland a try a few years later.

I had a washing machine made for my Mother – it cost 7 kroner. Not a large sum, but considering that my entire annual salary amounted to a total of 125 kroner, it was enough for me.



In Lille Bredlund

November 1, 1896, my time of service with Rasmus Rasmussen Flaskager was finished and I got a recommendation reading as follows:

Thomas H. C. T. C. has served me November 1, 1895, to November 1, 1896, and in this time, he has performed his duties with diligence and fidelity.

Tulstrup, Ikast

R. Rasmussen.

My parents had sold the farm in Gludsted and bought another in Lille Bredlund in the parish of Vrad only a few miles away. The farm was about 80 acres, and now I was returning home to assist them. The trip home was done in the manner that Jørgen Flaskager drove me the 7 miles to Isenvad and here my father met to take me the last 9 miles.

My father attended to the cattle and I plowed stubble fields and threshed crops – we did not grow beets at that time. There was no such thing as salary, but very often I threshed crops, mostly rye, with a young neighbor Søren Mikelsen. I got 0.25 kroner for the stook (60 sheaves) + board; it was pretty hard work for a lad of 17 years, but I set to work in high spirits and usually managed 3 stooks a day. In those days quite a decent day's pay.

My mother's grandmother, or rather, the second wife of my mother's maternal grandfather (Mads Bjørnskov) had for some years boarded and lodged with my parents – 30 kroner quarterly – even though she had accommodation and

support provided by the new owner of the farm Bjørnskov which her husband had owned. But when she was old (probably 89 years), she did not feel comfortable being alone and wanted to be with my mother, for they were both members of the Baptist community – a sympathy she did not share with Uncle Mads Madsen (then the owner of Bjørnskov), who had other interests and was only glad to get rid of her.

At Christmas, I visited Ikast and made visits to both Flaskager and Hagelskjær. There was still spiritual commotion there, and among others Johannes Hagelskjær, my former employer, had converted. At a meeting at Hagelskjær, the paper Kristeligt Dagblad [Christian Daily] was highly recommended; the newspaper was then in its infancy. After Christmas, things went quickly downhill with old great-grandmother's health; she was bedridden and could not help herself with anything. I can still hear her say: "Quench my thirst a little, Mom!" She often needed a little to drink. Later in February, she died as quietly and calm as the sunset in the fall. I remember that it was a quiet, starry night with a little snow on the ground because I was sent over to our neighbor Mikkel Sørensen to ask his wife to come and help my mother wash and tidy the dead body. It was laid on straw. In the guest room, a table top was placed on a few chairs, with a layer of long straw on top as a bed for the body, which was covered with a sheet. The next day the carpenter was sent for. He measured the body and made a coffin. After that, the body was dressed up and placed in the coffin, which then was placed in the threshing barn until the day of the funeral.

A funeral costs money, and if anything was scarce in my home, it was money. But something had to be done. In Silkeborg, about 16 miles from home, there was a market on one of these days. After careful consideration, it was decided that I should take a few cows to the market. To have a selection, I got three cows and one heifer coupled together. I left home with the cattle on the day before the market and had to stay overnight at Funder Inn. I arrived there in the twilight, got the cows situated and was assigned a chamber in the stable to sleep in. I had probably brought my own food and had only a cup of coffee at the inn, then sat and watched the card game. I wondered at this skilled millworker who only had one arm – he did well with playing cards, and it was said that he managed the work at the mill well.

It was a little creepy and cold out in the chamber, but I was not spoiled and found it all right. The next morning I got up early, had coffee, left with the cows and reached Silkeborg in good time. As previously arranged, our neighbor Søren Mikkelsen was there to help me sell 1–2 or 3 of the cattle, as best we could do. He drove his wagon to the market. I stood there steadily, and held the cows from early morning to mid-afternoon in the winter cold, replaced by Søren Mikkelsen only while I got a cup of coffee. Then I felt an urge to bring home something nice from the market, and bought four pounds of apples, but unfortunately, they were frozen and hard as stone. I got them in a handkerchief and carried them all the way home. Well, the trading did not work – we did not get any bids. So I began – somewhat depressed – to walk home. When I had traveled a good distance, a man joined me and asked whether I had been to the market. And I told him what had happened. After that, he said he would probably purchase the heifer and pay 35 kroner – for a large 2-year heifer!! Well, I thought, we needed the money so I let him buy the heifer. It was dark before I got home. Both the cows and I were tired and had sore legs, as we had walked 20 miles in a day and 12 miles the day before. Dad was fairly disappointed with the poor results, but you cannot force people to buy.

A few days later the funeral took place at the cemetery in Nørre Snede. There was a tremendous snowfall. The corpse was taken by sled, as were the mourners. Only close-by neighbors and my mother's siblings attended – they brought shovels to make sure they got through.

Not long after the funeral my father swapped the farm in Lille Bredlund for a farm in Stilbjerg in the parish of Ringive – it was 136 acres, but only 41 were cultivated, the rest were heath and bog. Since the exchange of real property did not include livestock, an auction was held at the farm in Bredlund. However, it was almost all old junk – we moved the livestock along to the new farm.

The same winter I very much thought of getting an opportunity to study, so my father approached Teacher Jesse in the school in Frisbæk. He was willing to give me some private lessons, but it lasted for only a few days, as our move on about April 1 ended the whole thing.

From the winter in Bredlund, I have a remembrance that is not among my happy memories. My older brother Anker had a job on a farm in the neighborhood of Tørring, and he sometimes came home from there for a visit. One day

toward the evening he came home drunk. His drinking was not a rare thing, but this is the only time I remember him coming home in that condition. He lurched, and my mother wanted to take him inside. But then he wanted to see the neighbor. He ran along the embankment of a ditch. He could not keep his balance, fell and came to rest upside down. He could not stand up again, so I helped him to his feet and took him to bed. When I think of him and many others in the family and acquaintances who have succumbed to the vice of drinking and as a result destroyed themselves, their family and their future, you might understand why I hate liquor in any form and do what I can so that my children do not indulge in the curse of drinking. It begins innocently with a glass of wine or beer, and gradually the desire and craving are awakened and take power. That is why my advice is: Abstain, abstain from all drinking of liquor in any form.

Another memory from that time: My older brother Mads had been abroad for five years in Germany, Switzerland and France, and came home that winter to get started for himself as Master Tailor, but he lacked the money to get started. He then came up with the idea to see all of his uncles and ask them either to loan him outright or loan him with collateral an amount of 200 kroner. In this way, he succeeded in raising a few thousand kroner. He started a business in Esbjerg on Kongensgade [King's Street], but that lasted only briefly. So he went to Aarhus at Store Torv [Great Square], and there he did fairly well.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue vertical marker is positioned at the year 1900.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

In Stilbjerg, Ringgive parish

Around April 1, 1897, we moved with our cattle, horses, wagons and household effects along the 26-mile-long road from Lille Bredlund to Stilbjerg in the parish of Ringgive. I and my two younger brothers Marinus and *Andreas* led the cattle, and my father drove a wagon with the other members of the family. We stopped to rest along the way with [maternal] Aunt Anne and Uncle Søren Svendsen in Hedegaard, where we were well welcomed and had *sødsuppe* [a sweet soup] and other goodies for dinner. It was a place where we always were happy to visit. As minors, we often came for a visit, and it was always something of an event. The field was situated near a couple of small lakes – Ensø and Trindsø – where the cousins had a boat, from which they fished. During the visits, we normally had a sail, and our aunt always gave us good food, boiled eggs, etc. After a rest we continued again with the cattle – it was a tough trip and it was late before we reached the end of the way. My father and the family arrived before us.

Next door to the farm in Stilbjerg lived a man named Hans Andersen or Hans Sjællænder [i.e., a man from Zealand], which was his name in everyday speech. He had previously been addicted to drinking, but through full and complete repentance, he had been freed of the shackles of drinking. He had turned into a happy, joyful Christian, and he became very important to me in the few years we lived there. He sang well and willingly and definitely lived the life of a true Christian. He had a small farm with one horse and a few cows; and he was also a thatcher and traveled far and wide doing that work. And finally, he was a planter on an area of 200 acres. A few years earlier the municipality had purchased the acreage for 3.5 kroner per acre and now had small areas planted with spruce and pine each year. Hans Andersen was expected to take care of a

small nursery, too. It was a lot of work, even more than he could deal with. He offered to hire me to help him for 1 krone per day + board, and later when the planting was over I helped him with his thatch work. I happily accepted his offer and was always happy to work with him. I was always paid my money immediately.

There was also another neighbor; we called his farm the station because Hedeselskabet's [Danish Heath Society's] 15-mile-long marl-railway to Grindsted and surrounding areas emanated from there. The marl was dug out from the field of the farm – and there was also a brickyard, where they burned the bricks using peat from his own bog. He sold the bricks in Grindsted and they were transported by the marl-railway, too. This man had plenty of work both at the brickyard kneading the clay, turning the bricks and then wheeling them into the drying shed, and also in the time of harvest. I worked a lot with him, but unfortunately, it was difficult to get money from him – thus he still owes me another 19 kroner from that time. Generally, they were nice people. They had many children, who as early as possible were involved in the work. I also helped to thresh the rye on a machine there – a hand threshing machine – it was not much fun, it cost me sweat with a vengeance.

I also had a little work with a third neighbor, master builder Hans Petersen. He employed four men, partly journeymen partly apprentices; I participated for about a week as a helper. I also had to help a little at home, and in consideration for that I was allowed to keep a sheep on fodder and grass, so whatever the wool and lamb could bring was mine.

In my Stilbjerg days, I often went to church at Grene – 4 miles – it was a sub-branch church to Grindsted and had been built some years before. At that time a young believing minister, Vibe-Petersen, later dean of Rødding, Sønderjylland [North Slesvig], served there – he was a good man, I liked to listen to him. We also often visited Grønbjerg, where there was a mission house and where regular meetings were held, as well as the YMCA and the Sunday school, and we were only a few miles from the place. Hans Sjællænder also held Sunday school in Stilbjerg school, assisted by Teacher Søslev. Hans Sjællænder himself had two unconfirmed children at home – Gustav and Agnete – a couple of nice and friendly children. He also had two sons and one daughter above the age of confirmation. On the whole, there were more than a few believers in

the region. In the Grønbjerg mission house, I heard a young teacher from the region of Tarm. He spoke and sang a new song for us. For many years he has been the member of parliament from the constituency of Ringkøbing County – Vesterager is his name.

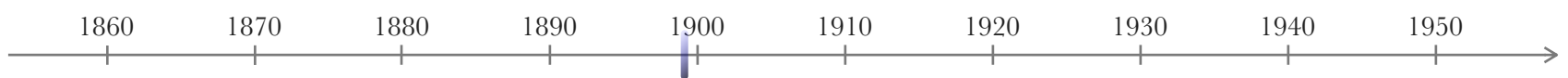
As of November 1, 1897, I was engaged half the time, that is every second week, with my uncle, Farmer Christian Madsen in Lille Hestlund, in the parish of Give, a farm of about 100 acres, some of which was moor and meadow. My pay for one year was set at 110 kroner + grass and feed for one sheep.

Toward the spring of 1898, my parents had to give up farming since there were no further opportunities to raise the money needed to pay the interest and principal on their steadily increasing debt burdens. Although the amount at stake was relatively modest, it was sufficient to exceed their abilities. It amounted to 4,000 kroner in unsecured debt and 2,700 kroner to the credit association against the mortgage on the farm. Since the interest was not paid in due time, the credit association took over the farm as security and put it up for public auction, but it only brought 2,000 kroner for the 140 acres, some livestock – probably one horse and 3–4 cows, and some farming implements. My parents then rented an apartment in Vejle, Fiskergade, near the old steam mill. My father did random work, and my mother tried her hand in a little trade with bread, beer, and milk, but with only moderate success in the beginning. Five minor children were still at home, so there were needs each day. Later they got an apartment on Vardevej and my father got a steady job at Hess's factories, where there was a foreman who many years earlier had worked with my father – this was probably the reason that my father continued to work there. Eventually, my mother worked up a little more trade, and the older children got jobs as couriers in the town. So they gradually managed so well that my mother said that they never had had it as good as now in their old age.

When my parents moved to Vejle, I was spending half of my time with Hans Sjøllænder when I was not staying in Hestlund. I had a good time in every respect with my Uncle Christian, and Aunt Johanne had no idea how much good she did for me. They had no outside helpers but had six children, none of whom had been confirmed. The oldest was a girl of 13–14 years and next his son Mads of 12 years. We helped each other as best we could with the work.

During the other half of my time, I was mostly with Hans Sjællænder, either doing thatch work or other casual work.

I had applied for and also been granted support for a stay at Haslev Højskole [a folk high school] and was determined to go to the military draft board to postpone my time as a soldier while I continued my stay at the high school. On October 22, I met with the draft board in Vejle and was declared permanently unfit for any military service; and in accordance with the law on military service (March 6th, 1869, § 18), I was removed from the conscription register. So I finished that quickly. There were 16 of us from the community of Ringive who met with the draft board in Vejle on that day. On the homeward journey we talked about the fact that to our knowledge we did not have any disabilities, but still only four were drafted. The rest were either dismissed or told to go home and to meet at the draft board next year. On November 2, the same year, I started my first travel to Zealand at 4 o'clock in the morning. We went by freight wagon from Stilbjerg to Vejle, where we arrived at 8 o'clock. I visited my parents, had food and received many good wishes for my journey. At 1 o'clock the train left for Fredericia and from there by ferry to Strib, again by rail to Nyborg, where we again changed to a ferry. By that time there was a strong wind, so the ferry was tossed about. This combined with the many travelers caused us eventually to be very late in arriving at Roskilde. We were four hours late, so the train southwards to Haslev had long departed. In Roskilde, I met with three other young men who also were going to Haslev Højskole; we went for a walk in the town, to find, if possible, an accommodation for the night. However, since it would cost 2 kroner – a large sum at that time – we decided to spend the night at the railway station in the waiting room. We placed tables and benches together and made ourselves as comfortable as possible on the hard benches. Besides us four, there were quite a few travelers heading southward. The 2nd class waiting room with comfy sofas was handed over to the ladies – we took turns lying down or walking back and forth on the floor as we could stand it. The next day the train departed southwards at 8:30 a.m. We arrived at Haslev in good shape and were well received at the folk high school.



At Haslev Højskole

In the winter of 1898–99 Haslev Højskole had 110 students, which broke down as follows: 50 students in the handicraft section under the leadership of Builder Christensen; 20 students in the agriculture section under the leadership of Agronomist Sandbæk; 40 students in the folk high school section were distributed in two classes under the leadership of Teacher Lauritzen, Teacher Underbjerg and old Teacher Hansen. Moreover, we had Headmaster Davidsen teaching some lessons, as well as Tenant Burmeister who gave lessons in farm accounting, and Veterinarian Andreassen and Doctor Paludan-Müller who gave some lectures. Moreover, many visiting persons gave lectures during the winter, including Bachelor of Divinity Olfert Ricard, the Reverends A. Fibiger, Cold and Ingomar Petersen, all from Copenhagen, and also Aksel Bülow, who was a cousin of Mrs. Davidsen. Missionary Anders Stubkjær with his pipe, and even the old Rev. Vilhelm Beck also came for a visit once, but he did not give us a lecture, as he did not have time. There was great excitement when he left the school. All the students were lined up along both sides of the drive to the high school to greet the old chief.

Life at the folk high school passed away very enjoyable; the school was organized so we always had enough to do. Lessons in arithmetic and writing alternated with informative and educational lectures. Each day began with devotions by the Director Davidsen, then a lecture alternately by different teachers. After the lunch break, Davidsen always gathered all students for a lecture about great men either from the Bible or from history. It was for me the highlight of the education.

In our spare time we did our homework, did arithmetic, wrote essays, made drawings or went for walks in the beautiful surroundings, sometimes all to-

gether to the nearby count's estates of Bregentved and Gisselfeld, each an attraction. Once we walked to the forest of Denderup Vænge with the grassland hill, 380 feet high, probably Zealand's highest point.

It also happened that we were playing a very popular game – slapping each other on the behind. It works like this: One of the participants sat on a chair with a cap in his lap, while another of the participants bowed with his face in the cap; the others were placed in a circle and one of them gave him a smack on the behind with the flat of his hand, then the “one smacked” would quickly get up and point to the person who had smacked him – if he found the right one, they switched places – otherwise, he had to take another turn.

At the end of the day's lessons devotions were led by one of the teachers before dinner. All students participated. At that time heating in the dormitory rooms was unknown and there was hardly any light: for each room with 3 or 4 students we got one candle to share for a whole week. That was why we normally used the classrooms at night working on various problems, as we had good warmth there and light from kerosene lamps. The air was not always nice. Smoking was forbidden in the classrooms, but a little red-haired dairyman thought that he could allow himself a little smoke on his long porcelain pipe. One day when he had left the room, he had placed his pipe in a corner. Then a few students had got hold of a mouse. They stuffed the mouse in the pipe, some tobacco on top of it and then they put his pipe back in place. When our dairyman returned he lit the pipe, but it was not long before that a bad smell of burning came out and the red-haired fellow began to spit – he never smoked again in class. Before we went to bed, we again held a little devotional, where those students, who could and would, carried out the ceremony in turn – it was good practice, which also gave them some confidence.

At Christmas, when almost all the students went home, there were about 5–6 of us students, who – due to lack of funds or other reasons – spent the Christmas holidays at the school, but we were not to be felt sorry for. We had a very enjoyable time as we did some arithmetic, drawing and whatever else could be done. We were also invited to the lighting of the Christmas tree at the mission house, with the Davidsens and with the teachers. I was very pleased with that Christmas in Haslev. On the whole, I can say that my folk high school days

were a rich and happy time, for which I thank God. We had our eyes and minds opened to so many things, especially valuable were our friendships.

On Sundays, we often went to the church in Dalby, just over 4 miles. Here we listened to Dean Blom and his easily understood preaching. Sometimes some of us went to Braaby church, which was only 2–3 miles away. Here Rev. Baumann preached. He had been the chairman of the Danish Missionary Society for a few years. On Sunday evenings we had a meeting at the mission house – usually the speaker was a visitor.

Tenant Burmeister farmed land that he rented from the school and also provided meals for the students according to the contract. There were a number of students who complained about the diet. Bread slices were too thick and margarine was spread too thinly. I was fortunately not spoiled and thus I was well pleased – we had always plenty of food and put on considerable weight. It was Burmeister's last winter at the school – apparently the governing body paid him 8,000 kroner to leave.

On April 1, 1899, Davidsen took over the tenant farming and the provision of meals for the students. In following years a strong increase in student enrollment took place; whether the change of diet has had any significant role in that, I dare not say. Old Teacher Hansen was a very good teacher, but unfortunately, he had such a low voice that he was difficult to hear and understand. He spared no effort if someone asked for his help. He was very eager to teach us chemistry, gardening, drawing, leveling, and surveying. Actually, when I think of it, I am surprised to see how much we learned from him during the short time we were at school. Afterward year after year he tirelessly maintained his connection with former students. I remember him with great joy and gratitude.

For my stay at the high school I was granted a subsidy from the county of 20 kroner per month, but since the fee amounted to 30 kroner, I had to pay 10 kroner myself. In my own opinion, I had plenty of funds, when I arrived at school, so I allowed myself to buy a new watch for 25 kroner and an expensive set of geometrical instruments. Some books were needed, too. So by the end of winter, my money had come to an end. It was not very good. I owed for another 2-month stay, and what should I do. My parents had only what was needed for their own use, but I had to write and tell my mother about the situation. She then asked her sister in Hansted if they would be so good to lend me the

needed 20 kroner until I again earned my own money. I got the 20 kroner, so I could leave school owing nothing there; for that, I was very grateful. A friend in need is a friend indeed. (Rasmus Høltzermann's mother was that friend).

One of the last days of March we said goodbye to Haslev Højskole. The last days were about breaking up, writing in poetry books and making records of birthdays. I had got a job as agricultural trainee at an estate up near Lemvig, where one of the students had a brother who was manager. Easter that year, fortunately, came so that the first two holidays fell in March and the other two in April, so it was convenient for a short vacation at home in Vejle before going to my next job.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

At Kabbel by Lemvig

Coming from Haslev Højskole to a Jutlandish estate may – in a spiritual term – almost be comparable to being transplanted from a well-fenced nursery sheltered in a forest to an open field beset by strong winds.

Kabbel is an old estate, which – according to Trap: Denmark – was first mentioned in 1491. It had a total area of 368 acres of arable land, 68 acres with hills and slopes, 41 acres of grassland and reedy swamp as well as 27 acres of forest located high on a promontory that juts out into Limfjorden about 1.5 miles northeast of Lemvig. The farm is situated very beautifully with a great view over Limfjorden both to the West toward Tørring, Hygum and Harboøre, in fact all the way to The North Sea [Vesterhavet] and also to the North toward Thyholm and Thy.

Kabbel was owned by three brothers: Judge L., Lt. Col. L. and Proprietor H. Lautrup. The latter lived there, but since his health was not good, the estate was managed by an older, unmarried gentleman of age 67. His name was Jørgensen and he had a full beard. Danielsen, who was responsible for the care of the cattle, was a so-called dairy manager or herdsman. A younger man worked as first farmhand and had the title manager. He came from the northern part of Jutland [Vendsyssel] and was named Petersen. He was the one who had hired me to work as an agricultural trainee. I arrived at the farm one of the first days of April, after a hard journey from Vejle by Ringkøbing and Vemb – there was a bit of snow that day. The first person I met on the estate was the old manager. He said: “Well, there we have the new farmhand. Now I’ll show you where you are going to stay!” And then he directed me into a large farmhand room with a stone floor. The room was entered from the stables. In the room were 3–4 double beds. I put down my carpet bag and went to look for the manager, who

along with a few other farmhands was busy cleaning grain in the storehouse. The manager comforted me by telling me that the large farmhand room had been a mistake. I had to share a room with him – it was a quite a nice room with a wooden floor and a bed for each of us. The herdsman, the manager, the stoker and I ate together in a living room facing the garden, called “Mellemstuen” [“the middle-room”], from which we had a lovely view over the sea. We could watch the fishing boats when they set off from Lemvig in the morning with sails stretching in the fresh breeze. We could see the rescue steamer “Vestkysten” with its high horsepower dart up the fjord toward Thyborøn channel when the wind was rising for a storm in order to be ready if assistance were needed. We also could see the sand pump dredger “Thyborøn” – with its mighty hull and two large suction pipes, one on each side – set out to keep the channel by Thyborøn open (it sucked up the sand and then sailed out to sea and emptied it there).

The operation of the farm was far from modern. There was no milking machine or seed drill, and the threshing machine, which was powered by an internal steam-engine, only had a straw shaker and the grain then was thrown over a separator [to separate the grain from the straw and chaff].

The quality of the soil at Kabbel was good, loamy, with a value of 32 barrels of hartkorn. The farm only had a few acres with root crops, rutabagas. A field was left fallow, but that was not sufficient to keep the thistles in check – in the undersown oats they were so strong that we had trouble getting enough oat straw to make the wisp of straw to sheaf. The livestock consisted of approximately 100 head of multi-colored dairy cows as well as some sheep. The owner, Proprietor Lautrup, said to me one day: “I’m sorry that you have come here, Tolstrup, because here you cannot learn anything. Actually, you may learn what not to do.” All my superiors were generally friendly to me. The four of us who ate together had the same spiritual interest. We often went to church either in Lemvig or in Nørre Lem – it was the very same minister. Every Sunday evening there was a meeting in Lemvig mission house either with an invited speaker, or someone from the community who read a sermon, and there were plenty of hymns. The big mission house was usually filled. Sometimes some people even had to stand outside the open windows when there was an invited speaker.

In Lemvig church, I heard the Rev. Vilhelm Beck preaching. The church was packed full – along with many others, I stood up during the sermon, but it was also both the first and last time I heard Vilhelm Beck himself.

For the harvest season, we got eight farmhands from Zealand through a special office which arranges exchange of farmhands. Most of the grain was reaped with a scythe and bound by hand – the oats with the many thistles were not so nice. We had a number of excursions, including to Ferring church where at that time the Rev. Blauenfeldt was the minister, and to the nearby Borbjerg lighthouse. Along the coast of North Sea, we saw the jetties, an impressive work to preserve the coastline. We had a harvest excursion to Harboøre, where we saw the giant tomb for drowned fishermen. One Sunday we worshipped in Bøvling church, where we heard the Rev. A. Busch, then minister there, and in the afternoon, we were invited to the home of a folk high school mate called Skadhede. Here we were met with great hospitality. Nørre Nissum folk high school and teachers college were also visited one Sunday, and afterward, we were the guests at the rectory of the Rev. Adolf Hansen for dinner. Manager Petersen had been a student at the folk high school and now a young agriculture teacher named Rasmussen showed us the school. Later he married and took over the farm of his wife's father. The name of the farm was Byskov, and later he took his name from the farm. He became the well-known member of parliament [senator] Rasmussen-Byskov, and he was also a member of the Home Mission Board for many years.

After seven months I left Kabbel. While not everything I had seen and heard was good, there were a lot of things for which I had good reason to be happy. Both the owner and the old manager wrote me good recommendations.

An old day-laborer at Kabbel, whose name I have forgotten, said that when he got married, they almost had no furniture; e.g. they did not own a table but used a beer barrel that stood on end. Thus, he did not have a table to put his own legs under. [HTC uses a Danish saying. The English equivalent might be “he was so poor that he didn't have a pot to pee in.”]

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

Holsteinborg near Rude

In the autumn of 1896, I had read in the Horsens Folkeblad [Horsens People's News] an article in which Count Holstein-Holsteinborg was heavily criticized because he had dismissed the author Budde, then the superintendent of the reformatory Holsteinsminde. The reason for the dismissal was that the Count after his conversion [to the Home Mission] did not find Budde's Christian point of view sufficiently positive. Instead, he wanted an unquestionably Christian influence practiced at the orphanage.

In the winter of 1899 the Count delivered a lecture at Haslev Højskole for the students [about conversion to Christianity]. To illustrate the challenge he used – as figurative language – a farming practice for getting rid of the thistles via conversion. He told us about his own youth as an agricultural trainee and later as a practical farmer on Spjellerupgård. He had noticed that by converting a field to grass for three years, the thistles suffered a defeat, which they did not overcome. In a spiritual sense: Conversion is needed to smother the weeds of sin. Because of this prior knowledge of the Count I wanted to learn more about the conditions on the Holsteinborg estate. So in the summer of 1899, when manager Andreassen announced in the Kristeligt Dagblad [Christian Daily] that he was looking for an agricultural trainee, I volunteered my services and was offered the job for 200 kroner in salary for one year. On the morning of November 2 in the same year, I was welcomed at Sandved railway station by the farmhand Peter from the home farm. He waited with his two red horses in front of the wagon. One of them, the stallion “Ypsilanti,” was Peter's pride – he thought he was the only one able to drive this horse. Peter was full of praise about the conditions at Holsteinborg and repeated constantly: “We are treated well at Holsteinborg!” Manager Andreassen – who was from Haslev, born at that farm

where Haslev Højskole is now situated – greeted me, and I was assigned a room to share with two other trainees. We were five trainees in all; in addition to a first farmhand, there were two farmhands. There were two married smallholders as well. All ten of us were expected to use pairs of horses, but since there only were nine pairs of workhorses the trainees took turns in the cowshed in winter – each working one month at a time. Here we took care of the calves, used horses to pump water, used a couple of big steers to drive liquid manure onto the field and at the same time learned about the economics and accounting of cattle farming.

The Holsteinborg estate had about 480 acres of arable land, which were operated in nine fields with crop rotation. 1) oats for green fodder, 2) fallow, 3) wheat, 4) barley, 5) beets, 6) barley, 7) oats with in sown clover, 8) clover and 9) grass.

It was a big change for me to move from Kabbel to Holsteinborg where everything was in the most exemplary order. Accordingly every day the cowshed was scrubbed and rinsed behind the cows and beach sand was sprinkled in the horse stable. In the pig house all the woodwork was scrubbed each week. The fleet of wagons and machinery was in complete order. Threshing was done with a self-cleaning threshing machine – reapers were still used as the machine for harvesting. The trainees were to keep a diary, and furthermore, we got some lessons in surveying. We surveyed the fallow field and each of us was to draw his own map of the surveyed field and perform a subdivision of land in smaller lots marked with pegs for guidance when sowing. In harvesting the pegs were used as guidance for the men who worked on piecework contract and bound sheaves. Unfortunately, there was a ditch that divided the surveyed field into two parts, so when we had to do the surveying, the manager could not make it match up with the map he had done himself. I allowed myself to say that my map was matching. The manager was not pleased, but the result was that the field was divided according to my mapping, and of course I felt very honored. This led, by the way, to the fact that in the harvest time I, along with another trainee, Henrik Nielsen, spent much of our time surveying the patches for the piecework contractors.

The Count had a stable for his personal use with many driving and riding horses as well as many luxurious carriages. To take care of all this, there was

one coachman, one groom, one stable hand and a stable boy. The master and mistress also had two servants, one house hand, 10-12 maidens and maids. In the garden, there was one gardener and one gardener assistant and nine working men. The forestry employed one forest supervisor, three rangers, and four forest guards. I don't know the numbers of forest workers. The hunting system employed one chief hunter and one pheasant hunter. Furthermore, the estate office employed both one estate steward and one clerk. There were about 1,900 acres of forest. The count's estate included several large farms: Fuirendal 900 acres, Snedinge 700 acres, Spellerupgård about 275 acres and Appelsberg about 300 acres as well as 14 village churches.

The Count was a very benevolent and humane employer. The permanent day laborers had daily wages based on product prices, and if they had more than three children, they got a supplement for the children. If one of the workers could spare some money for the savings bank, the Count added an equal amount in their name. Those who worked on the home farm got grass, beets and straw for a cow and at least 0.2 acre for gardening so that they could grow the necessary potatoes and vegetables for their households.

Holsteinborg Castle, the manor house, is situated exceptionally beautifully on the coast with a view overlooking the small uninhabited island "Ormø" and the larger island "Glænø" where you could see several farms. Now the island is linked to Zealand via a levee. The castle, in which you also find the parish church, is partially surrounded by wide moats. The home farm buildings, which are built of red bricks with tile roofs, are situated immediately adjacent to the castle and leave a very monumental impression.

There was a lot of spiritual life in the community surrounding Holsteinborg, strongly supported by the Count and the Countess. Daily devotions were held at the castle for serving staff, and those of us from the home farm were allowed to participate on Sundays. The manager, trainees, and farmhands had rooms on the castle grounds but had their meals at Mineslyst, a tenant house placed outside the moats and inhabited by a former dairy tenant Sørensen, who provided board for all of us.

At Mineslyst there was also a large hall that was used for mission meetings. On the castle grounds, there was a room that was used by the minister to teach the candidates for confirmation, and it was also used for YMCA meetings and

discussions. Here you could have the rare experience of seeing a stableman and the Countess sitting side by side on the same bench and exchanging words on life's biggest questions. In Bisserup, a nearby village with many fishermen, there were several young fishermen and farmers' sons who came to the meetings at Holsteinborg – that was the year that the YMCA was founded.

In the year 1900 a cooperative dairy not working Sundays was founded in Rude with the Count's support. A few years later, he built a large mission house in Rude.

An old unmarried man named Christen Dideriksen worked on the home farm. He was magazine steward, i.e. he managed the grain and feed lofts and weighed out what was needed in the various departments at Holsteinborg. He lived in Bisserup. In the same village lived an elderly unmarried woman who wanted to make herself interesting and among other things told the neighbors that she had for many years been secretly engaged to Christian Dideriksen. Someone told Christen Dideriksen who then replied: "Well, it certainly must have been a secret, for I never knew anything about it!" Another older, jovial smallholder wanted to tease us Jutlanders a little and quipped: "You do also have examples showing that Jutlanders like other people may have brains!"

Well, the year passed at Holsteinborg – a fine year in my youth, for which I thank the Lord. The year was filled with many wonderful experiences.

I had applied for and received a job on a larger farm at the village Bastrup south of Vamdrup, close to the border with Germany that was set in 1864. I left for that job on November 1, 1900.

Northern Schleswig was German territory from 1864 until 1920. Thus the Danish-German border was 50 miles to the north of the current border.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

Bastrup near Vamdrup

I had my next job with Farmer Laurits Hausted in Bastrup near Vamdrup and had the title of farm assistant, a kind of first farmhand with board and lodging with the farm family. The husband did some horse trading. He was not very energetic. He was married for the second time – the wife's maiden name was Hørlück and she had 2 brothers, each of them with a farm in the village. She was a quiet, not very conspicuous woman. She had three children at home, a daughter 18 years of age, a son 16 years of age and a little girl 8–9 years of age. The farm was situated in the village Bastrup half a mile south of Vamdrup Station. The farm had a total of 200 acres, of which 15 were forest and another 15 were marsh and meadow. The fields were located in many, perhaps a dozen, different places, which made it very difficult to operate the farm – in addition to that the soil was not of the best quality. The buildings were quite old but well maintained. The livestock consisted of 14 horses, of which, however, some were colts, 18–20 dairy cows, some young cattle and pigs.

In addition to me, there was another farmhand, a boy 16 years of age and an older man to look after the cattle. We threshed the grain with a self-cleaning threshing machine with horses delivering the horsepower. We shared the seed drill and reaper with the chairman of the community parish council, Moes, our nearby neighbor. Hausted was not healthy and did not take care of much of the farm management, but expected very much of me, as he supposedly had the opinion that I both could and should be familiar with all kinds of farm operations. But I was still so young, and furthermore their son – still at home – and who was supposed to be under my command, was almost rude and boorish in his manner. If he had just had his ear boxed a few times, our relationship probably would have been settled, but the father had forbidden me to beat him. That

pleasure he would have for himself, but unfortunately, the boy was 14 years of age and too old for that penalty to have its full effect though he was punished with the driving whip when really needed.

I enjoyed surveying and measuring out the fields in equal widths and then making straight furrows for a start. Before that, the fields were very lopsided and irregular. It was also my duty to perform the milk testing, that is to weigh the milk and figure out how much fodder each cow would need. The husband's wish was that things be done in the same way as they were at Holsteinborg.

However, my job in Bastrup did not last. The boy's teasing was unbearable for me, so I gave notice without specifying the reason. The last part did upset the master of the house and as a result, I only got 50 kroner for the winter, although I was engaged for 250 kroner for the entire year, of which 100 kroner were for the winter.

While the relationship between the son and me was not good, it was so much better between the daughter and me. She was extremely friendly and courteous – and we agreed to correspond after I had left. In order not to arouse the suspicion of the elders, the other young girl joined in the venture. She would provide envelopes from a relative, a bookseller in Aarhus. The address had to be printed on the envelopes when I mailed a letter to the ladies, so there was nothing to see from the handwriting. The correspondence did not last long, because when I wrote and asked Karen if she would repent and give God her heart, I got no answer from her. On the other hand, the other girl wrote that she did not know what had happened to Karen, as she just cried and would not say what was wrong.

In Vamdrup there was a very big mission house that probably could accommodate 7–800 people. Very often we heard invited speakers. I remember Peter Hedegaard from Sønder Økse and the Rev. Timroth from Hjarup. Frandsen Jørgensen was then the missionary in Vamdrup. At a large youth meeting in Saint Nicolai church in Kolding on Carnival Monday, I heard the Rev. Skovgaard Pedersen for the first time. Occasionally I went to church in Skanderup to listen to the Rev. Carl Moe. The local YMCA was headed by Teacher Møller, who worked at the Bastrup school.

After having quit my job in Bastrup I applied for a position as manager at Broksø, but at first, I did not succeed – an older applicant 22 of age was pre-

ferred. However, shortly thereafter I had a letter from Tenant Jørgensen saying that if I still was available, he would offer me the position as manager and pay 275 kroner for a whole year. I accepted with pleasure. Becoming a manager on an estate was for me very desirable. On May 1 I left for Broksø. Hausted was at that time sent to a clinic in Copenhagen and had surgery for a bile disorder – he did not survive the surgery, but died in May.



At Broksø for the first time

Late in the evening on May 1, a man of medium size with a blond beard was peering back and forth at the Næstved railway station as if he were looking for someone. He was there to welcome a new farm manager, who was to arrive by train from Jutland at 9.55 p.m. The searcher was Tenant Jørgensen at Broksø and the sought was Hans Tolstrup from Jutland.

The tenant was driving a pair of so-so horses hitched to a large, enclosed carriage. The carriage was waiting outside the railway station with a wardrobe and on top of it a young farmhand that the tenant had hired in a nearby registry office. After some searching, the tenant found the one he was looking for, and after the delivery of my luggage, we began the trip home. The tenant was wearing his good fur coat; I was at his side, and the farmhand was still on top of the wardrobe behind. There were about ten miles to go, so it was late at night when we reached Broksø. After dinner, I got a long lecture about how I had to behave myself and was subjected to an “interrogation” about my previous behavior.

The tenancy included 550 acres, of which 350 were farm land and the rest meadow. The fields were for the most part not drained so fallow ditches were very common on each lot. It was very annoying, especially when using the seed drill and the harvesting machines, but also when harrowing – you could never harrow across the fields.

The meadows were uncultivated and gave only modest yield. The livestock consisted of approximately 100 red dairy cows as well as some young cattle and calves and quite a few pigs. Once a year the tenant normally auctioned off gilts – it gave him a good income. There were six pairs of workhorses; one pair was used to bring a daily load of milk to Haslev, about six miles. There was a nine-field rotation of crops: 1) fallow, 2) winter crop, 3) barley, 4) beets, 5) vetch and

oats, 6) barley, 7) oats, 8) and 9) grass and green oats. To begin with the farm did not have a seed drill, but it had two reapers and two mowers. The tenant bought a new Marshall threshing machine with a traction engine with which he did some threshing for other farmers.

Spring came very late that year – at Broksø only half of the winter rotation of crops had been sown by May 1st. The fact was that the wheat had frozen, so those fields were once more sown with barley. The day after my arrival at Broksø the tenant traveled to Copenhagen to hire men, and he returned with a couple of young Swedish farmhands. Now with three farmhands and two trainees we could use all six pairs of horses. The entire undersown field was to be fertilized with manure and plowed before the oats could be sown. The grass field in rotation had not yet been completely plowed. I and three farmhands and one trainee were plowing there one day when it was raining pretty heavily. I hesitated to stop this work since the tenant and his family had gone out, and I did not know what else to work on. When the farmhands were entirely soaked, they returned to the farm and left the battlefield to the trainees and me. Because of the rain the tenant did not return home until the next day toward dinner time. I told him that the farmhands had stopped working prematurely, but I was excused. We certainly had to get along with them in a gentle manner, until the pay is due to them; then they shall be more manageable.

Tenant Jørgensen required a lot of work from those he hired; it was a good school for a young man – we managed to bring 89 loads of manure to the field in one day distributed by 9 loads per acre. There were two working men hired on a piecework contract to load manure with a beet fork from a field stack, three pairs of horses and one trainee to run between. I had to hurry using the manure drag. Another day we sowed 25 acres using a broad sowing machine, which broadcast the seed for ten feet. During May, we managed by hiring some additional men and renting horses to sow both grain and beets and plant some potatoes. The beets were weeded on a piecework contract by married working men. The farmhands and trainees had enough to do with hoeing [the fields with beets and potatoes] and harrowing the fallow fields [to get rid of weeds]; then came haymaking on about 200 acres of meadow, which, incidentally, only produced a poor yield of shoddy quality. No chemical fertilizers were used nor was anything else done to foster grass growth.

The tenant's had four children between the ages of six and two years; three boys and one girl. In July 1901, there was an anticipated event, as a fifth heir showed up on the scene. On that occasion I was assigned to fetch birth attendants; first the midwife in Haslev, and later that night I had to fetch Doctor Paludan-Müller from Gissselfeldt estate. While driving a rare accident occurred when a wheel fell off the carriage. Luckily in the early dawn I saw the wheel roll out into the ditch, and then I immediately pulled up the horses and asked the doctor, who was slumbering in the comfortable chair, to hold the reins while I got the runaway wheel in place. Luckily it stayed in place until we reached Broksø. The doctor never forgot that story: later on it was often retold.

Despite the late seeding time that year, the harvest occurred at the usual time. The rye was harvested on August 1st and barley harvested around August 10th. The grain was mowed with a reaper, sheaved and placed in shocks by men working on a piecework contract. They were paid two kroner per acre for this work. After the harvest, the tenant had a big harvest festival to which all workers with their wives were invited. There was a speech by the Director Davidsen of Haslev Højskole.

Since there was only a small barn at Broksø, nearly all grain was placed in big, wide stacks out on the field and threshed with a steam-powered thresher as soon as possible after harvest. A new threshing machine came to work, but the working men now wanted to have their knock off time an hour earlier, i.e. at 6 o'clock. Until then the work had not been done until 7 o'clock. The tenant would not accept this shortening of working hours. As a result, nine working men left work and we had to stop operating the threshing machine until a new crew was found. The yield was not large: 660 barrels of barley, 400 barrels of oats, 180 barrels of mixed grain and 22 barrels of rye. A total of about 1,260 barrels of grain. Almost a ten-fold return on the seed planted.) The beet harvest was also poor, only about 1,500 units of 100 kilos. The feed situation was improved by a big harvest of hay – approximately 250 loads.

The relationship between tenant and landowner

Tenant Jørgensen's relationship to Landowner Post or rather to Mrs. Post (she was the legal owner) was sometimes very tense. The tenant had to provide something in kind to the

landowner as part of the farm rent, such as feeding a certain amount of oats to the [carriage] horses and poultry. In addition to this, he also had to provide hay and straw as well as some loads of cow manure for the garden. The tenant also had to place horses at the landowner's disposal when they were needed. But the tenant tried to evade this obligation to some extent by providing oats of light quality, moldy straw, small loads of manure, and old stiff-legged horses. This, of course, prompted discontent on the landowner's part.

There were three wells on the farm. There was one outside the farm by the stream with a pipe to the stables and solely for this use. A second well was in the tenant's backyard but had poor water only usable for washing and dishwashing. The third well was directly inside the courtyard in front of the main building and was only for the landowner to use. However, the tenant had a contractual right to get water for cooking and drinking at this well. Irritated by the tenant's incorrect attitude the landowner had the well shut off by placing an iron chain with a lock around the pump, so the pump handle could not be lifted. This made the tenant angry, and after having consulted Lawyer Fester in Næstved he told me to go to the pump with an iron rod and break the chain, which I quickly obeyed. I took the chain and threw it up to the landowner's main staircase, and once again there was access to good drinking water. – Mrs. Post never let me forget this story. –

Tenant Jørgensen owned and operated two farms in Tybjerglille, a village in the neighboring Tybjerg parish, a distance by road of about four miles. As the birds fly it was just two miles over meadows and marshes. The farms were run by a farm manager, but they almost always had too few men, which is why after finishing at Broksø, we had to go there with all our men to drive the harvest home. We also did threshing over there with some of our men; I was always present to lead the work. Threshing continued right up to November, well,

sometimes even longer because of fickle weather. Only then we could start to harvest beets and begin plowing. We did not manage to get the beets home before the frost every year, and as for the plowing, we were never finished.

The winter was used for bringing straw, chaff and beets home and taking out manure partly to be stacked on the field, and partly to be strewn directly on the field. In addition to this, we drove part of the crop to the towns of Haslev and Næstved. Finally we did some hauling in the forest for the landowner.

Before her marriage with the tenant, Mrs. Benedikte Jørgensen had for many years been a housekeeper in mansions, last with Count Danneskiold-Samsøe at Assendrup near Haslev. She was in every way a capable, proper and energetic housewife, who led the household very economically, perhaps with a tendency to excessive thrift. The maids were kept on tight reins; but to the children she was a loving and careful mother. She could not bear to have a wind blow on them and protected them as far as possible against bad company. Well, she probably had the opinion that they were too good to be with the children of ordinary people. That said, they were five healthy, bright and gifted children, and they often came down to my room to look at picture books, etc.

For spring sowing in 1902, Tenant Jørgensen bought a new seed drill and a new two-row "Holeby" hoe. – Because of the problems with day-laborers the previous autumn, nine Polish workers were called in. They arrived at Gedser Station, but having no money they could not continue the journey. I was then immediately sent to Gedser, and I also found them in good shape lying in the waiting room. They were like a bunch of pigs – only lacked the straw to lie on. The company consisted of both farmhands and maids, four of each sex and a German warden or foreman. They were given an old house on the edge of the forest half a mile from the farm, and they were paid in form of potatoes, skimmed milk and fuel/wood. They were to do their own housekeeping. It was the first time that Polish workers had been at Broksø, and it soon turned out not to be an ideal solution for the work that needed to be done. Before it was time to harvest, the whole bunch had left. The reason I do not remember, but in my diary for July 11, 1902 I stated that all Poles have left. The harvest was considerably better than the previous year. Special was the fact that beets gave more than twice the usual yield. But grain and cattle prices were very low –

thus a barrel of rye (100 kilos of 121 Dutch weights sold for only 9.50 kroner and a cow for slaughter 0.43 kroner per kilo).

The Poles' departure was a hard blow to the labor force, but already on the next day the tenant traveled to Copenhagen to get substitutes to help weed the beets and take care of the upcoming harvest. He immediately brought home three farmhands from the servants' registry office and a few days later, another two arrived. These five along with two young workers started weeding the beets for the second time, stacking the plentiful hay, and bringing the manure out to the fallow field. The harvest started very late in 1902. On August 18 we began harvesting the rye, and we did it like this: we used two reapers; the fields were divided into six equal pieces. Then 12 men, who worked in pairs, sheaved. The spring grain was sheaved on a piecework contract. The pay was 2.00 kroner per acre for sheafing and shocking.

When the rye and wheat was ready to be brought home, the threshing machine was set up in the field and the crop was threshed directly from there. The threshing produced 300 barrels of rye and 100 barrels of wheat. Furthermore 50 cartloads of rye were driven home because the straw would be used for long straw. As previously mentioned several fields had open drain ditches, which divided each field in smaller lots. This indeed made it difficult to harvest. In fact we were obliged to cut a swath with scythe, and that meant about a quarter of the area had to be cut with a scythe. On August 29, we began to reap barley and were finished on September 20. The last grain was driven home on October 2. Then we used the threshing machine at Tybjerglille for 4–5 days. From October 11 to 22 we threshed at Broksø producing 530 barrels of barley and 500 barrels of oats. In the week after the threshing we drove barley to Næstved and Haslev. We made two trips a day to Haslev, but only one to Næstved. In Næstved we normally had an hour's rest, but unfortunately, the farmhands used the pause to purchase spirits, and as a consequence some few were drunk before the trip home. Usually nothing happened, but one day things went wrong with a farmhand named Peter Tune. Ordinarily, he was nice and clever at his work, but one evening after such a trip to Næstved, he went berserk.

He insisted on fighting with the tenant and that was why he got hold of a big truncheon and started beating on the windows of the tenant's house. Most of his companions followed him and applauded loudly, especially when he

shouted: “Come out here you bearded guy, then we’ll beat you to a pulp.” The tenant was hiding; he did not dare to come out. The fellow eventually broke 20-30 panes of glass in pieces. Finally he drove an arm through a pane and as a result he cut the artery of his right wrist. This somewhat tamed the guy. The doctor was called in, the farmhand was put to bed and had the wound sutured together. Under doctor’s treatment the tenant came to the chamber to see how bad it was, but immediately the fellow yelled that he would shoot the tenant, he could still use his left hand – if only he got a gun. The doctor really had to raise his voice to calm him, especially when he whimpered and moaned during suturing the wound. The next day after he had slept it off, he was very unhappy about what he had done. He obviously had to compensate for what he had destroyed. The fellow was especially angry because the tenant would not arrange a harvest festival, which probably was wrong on his part, too. In my opinion they had worked hard both during the harvest and the threshing.

During my stay at Broksø I regularly went to visit Haslev Højskole. Director Davidsen’s brother, Jens Paakjær, was at this time the farm manager of the home farm. Since we were from the same class at the folk high school, I often came to see him and at the same time to attend the Sunday evening meetings in the mission house. There were also a few families in Skuderløse who showed me hospitality. Steam Miller, Baker and Home Missionary Hans Christensen and in particular a small farmer and carrier Lars Rasmussen in Skuderløse Husrække. He and his wife showed me much kindness. In Skuderløse there was a mission house with meetings for both young men and young women.

We split our church going between our parish church at Herlufmagle with the old conservative Dean Waage and the more closely-located church at Testrup with the Rev. Hornbæk, who later became minister and dean at Holmens Kirke [The Navy Church] in Copenhagen. The Rev. Waage once said: “So far, thank God, I have managed to keep the Home Mission out of my parishes.” Later, however, he ended by saying: “Let us not quarrel and fight.” This was said as a prelude to a church service in his church held by the Rev. Friis Hansen from Copenhagen Church Society.

I agreed with Tenant Jørgensen that I would stay for a third year at Broksø, with the reservation however that if a job turned up, which I wanted to apply for, I should be allowed to do so. In late February or early March 1903, I saw in

Kristeligt Dagblad an advertisement: Job as a farm manager open at Fuirendal near Sandved with Tenant L. R. Holst.

Without any objection Tenant Jørgensen gave me a written recommendation, and I bicycled the long distance of twenty miles to get there and offered my services. I was well received by both the tenant and his wife. However, the tenant wished to wait and see if there were any applicants from his circle of acquaintances, but I should be notified by phone in the near future. A few days later a messenger from Skuderløse cooperative store asked me to come to the telephone. Tenant Holst offered me the job from May 1, 1903 with 400 kroner in salary for one year.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue vertical marker is positioned at the year 1900.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

At Fuirendal

Fuirendal was a tenancy farm under the estate of the Count of Holsteinborg located between Næstved and Slagelse, about 1.5 miles from Sandved Station. At that time, the farm had a total of 800 acres arable land and a bog of about 100 acres. The bog was partially reclaimed. The farmstead consisted of good brick buildings with a very old and solid medieval main building, a large garden with the remains of moats, well located in the field. There was an eight-fold rotation of crops: 1) fallow, 2) wheat, 3) barley, 4) beets, 5) barley with undersown grass, 6) 1st year grass, 7) 2nd year grass and 8) green oats. There were about 100 acres in each rotation. The livestock included 28 working horses, 150 dairy cows, about 100 young cattle, and a few hundred pigs. The men included mainly married working men who lived in the farm's cottages – and 10-12 agricultural trainees. Milking was done by two cowmen, three maids, two to three women, and a herdsman trainee.

Tenant Holst was a man of 30 years of age, a Jutlander and born at “Virke-lyst”, a 200-acre farm in the community of Seest near Kolding. When he was 19 years old, his father died, and Holst took over the farm including the debt. For several years, he toiled steadily, but the financial circumstances were difficult. A sister looked after the household for him. After five or six years, Holst handed over the management of his family farm to an old friend. Holst himself took a job as farm manager with Count Ahlefeldt-Laurvig at Møllerup Hovedgård near Rønde, Jutland. He was there for only one year. Then he took the job as inspector at Rosenholm with Baron Rosenkranz. About the same time, he married Miss Sigrid Brodersen, daughter of Doctor Johannes Brodersen, Kongens Lyngby.

In spring 1902, the tenancy of Fuirendal became vacant. Holst applied and was entrusted with the tenancy. Simultaneously he sold his family farm, which in the meantime had given him a tidy profit. But as the tenant had to buy horses and machinery, the capital from the sale of his family farm was needed. Cows and wagons belonged to Fuirendal.

Toward evening on May 1, I arrived at the job. The tenant was paying salaries to the trainees and maids who had been working there in the winter and were to continue working at the farm. The pay was not high at the time. Trainees were paid 200–250 kroner per year and the maids were paid 15–20 kroner per month. I noticed that the housemaid, Jane, had spent the salary she was owed except for a few kroner, while the cook, Elisabeth, approximately had 60 kroner left.

The staff at Fuirendal in the summer of 1904



Tenant Ludvig Rønnenkamp Holst standing to the far left. Manager Hans Tolstrup Christensen in front to the right (with a cane).

Picture courtesy of Ole Rønnenkamp Holst.

In addition to the assistant farm manager and me, a trainee also dined with the tenant's family. The other trainees shared a dining room. This was a big change from Broksø. Everything was indeed in order and well maintained. It was truly a much larger setting, and now I had a status that allowed me to be equipped with a cane and only supervise the work. It was a comfortable position. The men were nice, and the tenant was an unusually decent, right-thinking and compassionate employer. Well, I consider him to be the best man I have ever known – in addition to that, he was determined in his conduct. He was balanced; you knew where you stood with him.

In the previous year at the beginning of the harvest, the smallholders agreed that they would ask for 0.50 kroner more per acre for sheaving grain. Because of that, they took an early morning walk to the tenant's door to submit their claims. The tenant took his time. He sent word to the men that their leader, a former first farmhand, Ditlev, could come in and talk to him. It was not what Ditlev had in mind. He had thought that the tenant would come out and negotiate with the whole bunch. Ditlev was now told that they had better start working, or two new self-binders would be bought, and there would be no more sheaving to do. There was no work stoppage this time.

Tenant Holst displayed great confidence in me. I paid out wages to all the men. He sent me to the estate's office to pay the rent, leaving me to buy fertilizer and so on. He was easy to deal with, was always helpful. During the harvest when we worked long days he supervised after closing time, so I could have some leisure time. The work was always well done, there were enough men.

This year the harvest did not start very early. We began mowing on August 10 and had completed it on the 25th of the same month. After about a week we had finished sheaving and shocking, and on September 2, we began to drive the grain to the farmstead. The tenant bought a new Marshall threshing machine with a traction engine, and it became operational on September 7. For eight days we worked in the barns threshing the grain which had already been driven to the farmstead. Since it had rained a lot, we could not continue driving grain from the field to the farmstead.

For sheaving and shocking the wheat the pay per acre was 2.50 kroner, and for barley and oats it was 1.85 kroner per acre.

On September 23, we drove the last raking to the farmstead and it was threshed at once.

That autumn the army conducted a large maneuver near Skælskør. On September 28 a large billeting was placed on Fuirendal consisting of seven officers, 26 NCOs, and 121 privates. On the evening when they arrived they were treated to all the æbleskiver and coffee they could consume. The day after they were also offered sweet soup and roast.

After the billeting of the soldiers, all of the trainees, farmhands, laborers and maids had the day off to watch the maneuver. It was quite a little harvest picnic. They were driven there in two or three wagons. Unfortunately, this maneuver affair slowed our threshing work. We had a lot of stacks of grain standing in the field. On October 1, we began threshing these stacks and in $\frac{3}{4}$ of a day we had threshed 157 barrels with wheat. When we stopped for the evening, we were halfway down the stack, and as usual, we covered the stack for the night with a layer of loose straw. At night, it started to rain and this continued the following day with the result that the water sucked into the stack. However, we were busy plowing and lifting beets, so when we took up threshing again in November, the grain was wet and grown together to such an extent that we had to use knives and manure drags to pull it apart. After threshing for a whole day, we had only 35 barrels and the wheat was so wet that it could not be ground but had to be cooked for the pigs.

Fuirendal church and the farmstead are built so closely that they almost constitute a connected whole. The cemetery wall forms one side of the courtyard. The main wing, which is a two-story building, is placed opposite and forms the second side. The gate wing in the West forms the third side and on the fourth side (east side) a wall between the courtyard and garden forms the fourth side. In the gate wing nearest the main wing was a kitchen, pantry, dishwashing area, room for the housekeeper, a pantry and two dining rooms for trainees and farmhands. South of the gate were three rooms for the farm manager, the assistant farm manager and one trainee, who paid for his training.

In the far South, a wash house had been built directly inside the cemetery. My room was so close to the church-yard, that it was only 2–3 yards from my bed to the nearest grave.

In spiritual terms, it was a good place to stay. The tenant held prayers every night in the dining room, where trainees, maids and whoever wanted to could participate. We also had easy access to the church, where a good dean, Thiel Kristensen had Fuirendal as an annex to his parish. Bible discussion meetings were held alternately in different homes in the surrounding area. YMCA meetings were held regularly at the farm.

Mrs. Holst, a doctor's daughter from Kongens Lyngby, was very nice and pleasant, but very young and relatively unfamiliar with rural households. That is why she quite naturally left a large part of the management of the household to her faithful and reliable cook, Elisabeth Jensen, daughter of farmer Jens Søndergaard, Thorup in Dronninglund parish. She had arrived at the farm in the spring of 1902 when Holst took over the tenancy. However, for the first six months, there had been a trained housekeeper. But when she turned out to be too independent, she got the sack. Elisabeth managed quite well – she came along with the family and was respected by the other servants.

I had dinner and supper with the family, whereas my lunch and afternoon coffee were brought over to my room. Usually, it was Elisabeth who came with the tray. She was young and beautiful with clear blue eyes, so I finally looked too deeply into her eyes, or rather deep enough to find out that the two of us had to share our lives' joys and difficulties. February 2, 1904, was the day of our betrothal. Together and separately we asked the Lord that this would be a blessing to our future. Next to giving one's heart to the Lord, deciding with whom to share one's daily life and bread is the most important decision in life. I did not promise the moon since I did not possess much. At that point, I expected to be engaged for five years and hoped that by thrift and diligence I could earn enough to so we perhaps could buy a small farm or something else. We agreed to keep the engagement secret for the time being. I never visited her in her room. She came to visit me once a week in the evening. Neither too early in the evening, for it should be calm, nor too late, for each of us had to take care of our work the following day. Usually, she came on Saturday night, so we had Sunday to rest. Before we parted each Saturday evening, we held devotion together. We were both at the farm for nine months after our engagement, and no one discovered the true relationship. Sometimes in the summertime, we

met in the nearby forest to enjoy the evening atmosphere and bird songs, but we had to take separate ways both to and from the forest.

Elisabeth Jensen's childhood and youth.

Else Elisabeth Jensen, born in Thorup, Dronninglund parish June 13, 1879, the daughter of farmer Jens Poutruphus and wife, Mariane, born Pedersen. She grew up in a home characterized by frugality and diligence. The mother was a serious Christian. Her father never expressed his position on these questions, but he was an upright and respectable man. He was strict and specific in his way in raising his children; however, they were very fond of him.

Elisabeth was number five in a family of eight children. Like her siblings, she had acquired her knowledge at school from the nearby Thorup school. The teacher named Christensen was addicted to drinking but was in fact a skilled teacher. His teaching in religion was particularly recognized and praised.



Elisabeth Jensen

When Elisabeth was 10 years old, she had her first job. It was with a family with a small farm in Dorf. The husband was named Jens Christian. Here she had to help out with all odd jobs both inside and out.

On October 1, 1893, Elisabeth was confirmed in the Hellevad church by the Rev. L. Tolstrup, who was minister there. After confirmation, she stayed at home for a few years due to illness. She supposedly had tuberculosis in one lung, but it went by so quickly that by the age of 16 she had a job at a small farm, where, besides the

husband and wife there was an old woman, the husband's mother. She was an occasional cook – a significantly tough woman who wanted to control everyone and dispose of everything.

On November 1, 1897, at the age of 18, she came to work with Farmer Jens Kraghede, at Kraghedegård in Ørum parish. He was Chairman of the community parish council. It was a large farm with two farmhands, two maids, and a large family. The wife was weakly, so Elisabeth had to work hard indeed in the household. She also participated in milking and field work. This job lasted for three years ending on November 1, 1900. However, it was not just bright memories she had from that job. There was a first farmhand at the farm. He was very good with his work, but in his relationship with women, he was something of a rogue, as he simultaneously dated two girls and a married woman. Elisabeth was one of the two girls, but luckily she escaped this situation without serious harm, but richer for the experience.

The following winter was used for learning and training in dressmaking. On April 1, 1902, Elisabeth took a job as cook with Tenant Holst, Fuirendal. The farm was owned by Count Holstein-Holsteinborg and had 925 acres of land. She was there for 2½ years. She learned a great deal. That was followed by three months at Haslev Højskole. The next three months Elisabeth stayed partly at home in Thorup and partly at Fuirendal, where she helped to look after Tenant Holst, who that fall was restricted to a sickbed.

On October 26, 1905, Elisabeth and all her siblings were renamed "Søndergård." The following year from November 1, 1905, to November 1, 1906, Elisabeth had a job with Proprietor Olesen at "Asdal Hovedgård" near Hjørring. Here

she was a housekeeper. From November 1906 to May 1907, she was a housekeeper with Fritz Lawaetz, at Langedamsgaard near Kalundborg.

This was a small insertion about the cook at Fuirendal. – Back to life on the farm.

Around April 1 three young men arrived at the farm: Christensen Lund, who was engaged as assistant farm manager, had been a trainee the previous year and had been at a folk high school for five months; Sørensen from the neighborhood of Aalborg; and Gunnar Helweg-Larsen, son of Dean Helweg-Larsen in Viborg. The last two were both to learn farming. Helweg did not want to study. So he had tried going to sea, but this was not to his liking either. Now, he was about to try some farming. The tenant's sister Miss Doctor Marie Holst, a missionary in India, was his godmother, and his father had been pastor of Seest parish near Kolding, thus the acquaintance. Helweg was gifted, but he was stubborn about getting up in the morning. He was not especially eager to work. Once he had a lunch break, and when he was about to start again, he was so unsuccessful in putting the bridle on the horse that the bit ended up on top of its nose instead of in its the mouth. When I made him aware of it, he replied: "Well, it must have spat it out again, because I did put it in its mouth!". After half a year Helweg tried studying again, but he never finished. Some years later he was a journalist and editor at B.T. He succeeded to increase the circulation considerably. Later, he became editor at the *Nationaltidende* and *Kristeligt Dagblad*. [Three *very* different Danish newspapers]

To procure assistance for the harvest I was just before the harvest in 1903 sent to a registry office in Copenhagen to recruit men for the farm. I managed to bring back six farmhands – four Swedish and two Danish. However, we were not too happy with these farmhands. Two of them left before the harvest, and one of the Swedes later went down to the local juridical office complaining about the board. When asked where he had come from, he replied: "I come from 'Porridgedal', since we have porridge three times a day – porridge for breakfast, porridge for lunch, and porridge for dinner". However, he did not gain anything from his complaint.

So for the upcoming summer, the tenant decided to try Polish workers. Three farmhands and six maids were engaged, all of whom arrived late in May.

They were a good help for the beets and the harvest. We began to reap on August 8 and had completed it on August 18. On September 2, we had finished bringing the harvest to the farmstead. During this work, the tenant had a visit one day from landowner Carl Lawaetz, of Kalundborg Ladegård. He was also the tenant of Rudbjerggård near Nakskov and Refsnæsgård near Kalundborg in company with his brother Lotter Lawaetz, who was inspector at Rudbjerggård. This Lotter was acquainted with Tenant Holst from Møllerup in Jutland. Holst had replaced him there as farm manager. He needed a new farm manager at Rudbjerggård as of November 1. Thus, he asked Holst if he could have me. As Holst was of the opinion that this would improve my skills, he granted the request. For me, it meant a promotion both in salary and responsibility, so I accepted the offer, even though I knew that I should never have a job under such good conditions as at Fuirendal.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue vertical bar with a circular end is positioned between 1900 and 1910, specifically at the year 1904.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Rudbjerggård near Nakskov

The Rudbjerggård estate with its 1,000 acres of flat and well-managed fields is located in the southwest corner of the loamy-soiled island of Lolland. It was a lucrative but not exactly a beautiful property. The home farm with its big broad buildings partly with fairly flat tarred roofs and with a steam chimney located by the dairy was more reminiscent of a major manufacturing business than a farm. Rudbjerggård was owned by Count L. Reventlow. The main building, which was surrounded by moats, was an old, very long, half-timbered building with a large octagonal tower in the center. In addition to the 1,000 acres farmed by a tenant, there were 950 acres of forest adding up to a total value of 120 barrels of hartkorn. The forest area was situated along the South Beach of Lolland, where at the water's edge along the coast a dike with sloping stones was built out to the sea for flood protection.

On November 1, 1904, I took up my next job. It was large scale conditions that I met. There were 22 pairs of horses, approximately 200 dairy cows in addition to young cattle and pigs. 300 acres were sown with sugar beets. The crews included 10–12 students, 5–6 farmhands, 12–14 day-laborers. In summer, an additional 60–70 Polish girls were supervised by two German men. There were 2 assistant farm managers, a storehouse manager, a farm manager, a herdsman, and a dairy manager, who also kept the farm accounts and was the teller. The farm was well equipped with machines and equipment including two reaper-binders, six reapers, two large seed drillers and eight double weeders. Wagons and everything else were well maintained. There were two steam threshers with presses and a portable railway for sugar beet transportation that could be laid out in various fields. The working conditions were pretty good. Almost all of the students were Swedish; big and powerful guys at 20 years of age,

some of them were addicted to alcohol. The smallholders were nice people, most of whom had been on the farm for several years. The farmhands were not all equally good – there were a good many rough guys.

My cooperation with Inspector Lawaetz was not the best. It was probably a disappointment to both parties. In my opinion, he was not equal to the task; his opinion of me was probably likewise. However, after all these years I can better assess the cause of his fragile mind. He had been married, but his wife died after a year of happy marriage. He was now all alone; he had no one with whom he could share his thoughts. But there was one thing for which I respected and to some extent admired him. When he forgot himself and did wrong to somebody, he was able to admit his mistakes and ask for forgiveness. The inspector led prayers when he was at home. In his absence, the duty was mine. On Sundays, we went to church – often with two wagons – alternately to Nakskov and Kabbel and occasionally to Glaslunde. We never chose our neighborhood church in Tillitze, although it was only a good mile away. I remember having been there only once. It was the occasion of the funeral of a smallholder's wife from one of our own houses. In Nakskov, we heard a minister called Henriksen, who later became a minister at the Church of Our Lady in Copenhagen. One time we heard Dean Elmqvist. In Kabbel, The Rev. Hindhede was the minister at that time. We appreciated him very much. Later he became editor of the Inner Mission's Journal.

Although Rudbjerggård home farm had a large amount of livestock, it could hardly devour the entire large harvest of hay and straw; straw piled up in especially large quantities. Despite its poor value the tenant sought to sell a fair amount of the straw. A merchant Kjær from Mørke in Jutland bought lots for shipment to England. To make the long transport possible, the straw was pressed firmly into bales and bound with 2–3 wire ties so that each bale weighed 30 to 40 kg.

The Danish Sugar Factories, which bought virtually all of the Lolland sugar beet, wanted at the time to introduce new contracts which would apply for 15 years. The growers, and particularly the tenants, were decidedly against this change. Among them especially Carl Lawaetz. He wanted the growers to have influence in the management of factory operations, or at least for the contract to be for a shorter number of years. However, since the factories rejected these

demands, Carl Lawaetz began agitating for an association of all farmers, with the aim of taking over the factories or possibly even by building factories. This caused a sensation and, of course, strong opposition among shareholders, among whom was the owner of Rudbjerggård, Count L. Reventlow. This clash of interests led the Count to give the tenant one year's notice to April 1, 1906, despite the fact that six years remained in the tenancy period. The tenancy contract had in fact included a provision that the Count could at any time terminate the tenancy with one year's notice opposed to reimburse the tenant 3,000 kr. for each remaining year of the contract.

The tenant was very angry and felt strongly aggrieved. Thus, he wanted to utilize as much as possible of the present feedstuffs, hay, straw and sugar beet pulp. In his last autumn, he bought a heap of lean bulls and heifers. All the best dairy cows that belonged to the farm were picked out and sent partly to the tenant's own farms Kalundborg Ladegård and Refnæssgård and to a brother-in-law who was tenant at Tølløsegård, as well as to an uncle in Helgenæs. The cows he picked out were exchanged with cull cows [no longer producing milk] from those four farms. Because they had been well fed and cared for, they looked good; and the cows were returned in mass according to the contract.

Later Carl Lawaetz bought Løvegård near Høng as a replacement to Rudbjerggård, and he was the driving force in the establishment of Gørlev Co-operative Sugar Factory.

At Whitsun, I should have had a few days of vacation and had planned a bike ride to Broksø to visit my old principal. I also planned to stop over in Næstved and meet with my fiancée, Elisabeth. From May 1 she had been a student at Haslev Højskole along with her sister Petrea.

On Whitsun Saturday, June 10, 1905, I started biking together with the storehouse manager Henrik Nielsen (later a factory owner in Holbæk). His parents lived at Knudsskovgård, at the headland of Knudshoved, where his father was the manager, so we could accompany each other to Vordingborg. On our way we stopped over and had lunch at Nielsen's in-laws-to-be; they had a farm somewhere between Maribo and Bandholm. Nielsen was supposed to take his fiancée with him to Knudsskovgård. The wind was not favorable to us; Nielsen struggled because of the head wind. In addition to pedaling his own bike, he pulled his fiancée's bike with a rope. It was late afternoon before I reached

Næstved, and I suppose I met Elisabeth at the railway station. First, we went to the goldsmith, where we tried on rings, then we probably had coffee and then a walk in the woods. When we came back, it turned out, unfortunately, that there were no more trains toward Haslev that evening. Luckily we found a place where Elisabeth could spend the night. I continued my journey to Broksø where I was kindly received.

On Sunday morning, I borrowed a vehicle from Tenant Jørgensen and drove to Haslev. The tenant insisted that I take my fiancée to Broksø and introduce her.

We spent a few lovely days as guests at Broksø. On Whit Tuesday, the tenant's two eldest boys were supposed to attend Haslev school, so it was convenient for me also to return Elisabeth to the folk high school. After my return from the trip, I bicycled to Fuirendal to visit Tenant Holst, where I received a very warm welcome. From there I immediately telephoned Elisabeth in Haslev, so that she and I could have another few days together. Tenant Holst drove us a long way through the forest to Holsteinborg and Snedinge. Like everything good, those good times ended quickly.

In the summer of 1905, the YMCA and YWCA in Nakskov and surrounding area arranged a very successful trip to Lübeck in the northern Germany. The trip was taken by a small steamer, hired specifically for this purpose. In charge of the trip was a young traffic assistant Theill, who later was Danish Missionary Society envoy in India for many years.

There were a number of us young people from Rudbjerggård home farm on this excursion. The voyage was absolutely not an unmixed joy. The little steamer rolled badly, so several of the participants had to sacrifice their breakfast. Lübeck is an old Hanseatic city with a number of attractions, including the City Hall with some old paintings depicting the Hanseatic League's battle against Denmark. We also visited Saint Mary's Church, with a very peculiar clock that besides hours, minutes, and seconds, also displayed the date, season, and year. One chapel's walls had painted images depicting the coming of death in the form of a skeleton with a scythe. He comes to people in different positions in life; there were kings, squires, bishops, merchants, peasants, and workers. All of them were declining, though; no one was ready to come along. This

small chapel's paintings are the origin of the saying: "You look like the Death from Lübeck".

On a Sunday outing with Farm Manager Nielsen to Knuthenborg Park, we had an interesting experience. For a few years, Nielsen had been farm manager at Knuthenborg for a tenant farmer called Sonne. Since Nielsen was well acquainted with the situation there, he suggested that we park our bikes at Bandholm and take a shortcut from there into the castle grounds, to which the public usually was admitted only through a guarded gate. However, we made it only a little way into the park before we met Count Knuth. He came up to us and asked in a gruff tone what we wanted and where we had come in, who we were visiting. Nielsen explained that he was Tenant Sonne's former farm manager and that we intended to go up to the home farm to visit him. That was probably one of the worst things we could have mentioned. The Count, who was not of age yet, hated the tenant intensely, and the farm manager likewise. He had sworn that these two, the one with the neck (the tenant) and the one with the ears (the farm manager) were the first to be ousted from the estate as soon as he came of age. So he ordered us to leave the park the way we had come in, as soon as possible.

To and fro is equally far, but we kept an eye on the guy, and then he went down to Bandholm port, where he had a yacht, and went on a boat trip. We availed ourselves immediately of the opportunity and resumed our course to Knuthenborg where we were kindly received by the farm tenant; he was very amused by hearing of our meeting with the Count.

In the early summer or a little before harvest, a team of Finnish farmers and professors visited Count Reventlow. Of course, they had to see the home farm – both fields and livestock. Afterward in the garden, Tenant Sonne gave a lecture on agriculture. In the evening, many of the large farmers, landowners, and tenants from the surrounding area were invited as the Count's guests. They were served food and drink galore. It was a standing banquet, so anyone could take whatever he wanted. They drank champagne in wide bowls and speeches were given, both in Danish, Swedish and Finnish. The inspector, the accounting officer and I were invited and attended the party. No women participated in the party.

From time to time I and store manager Nielsen along with Inspector Lawaetz visited a number of the surrounding manors. Thus, I remember that we went on a short visit to Tenant Funder of Fredsholm – Together with Proprietor A. Galsgaard, Lille Købelev, we went on a Sunday visit. In his youth he had been a stableman at Refnæsgård at Lawaetz Sr. After the harvest we also went on an afternoon visit to Inspector Jensen at Lungholm Avlsgård; he was the farmer's son from a farm neighboring Rudbjerggård and was unmarried. Lungholm was leased to the Danish Sugar Factories.

In the summer of 1905, Tenant Jørgensen, Broksø, bought Troelstrupgård near Haslev, a farm of 165 acres. He wanted to move to the new place to facilitate the schooling of his children. Since there were still a few years left on the lease time on Broksø, he offered me a job as manager beginning November 1, 1905.



Second time at Broksø

On November 1, 1905, I started as manager at the home farm of Broksø. I came to somewhat well-known conditions, but honesty compels me to admit that I did not make my entrance filled solely with joy. I reached Haslev station after dark, the rain was falling, and there was no vehicle available. Well, fortunately I knew the route, and the six-mile walk was not unmanageable for a young man carrying just a carpet bag.

A herdsman called Frederiksen from Helgenæs near Nakskov started working at Broksø simultaneously. His wife was going to look after the house, and he was going to look after the pigs and the livestock. According to his contract he had to provide board and wages for his assistants.

Another young man followed from Rudbjerggård. He was going to be first farmhand at Broksø – generally, the manpower was scarce and they were far behind in their work. There was plenty to be done because the beets were not harvested, almost nothing was plowed, and moreover part of the harvest was still in stacks of unthreshed sheaves. We spent the first few days moving, partly the tenant's own belongings to Troelstrupgård and partly the herdsman's and mine that were in Haslev.

On the first Sunday in November, I walked across the fields; and on my walk, I met a young man about 20, Jens Peter Jensen. He lived with an elderly, childless couple who owned a small farm with about 14 acres which was surrounded by Broksø's fields. He was supposed to inherit the property from these two old people, and he helped them at their farm as if he was their own son. He was a determined young believer. This meeting was a great pleasure to me, especially as there was no one else at Broksø with whom I could share the best. Jens Peter Jensen later became a leading man in the parish, bought a farm in

Skuderløse, and was elected Chairman of the Consumer Cooperative, later the local sheriff and chairman of the community council. There was another devout young man, Marius Andersen; he lived at home with his mother, who was a widow. She owned a small farm with eight acres, which also was framed by Broksø's fields. Later he studied and became an agronomist, and still later he acquired a watermill with a little farm in Funen. I was fortunate to have met these two young men.

Due to the meager workforce, I contracted a couple of fresh young men for temporary help: Sigfred Sørensen, who was first farmhand at Fuirendal in my last year as a manager there. He was hired for the day and stayed until Christmas. Afterward, he went home to Kejlstrup near Rønde in Jutland and attended Rønde Højskole [folk high school] after the New Year. Later he became manager at Astrup near Skarresø, then inspector for Bishop Fonnesbech-Wulff at Vesterbygård, now he is tenant at Lille Frederikslund. The second was called Andersen. He came from around Haslev and was manager at Broksø the preceding summer. He was also hired for the day and stayed until the New Year. They each were paid one krone per day plus food.

On November 6, we had the necessary manpower, so we started threshing the stacks of sheaves which were standing in the fields. We finished over the next four days, and then we delivered some grain partly to Haslev and to Næstved. Then we plowed while smallholders harvested potatoes and beets. – Jørgensen asked me to come to Troelstrupgård every Sunday afternoon, partly to talk about what we had done, and partly about what we were going to do. Often we went together to a meeting in the evening at the Mission in Haslev. I had got myself a new pig leather saddle – a couple of 3-year Frederiksborg foals were at my disposal so that the conveyance was easy and cheap. After New Year, we threshed a stack of mixed seed sheaves which were standing outside the barn; the previously mentioned Jens Peter and Marius assisted me.

It was a winter almost without frost and almost no snow, thus, we plowed until January 20. Additionally, we used the time to drive beets, hay, and straw to the farmstead. In February some farmyard manure was strewn in the fields. In March, we drove a great deal of spruce timber from the forests partly to the farms in Tybjerglille and partly to Troelstrupgård. Many loads of timber were needed because there were plans to build a large barn on Troelstrupgård and

roofed hay barns without walls at both farms in Tybjerglille. We fetched the wood for Tybjerglille in Tybjerggård forest and the wood for Troelstrupgård in Hesede forest.

In the first days of March, we gathered some ice for both the landowner's and the tenant's use. It was stored in elongated pits; it was broken and covered with a thick layer of peat, so it could stay cold to be used in the hottest summer days, including for cooling the milk.

On March 14, a young man, Christian Christensen, arrived from Asdal in Vendsyssel. He was going to be assistant manager. He was a good and steady assistant, whom I appreciated very much. Spring sowing began on April 10 and except for the root vegetables was finished on the 27th of the same month.

Unfortunately, Herdsman Frederiksen did not succeed. He left the job after six months and took another job in Langeland. A herdsman from Jutland was hired as his successor. He came with great expectations – the job advertisement was somewhat pretentious like: "Herdsman contract at the Manor of Broksø." He had bought new furniture for a couple of lounges, including a lovely organ, that neither he nor his wife knew how to handle. - Everything was probably bought on credit. He was supposed to hire his assistants, but could not get any. That was why we usually helped him with a few men. As we had got five Poles in the beginning of April, we were fairly well off as far as crew was concerned.

On June 30, the herdsman got ill with diphtheria, so he and his oldest child – a boy of about five years – were rushed to hospital in Næstved. His wife and a little girl of about three years and an elderly maid got a serum injection, to prevent them from getting the disease. As a result of this injection they had some fever and had difficulty walking. In the wife's case it accelerated an awaited birth, so that in the evening after her husband and child had been taken to the hospital, she asked me to send for the midwife. It was a rather curious situation I had come into. All alone in the house with a woman giving birth, no one dared to come to help because of the infection. The landowner's wife walked around in the courtyard, as she had heard what lay ahead. She informed me through the open windows, that if it was absolutely necessary, she would come to the rescue. She gave me a cup with a mouthwash for gargling my throat in order to prevent infection. Well, I made sure there was hot water,

and after an hour the midwife arrived. Unfortunately, it turned out that there was not enough baby equipment, so the landowner's wife supplemented it. In other respects, the event went by regularly. Cooking was a challenge in the following days. We had a milk wagon and drove past Troelstrupgård every day, so it was arranged that Mrs. Jørgensen prepared dinner early in the morning, and the milk driver brought it to us. Then we only needed to serve the meals. We managed to make our breakfast and our evening meals ourselves for some days.

The harvest occurred quite early that year, but since a reaper binder had been acquired, the work was done considerably more easily than in the past. On July 31, we began to mow oats in the field next to the forest, while we were carrying hay home from meadows. There was a total of 210 loads of hay.

We finished harvesting on September 15. On September 11 assistant manager Christensen was drafted to participate in autumn military training maneuvers. After the harvest, the fallow land was plowed and prepared for winter, and the rye was sown. Thereafter we started steam-driven threshing, first at Broksø for about 14 days; thereafter at the farms in Tybjerglille also for 14 days and finally at Troelstrupgård. The latter, however, was done without a crew from Broksø. Next we were able to get started with the autumn plowing and harvesting of beets.

On November 1, 1905, Elisabeth started at Asdal near Hjørring as a housekeeper for Proprietor Olesen. Mrs. Eva Olesen was the daughter of the old Proprietor Lawaetz, Refsnæsgård. She was a clever, but a very demanding lady. However, it was a very instructive job. We were well separated from each other, but there was a regular postal service, and a letter was written every Sunday, alternating between E and me.

In Shrovetide 1906 we decided to meet in Dronninglund. I was going to be introduced to my in-laws. I took the opportunity to take a trip to Skagen to see what sort of oddities there were to look at. At that time, there was only a narrow-gauge track between Frederikshavn and Skagen. On the way back from Skagen, I met with Elisabeth in Frederikshavn. We went together to Dronninglund station where we were received by her brother, Søren. I was very well received at Torup Søndergård, even if the in-laws had some concern with this

estate manager. It is often seen that such a “gentleman” gets conceited and believes that his future is to walk with a cane and in high boots.

Jens Søndergaard and his wife Mariane were not born in Vendsyssel. As newlyweds, they had come from around Løgstør to Torup and bought an old farm with poor, sandy soil. The farm had 76 acres, of which 22 acres of meadow was located five miles away. The farmland was worth one barrel of hartkorn. It was a farm that required plenty of work but had meager rewards. However, with hard work, thrift and gradually the children’s help they marled and otherwise improved the soil a bit. In fact, a few years earlier they had even rebuilt the farm buildings. However, the two sons – Peter, the eldest, who was then a master builder in Hellerup, and the second eldest, Søren, alternately bricklayer in Copenhagen and Malmö or assistant at home in Søndergård – had made great contributions to the rebuilding of the farm buildings.

There were eight children in the family: four sons and four daughters. By age: Niels Hansen Jensen was married and living on a small farm in Asbækholt just south of Dronninglund. He later engaged in hauling and lived for many years at Dronninglund station. He was from Jens Søndergaard’s first marriage. 2: Peter Søndergaard, master builder in Hellerup, later in Vejle. He died at a young age in 1914. His widow Mrs. Anna Søndergård moved soon thereafter to Copenhagen, where she owns two large apartment houses. 3: Søren Søndergaard remained unmarried. He was in the United States four times and he worked otherwise at different sites within the family, for a short time had his own farm in Skuderløse, died in Tappernøje in autumn 1943. 4: Marie Søndergaard married Laurits Larsen from Hjortbæk, and they lived for some years in Hjallerup. Her husband died after four years of marriage. Marie then sold the farm, lived a short time in a small house in Hjallerup, later moved with her parents to Zealand and lived with them for many years in a house in Kirke Skensved. She had two daughters, Johanne, and Mary. 5: Elisabeth. 6: Anne Petrea, who for a short time looked after the house for her brother in Hellerup. After his marriage, she took a course in Copenhagen; she had thoughts of being educated to serve the foreign mission. She was at Haslev Højskole together with Elisabeth, then for a time in a college preparation class. The training for the mission was not successful because the mission society’s doctor would not recommend her for the job. For some years she had a job as maid for various la-

dies; she was in England a year as well. After returning home, she was betrothed and married to Christian Stobbe in Store Røttinge near Tappernøje. 7: Henrik. Farmer, had jobs at various farms. On November 1, 1903, he came to Fuirendal, where he was going to learn farming. Later in the winter, he fell ill and went home. Some years later he took over the family farm in Torup after it had first been offered to Søren. Unfortunately, he preferred trading rather than the quiet domestic life. He was obliged to accommodate and support his parents, for whom he provided an apartment in one of the sheds. Just a few years later he sold the farm, and both he and his parents moved to Zealand, where Henrik bought a farm. However, his urge to trade persisted; he has changed his residence countless times. 8: Ottomine, a name she hated to be called, whereas “Minna” was more to her taste. She had a predilection for serving noble and elderly ladies. She started in the home of the count of Dronninglund, for some time later she was at Fuirendal and Langedamsgård together with Elisabeth, later for many years she served various older ladies in Copenhagen.

My next journey to Jutland was around November 1, 1906. At that time, Elisabeth traveled from Asdal to Langedamsgård near Kalundborg, where she had to look after the home of Proprietor Fritz Lawaetz, a brother to Mrs. Eva Olesen. We met in Aarhus, where we were to visit my brother Mads and his wife Margrethe. They had a tailoring business at Store Torv in this city. During the visit, we went to a cinema theater where we saw “Earthquake in Valparaiso,” “The Captain from Köpenick” and “Mother in law.” We also visited my parents in Vejle and my brother Peter in the same city. The journey homewards was by steamer from Aarhus to Kalundborg. There was a cart from Langedamsgård there to welcome Elisabeth. I went to Refsnæsgård to greet my old friend Henrik Nielsen, who was still manager out there. His housekeeper was Miss Petersen, formerly a household trainee at Rudbjerggård. I do not remember how I got out there; probably I rented a bike in Kalundborg.

I was there overnight, and the next day I went around in the fields, where I saw a hydraulic ram pump. I saw how they drove beets to the farmstead, too: they loaded them by hand and unloaded by hand. Beet forks were not allowed. Nevertheless, they managed to drive 80 loads to the farmstead – each with 12 barrels of beets – with four wagons, as there were three men to help the driver

in the field and one man to help loading. I also visited the lighthouse and greeted the lighthouse keeper, Jensen, a devout man.

Tenant Carl Lawaetz from Kalundborg Ladegård came that day. He talked a lot with me; he was interested in hearing about his cousin, Tenant Otto Lawaetz from Holmegård, a farm next to Broksø.

The herdsman and his family left without notice on November 5. Now we were once again without someone to cook and without kitchen furniture or dining room furniture. Assistant manager Christensen took over the herdsman job with 3–4 assisting farmhands, but a housekeeper was not so easy to find immediately. Thus, once again Mrs. Jørgensen had to supply dinner sent by the milk wagon, and smallholder Jens Simonsen's wife stepped in as a kind of relief until we managed to find an older woman, Miss Larsen from Skellebjerg who was able to cope with the situation. There was certainly enough work to do for one person; besides the four of us who dined in my office, 4–5 people dined in the servant's hall, also all rooms and the farmhand's billets.

Over Shrovetide Elisabeth and I took a trip to Copenhagen to meet with her brother Peter in Hellerup. They had been married a few years before and had a little, one-year-old girl, Lissi. We also visited Peter's brother-in-law, Peter Andersen in Holsteinsgade. He had a store with beer, wine, and tobacco. He was unmarried, and Petrea Søndergård kept the house for him. There we met with a young man, Johannes Stobbe from Store Røttinge who studied medicine. He had to give up the study because of a skin disease; later he became editor of a newspaper in Skjern. At Easter, I visited Elisabeth at Langedamsgård. Lawaetz was very kind, he showed me around in the fields, stables, and barn. With particular pride, he showed me the barn, which was full of straw, and he stressed how nice it was to have it fully packed.

As the lease of Broksø would be up on April 1, 1907, March was a particularly busy month as we prepared for the transfer. The tenant's belongings, machinery tools and the horses and gilt in gestation were put up for auction. By the way, I had earlier gently asked the landowner's wife if there was any possibility of a continuation or renewal of the lease for Jørgensen and with me in a partnership. But she flatly refused, and particularly because I had once broken the chain that was put on her water pump.

The new tenant, Gunmar Larsen, had already been there a few times during the winter to have a look at the state of affairs. He was a plucky man, a little boastful; his constant refrain was: "It doesn't matter." He took a liberal view of things. All the fields were going to be drained; a new barn was going to be built, and he wanted new machinery and equipment. The meadows would be reclaimed and cultivated. Altogether he wanted to change everything. Unfortunately for him, his time at Broksø did not last long, after nearly two years he left the lease deeply in debt.

After the auction and the transfer to the new tenant, I moved with all my paraphernalia to the "Jeppegård," one of Jørgensen's farms in Tybjerglille. It had now been determined that we were going to get married and stay on this farm. There was a good, new farmhouse with three rooms and a chamber in addition to the kitchen and wash house. Behind the house to the north was a small garden. I had to look after both farms; the farms were situated next to each other and accounted for 200 acres in total. I had to take care of the 20 dairy cows at Jeppegård. There were 30 dairy cows on the other farm, located in Tybjerglille, but there was a married herdsman living there who was required to look after them.


 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

At “Jepppegård” in Tybjerglille

My activities in Tybjerglille began on April 1, 1907. We had plenty of work to do. A large part of the fields was waterlogged; some draining had already been done the previous year and continued in the following spring and summer. Tenant Jørgensen started the draining work himself, that is, he measured out the distance between the ditches – 50–60 feet. The fields were not leveled. The ditches were dug four feet in depth. After laying the pipes, we filled the ditches with a plow.

Throughout April, I had dinner at the house of a married manager, who left his job on May 1. Our marriage was to be held on May 20, 1907 – on Whit Monday in the Dronninglund Church. Elisabeth went home on May 1 to prepare for the marriage. With barely three weeks she did not have much time to sew her trousseau. Furthermore, she had to be in charge of the cooking for the celebration. However, there was not much fuss about it, since there would be only the closest of family – parents and siblings – and a few neighbors. Everything was quite modest – very much like the general attitude in the home of Elisabeth’s parents. A home that was marked by godliness, diligence, and frugality. The wedding day was a cold and windy day in May. To be somewhat respectably dressed back then a groom had to wear a formal diplomat’s coat with tails. I had the good fortune that my brother Mads was a tailor. I had asked him to make the necessary attire, but unfortunately – like many other artisans – he had difficulties in keeping his promises. On my way from Zealand, I made a stopover in Århus to try on the get-up. As the work was not completed, my brother had to travel on the night before the wedding in order to bring the clothes in time for the wedding. The wedding party was a quiet one without wine and speeches, which would not suit a plain peasant in Jutland. My father

and mother, my sister Debora and Tailor Mads were the only participants from my family. However, most of Elisabeth's siblings came. Only Petrea was missing, because of exams. The day after the wedding we packed our things and traveled by an afternoon train from Dronninglund through Jutland and arrived in Haslev by a morning train. A vehicle from Troelstrupgård picked us up. We had dinner at Troelstrupgård, and later we drove to our first home. Most of the furniture was bought and had already arrived. Joiner Wilhelm Hansen from Haslev delivered two beds with mattresses – 50 kroner; one washstand with a marble top – 20.50 kroner; one dining table with extra table leaves – 25 kroner; one used double bed with mattress – 11 kroner. A total of 106 kroner. To be delivered on May 16, 1907. From the saddler in Skuderløse were shipped one chaise longue and four upholstered chairs, upholstered in green large-flowered plush of the best quality – 100 kroner; six Swedish chairs for the dining room for 20 kroner; one divan – 24 kroner. Furthermore, a rocking chair with the same fabric as the upholstered chairs as a gift from the community and the YMCA in Skuderløse. A total of 144 kroner. Also delivered on May 16, 1907. I had had a desk for several years. We were probably happy with our new home though we would have preferred something of our own. The salary was 1,000 kroner a year. We also received the house and garden, 1 liter of whole milk per day in addition to the skim milk and the buttermilk we needed. As we had a herdsman and a farmhand boarding with us, we got 50 øre per person per day.

As I no longer needed my pig leather saddle, I sold it to Tenant Gunmar Larsen at Broksø. We toiled all summer, as there was always a lot of work to do. Manpower was never adequate, which is normally not very economical. The beets grew too big before we thinned them out. Eventually, we had to crawl on our knees; the weeds (knotgrass and navew) were so high that we could hide between the rows. The harvest turned out well and was brought home safely. Each farm had a pole barn that normally could hold the entire harvest (all the sheaves). After the harvest, we threshed and brought the grain to Haslev.

Klintsmark

In October, an old farm was offered for sale in Klintsmark north of the Tybjerggård estate. It had an area of 68 acres. Half of it was fine loamy soil while the rest – near the Suså stream – was sandy. Next to the stream were a few acres of meadow. The buildings were small, old and poorly maintained. After some negotiations, we bought the farm for the sum of 26,500 kroner. 18,000 of this was a primary mortgage owed to Bondestandens Sparekasse [The Peasantry's Savings Bank]. In addition, there was a yearly copyhold charge of 3,000 kilos of barley to pay to Tybjerggård. A charge of 3,000 kilos of barley had to be paid to Tybjerggård whenever the farm had a new owner. Proprietor Jørgensen and Tenant Holst agreed to provide security together for 8,000 kroner while getting a secondary mortgage on the farm. We borrowed 1,000 kroner from Peter Søndergaard. We were close to a break even, so that when paper costs were covered, we owed 1,000 kroner more than the price of the farm.

At the time of the acquisition the livestock included, according to a registration from the same period: 10 dairy cows each worth 200 kroner, 8 young cattle = 430 kroner; 4 workhorses of which one could not stand up on its own, one 1½ years old colt, 8 sows with young and 1 boar, 19 growing pigs and 37 piglets, 14 chickens, 160 barrels of grain, 200 barrels of beets and 4 barrels of potatoes, and some hay.

The following year there were 13 cows, 8 head of young cattle, 4 workhorses, 4 sows with young, 18 fattened pigs, 9 growing pigs and 14 piglets, 25 chickens, 394 barrels of grain, 1,800 barrels of beets, 50 barrels of carrots and 10 barrels of potatoes.

We took over the newly bought farm in mid-October, but I could not leave my job as farm manager until November. Actually, even in November, I was still supervising the threshing for a few days, as Jørgensen wanted me to help him. Fortunately, Søren Søndergaard came to Tybjerg and helped us in October. The cows had to be milked and fed, the pigs needed fodder, too; we had grain to bring to the mill, and beets were to be driven to the farmstead.

	October 1907	October 1908
Cows and young cattle	2,430 kr.	3,330 kr.
Horses	1,500 kr.	1,200 kr.
Grain and beets	1,540 kr.	4,690 kr.
Machinery and tools	1,260 kr.	1,520 kr.
Buildings	4,000 kr.	4,000 kr.
Swine and chickens	1,158 kr.	1,362 kr.
	11,888 kr.	16,102 kr.

Elisabeth moved up there shortly after we acquired it. From her home in Vendsyssel, we got a confirmed Christian boy, Peter Bentsen, as an assistant. They could presumably cope with the daily work until November. There were one and a half acres of beets, that a contracted laborer harvested. After November, we really began plowing. We saw to the cattle and the pigs in the morning before sunrise and then took off with the horses. Home in the afternoon at 4 o'clock, fed, cleaned and milked; so the days went well. It was a very special feeling to work on one's own property.

The blacksmith from Hjemsølille, Christian Jørgensen, was one of the first to visit us after we moved to Klintsmarken. We soon learned that he and we were of the same mind in spiritual terms; it was a great joy and encouragement to us. In addition, there were a few other families, a neighbor, Farmer Christian Hansen and another farmer, Niels P. Davidsen, who was an egg dealer, too. Also a family in the neighboring parish Sandby, Anders Jensen, Buskegård. They had a Bible circle, where we were very well received with mutual joy and spiritual enrichment.

Peter Søndergaard and his wife, Anna, and their little girl, Lissie, came from Copenhagen and visited us at Christmas time. Søren Søndergaard probably came as well. It was a very cold ride from Haslev; 12 kilometers in an open carriage – fortunately, we had an old foot muff.

The buildings were old, small and poorly furnished; especially the cowshed which was very narrow and awkward. There was only room to tie 16 head of cattle in two rows as well as a small calf stall. There was so little space behind the cows that a wheelbarrow could not pass, so the manure had to be carried out to the stable passage. There was no drain either, so the liquid manure had to be

scooped up in a bucket and carried out to the dung heap. There was no tank for the liquid manure, either.

Toward springtime, we eagerly anticipated and looked forward with pleasure to the arrival of a new world citizen. On April 29, 1908, the happy event occurred with the midwife's and the doctor's assistance. Also, Aunt Tea had waited patiently for a month's time for something to happen, so we were happy and thankful to God for our shapely little boy. He was named Johannes at his baptism that took place only 14 days later because our aunt now did not have time to wait longer, as another sister (Aunt Marie) was to be married on June 5 of that year.

We had an unexpected visit from my father in the summer of 1908. It was the first and the last time that he visited us; it was at the end of the summer. He came by train to Ringsted. From there he walked the six miles – occasionally asking for directions. It went very well until he reached Suså. There was not even a log bridge, only a ford. Our neighbor came to his aid, and he came across the creek. When he passed the grazing horses, he thought that they needed to be moved, even though he was so tired that he was staggering – possibly they needed some fresh grass. The fertile fields impressed him; after all, it was better than the heath back home.

On May 1, 1908, we got a young assistant from the orphanage Holsteinsminde near Fuglebjerg; Robert was his name. The first summer Elisabeth had no maid. In May 1909, we got a newly confirmed Christian girl, Emma, daughter of our nearest neighbors – Mads and Karen Sofie. We had good help, but it was a young staff. However, we did well with hoeing beets. In the harvest we got a little help from the blacksmith's apprentice; back then all the grain crops had to be bound by hand. When Elisabeth's parents visited us, they helped us bring the harvest home. We got help from a former farm owner, Niels Hansen from a neighboring farm; he had no desire to help his own son, on the contrary, he preferred to give us a helping hand. It was a good harvest that year. Everything was put in stacks outside the courtyard and threshed with a rented threshing machine.

In the winter, we had only Peter Bentsen to assist us. The threshing was done, and we just had to bring in the beets and see to the cattle and pigs. Tenant Holst was going to cede the lease of Fuirendal and take over the lease at

Bremersvold along with Strognaes estate in Lolland. On this occasion, he held an auction of a few dairy cows, heifers, machinery and farm implements at Fuirendal. I bought the four young cows at a cost of approximately 800 kr. In addition, I bought privately from Tenant Holst a red Jutland filly for 500 kr. At the auction at Fuirendal, I met for the first time Johannes Krarup, who shortly before had been hired as breeding manager at Holsteinborg Estate. He was young and unmarried; he boarded with tenant Sørensen at the Mineslyst dairy. At the auction, Krarup bought one of Holst's self-binders, it was the first self-binder on the Holsteinborg Estate. Holst had bought a pair of young brown carriage horses to Bremersvold, which he asked me to feed for a month because he was afraid they would be used too hard if they came out there just for the sowing season. For us it was a good extra help; unfortunately, one particular horse was so grumpy, that we had difficulty controlling it. My brother Marinus was with us for a short time in the spring, and one day we took two wagons to Haslev to get some fertilizer. After we had loaded the wagons, I let the farmhand go home with one wagon. Marinus was supposed to wait for me along with the carriage horses while I did an errand at a merchant. When I returned, he had left; he could not hold them back. So I had to walk all the way home with my package under my arm. It was about seven miles.

In May, we had another boy, Ludvig, from the orphanage. He was unreliable, lying and thieving. He stole socks, etc., from a grocery store in Hjelmsølle among other places. In the harvest, my brother Marinus came once again and helped us after he and a buddy from Vejle, Ejner Haase, had been on a journey as workmen in Germany, where he his shirt got filled with lice. On this trip, he saw the first airship, built by Count Zeppelin. The Germans were thrilled, and for Marinus and his companion, it was a great experience.

In the fall of 1909, we had an artesian drilling done in our well since it did not provide sufficient water for our livestock and household. We began in late October; Welldriller Ole Nielsen, Haslev, was assigned to the task. A laborer who later became editor of the newspaper Haslev Socialdemokrat was sent to do the work. Unfortunately, the work was so prolonged that that a large part of the beet crop suffered from frost damage. The drilling brought no practical re-

sults. The water could not rise sufficiently in the well. Cost 215 kroner + food for two men for three weeks.

On November 3, 1909, we increased the family again. This time with a little girl who was baptized with the name Margrethe. Her godmother was Mrs. Benedikte Jørgensen, Troelstrupgård.

Now we had both a farmhand and a maid that we could count on keeping. Even though they so far only caused us extra work, it did not decrease our joy.

In the course of the spring and summer of 1909, a new telephone exchange was established in Tybjerg. It started with a little more than 20 subscribers. On this occasion, we got a telephone, too. We got telephone No 19. As the farm was somewhat secluded out on the field, the telephone was a great comfort. It felt especially useful when we needed a midwife, doctor or veterinarian.

In the fall of 1909, my father took ill and was hospitalized in Vejle. The reason was a hernia disorder, which he had had for many years but now worsened. He had an operation, and according to the doctor's view should have had good hope of regaining his health and vigor. However, my father had told the doctor during his ward rounds that he did not believe that he should get up anymore, meaning that he longed for the home above. Some days later, the doctor visited my father again and said, "Well, Christensen, you have not yet come into Paradise." My father responded: "No, Doctor, but I think it still can be reached." He remained in his sickbed for a long time, and we were aware that the end was approaching. I was in Vejle a month before my father died. However, it is not too hard to say goodbye for the last time, when we have faith and the certainty that death is not the end, but that there is a place prepared at home, where there is no sorrow and no pain. My father died on February 20, 1910, at the age of 70 years and five months. His funeral took place at the Baptist Chapel on February 26. All children that were not abroad were present. That was the same day as my 30th birthday. Elisabeth was not at the funeral because she was expecting Emil. Uncle Søren traveled through Vejle on that day bound for America. Peter Søndergaard and I were at the station to say goodbye to him.

As the old buildings were condemned and needed to be replaced with new ones, we started to prepare for the construction of a new building in the south side of the courtyard. It was designed to accommodate 24 dairy cows, a beet

barn, and a drive-through gate with a loading platform in the eastern half. It was going to be 113 feet long and 29 feet wide. The ends of the building and the southern side were built of cleft granite because we had ample large stones on the grounds. The wall toward the courtyard was built of cement concrete. Timber and battens could be bought in the nearby Tybjerg forest. There was a good practice among the farmers in the district that when someone was about to build, we invited the neighbors to haul either a load of timber, gravel or stone, and it cost us only a meal. In the winter, we had bought spruce and batten in the woods and hauled some gravel. I had made an agreement with a stonemason to split the stones, so we could be ready to build the foundation in the spring of 1910. The roof above the barn and beet barn would have iron beams and a brick ceiling. We obtained iron beams from an in-law, master builder Peter Søndergaard, at a cost of 0.33 kroner per foot. From a grocery store in Ringsted, I got an offer of 0.85 kroner per foot. What a difference, and it was the same size of iron.

I had engaged an older man named Lars Jensen from Tybjerglille as a builder. He had an assistant of his own age – a bricklayer named Davidsen. They were both skilled workers, as long as they were sober. They had some difficulties with that. At that time, spirits were cheap and easy to obtain, so they often had a bottle. When such a boulder wall was built, they put a vertical pole at each end of the wall to attach the cords. These poles were placed in holes in the ground, so they stood firm and precisely vertical to make the wall straight. One day a farmhand, unfortunately, hit one of these poles, so it became a bit askew. The builders did not notice it until a few days after. Thus, the wall had a bad alignment, which later caused much trouble.

This summer and autumn, a few people in the district, especially children, were sick with jaundice; however, most of them had it rather mildly. I got the disease, too. It shows itself in a way that you cannot tolerate food, become uncomfortable and tired, get a yellowish appearance, first perceptible on the whites of the eyes. If it lasts for a long time, one's strength decreases significantly. I had a doctor several times, a young doctor Thejsen from Sneselev, but I was not getting any better. As soon as I tried to eat just a spoonful of food, it immediately came back up. Then I was advised to send for a doctor Christoffersen from Ringsted. He came, and when he saw me, he said: "That won't do. You

need food; otherwise, you'll starve to death. If you can't tolerate a tablespoon, then we try a teaspoon." It turned out, that I made it with such small portions – however, a month went by before I was fully recovered. I still remember clearly the first day when I came out, the sun was shining, the sky was blue and the birds chirping – it was like getting life anew. Actually, I did not have the time to be sick – a large construction and harvest, but I had to give up. It is only when one has had a disease that one learns to be thankful for health and vigor; normally, we consider it a matter of course that we are healthy.

This summer Johannes had turned two years in April. He often toddled about on his own. One day he had come too near a pit of slaked lime near the dung heap. He fell in and was badly smeared with quicklime. Fortunately, I was not far away, and he was quickly rescued. He possibly got a spanking as it accorded with my pedagogical principles. When children are doing something they should not, then the immediate punishment is the surest way to prevent and counteract recurrences.

Construction progressed although it went slowly and was followed by various accidents. The first has already been mentioned, where the servant ran against the support or "gallows" as it was called. As a result, the wall was a few inches out of alignment. While making the cornice, Davidsen tried to correct the skewed wall by straightening the cornice a few inches. However, he neglected to make sufficient balance, so when he was almost finished, much of cornice rattled down on the scaffold. The house was roofed with long straw; it was a lot of work. Simultaneously, we also built a liquid-manure tank. The walls and the bottom had just been finished when we had a thunderstorm one night with strong rainfall. Water flowed down the private road to the farm, and it sloped directly toward the newly finished tank, where the water ran down behind the wall and deformed it. Furthermore, the tank was filled with rainwater. It was the third accident, and the fourth and last occurred when Davidsen built the roof between the iron beams in the cowshed. The vaulted roof was built of bricks in cement on boards, based on templates, positioned between the iron beams supported by pillars of wood. As the masonry dried the boards and templates were moved to the next section. We had reached late autumn, and the masonry dried somewhat slowly. The arches could hardly support themselves when the boards were removed. Davidsen was unfortunate enough to stumble

A stable build in Klintsmark in the community of Tybjerg, summer 1910:

Timber 264.30, laths 70.00 from Tybjerg forest	334.30 kr.
Cutting of laths at the sawmill	72.84 kr.
Boards and laths from timber merchant	28.05 kr.
Bricks 300.00, plaster 45.00	345.00 kr.
Cement 396.50, gravel 50.00	446.50 kr.
Stone mason and bricklayer	888.85 kr.
Carpenter	400.00 kr.
Thatcher and wire	125.00 kr.
Smith and pipes	150.00 kr.
Windows and roof windows with glass	110.00 kr.
	2,900,54 kr.

across an empty sack, on which he had rested his knees while he worked. He fell onto a vault where the boards had just been taken away. As a result he – along with the collapsing vault – fell down on the shed floor. Unfortunately, 2-3 other arches fell down, too. Quite a loss of both material and work, as most of the bricks broke into pieces. The work was done on a piecework contract, but I provided the materials. Now it is quite interesting to see what the prices were back then.

There is no price for the boulders, the hauling and the straw for thatching roofs as these were materials and work we were supposed to deliver ourselves. The building was 113 feet long and 29 feet wide. The prices include the making of the liquid manure tank 16 x 12 x 8 feet.

The meetinghouse in Tybjerg was built in 1908 near Tybjerg church. It contained a rather spacious hall and a smaller one. It made the biblical study circle consider having a missionary week. It was delegated to me to rent the hall and make arrangements with the speakers. To mention a few of the speakers in those years: Secretary H. Kildeby, B. D., from Haslev; Teacher Rasmussen, B. D., from the teacher's college in Haslev, and Teacher Pagh Petersen from Haslev Højskole. Missionary Rasmussen from Sandvad; Aggerbo from Vordingborg and Lars Åge from Køge.

On March 18, 1911, Emil was born. The third in the row. A healthy and well-shaped boy, and an increase of workload for a busy housewife.

In the southwest corner of the field, there was a house owned by a man of around 80 years. His name was Niels Just. He had previously been a wheelwright, but now he lived on a pension and small savings. He was a widower and had an elderly widow as housekeeper; we called her Marie Just. She had been with him for many years, and they lived, as far as we can judge, as husband and wife with each other's consent. It was decided that she was going to inherit his assets if she survived him. To the house with garden belonged two acres of good land, a cow, and a workbench + some old tools. When Niels Just died, I bought the house, cow, and tools. 2,000 kroner for the whole lot.

Suså creek was situated to the north in the field. However, it did not form a boundary, because it writhed around. The boundary, however, was straight so that I had about one acre of land on the other side of the stream, and my neighbor Christoffer Hansen, Almstofte had approximately 22 acres of meadow on my side of the creek. I rented this meadow from him every year partly to harvest hay and partly for grazing. Then I used to pay him at my convenience. However, in the summer of 1911, I had cut the grass and stacked the hay, without paying him rent yet. One day, I was in the meadow, Christoffer came over, and we talked across the creek. He then noted that he would like to have the money before I drove the hay home. Well, I could understand that. Johannes, who at that time was a little kid just over 3 years old, often followed me in the field. On that day, he was also in the meadow. I wrote on a slip: "Give the boy a 100 kroner note in his back pocket," and put the slip in the boy's pocket, told him to go home and give Mom the slip. He took care of the errand satisfactorily; he returned with the 100 kroner note. Christopher got his money and I got my hay, so both parties were satisfied.

In the summer of 1911, we had a visit by Tenant Holst, who at that time held the lease on Bremersvold on the island of Lolland. He was of the opinion that we should have a larger property. He thought that we might be able to lease "Broksø", as he would help us with money and possibly be in company with us on the lease. On this occasion, we went over there, and the tenant received an audience with her Ladyship and asked about the possibilities. When she heard my name, she was immediately unwilling to discuss the matter. "He was the one who put a chain on my water tap" she exclaimed, and thus Broksø was abandoned (see earlier).



The author with Margrethe, Elisabeth with Emil, and Johannes.
The picture is supposedly from the autumn of 1911

In the Christmas of 1911, Tenant Holst wrote us a letter mentioning a farm called "Elisabethslyst." It was situated near the small town of Geldballe in Skanderum parish a couple of miles from Lunderskov. The farm which had a total area of 200 acres belonged to Holst's brother's mother-in-law. She was a widow and she wished to sell the farm. Holst suggested that together with Proprietor Jørgensen he could guarantee an amount of 10,000 kroner. He believed that we could raise a similar amount with a sale of the farm in Tybjerg. He meant that the financing then was within reach. Of course, we were excited by this possibility. I wrote immediately to Holst for further information about the farm. He answered in a letter that the buildings were good, built of bricks, well maintained and situated in the center of the main area of 143 acres. 32 acres in fenced pens were situated 1.5 miles away from the farm. 25 acres was forest. Good livestock: 30 dairy cows, 6–8 young horses, many pigs and good machines. Everything sounded very good. After discussing it with Tenant Jørgensen, he and I agreed to make a journey to see the farm and talk to the owner, Mrs. Elisabeth Jepsen. This year we had a very hard winter with persistent frost. Despite that, we chose to carry out the journey. When we reached Korsør, the ferries appeared to be suspended due to frozen water. An ice-

breaker was about to depart, and we were asked to come along. It was exciting. We went with the icebreaker, but it did not run fast – the service took four hours (a distance of around 14 miles). The ice was thick and it could be broken only by letting the ship's bow run on top of the ice and breaking the ice with the ship's weight. It often had to take another run to make its way through the ice masses. Indeed, it was no cruise; there were frequent severe bumps. We eventually arrived safely and continued our journey to Kolding where we stayed for the night at the mission hotel. The next morning, we caught the train to Lunderskov. We walked the last part of the way. We were nicely received by the owner, who did us well. She showed us over the farm inside and outside. The layout of the barn was obsolete with no feeding passage, so all the fodder had to be carried from behind the cows. One thing in particular that worried Tenant Jørgensen was that the assessment for the taxes on the farm was only eight barrels of hartkorn, which led him to conjecture that quality of the soil was too poor. As Tenant Holst at the same time was taken ill and hospitalized in Copenhagen, no further steps were taken to bring off the deal. The farm was sold to another buyer at 95,000 kroner. It was a big disappointment to us.

While these things happened, life went on at the farm in Tybjerg. I will tell of one of the servants: In 1912, I had hired a farmhand named Carl from a labor exchange office in Copenhagen. He was about 23 years old – not totally crazy, but not quite right in the head either. I had my difficulties in educating him. In particular I remember a day when we had *æbleflæsk* for dinner; he did not eat the bread but ate only the bacon and the fried apples. I pointed out to him that it was customary to eat bread as well. “It tastes damned good anyhow,” Carl replied. At the same time, we had a maid named Maren. She was engaged, and her boyfriend was given to climbing through her window to her. Carl discovered it, however, so he stood by the window and promised to give her boyfriend a trashing. This made Maren approach our bedroom and wake us. She told us that her boyfriend did not dare to leave, as Carl would kill him. She really wanted me to help him out. I got up and admonished her boyfriend the best I could. If he promised me that he would no longer make nightly visits, he would be allowed to escape. He promised everything, as long as he could escape alive. I let him out through the front door while Carl still stood guard at the window in the garden. Carl was sloppy with his work, good directions did

not help. Then one day, I eventually lost patience with him and suggested that he leave with the pay he was owed to date. Carl replied calmly: “Hell, I’m not leaving, I feel all right. You can call the sheriff, but I will not leave anyway.” One day some time later, I thought that he had taken too long to get the horses out of the barn, and I gave him off a little shove. Then he became very angry and hissed: “Such a boor.” It was probably the most “elegant” word that he could come up with hastily. As far as I remember, I endured his stay until the end of the current half year employment period.

Tenant Holst, from “Bremersvold” near Holeby Station, died in the autumn. He was buried from Kongens Lyngby church. He was only 39 years old, leaving four children in his marriage: Johannes, Ester, Karen and little Erik. I attended the funeral, and on this occasion I borrowed Farmhand Peter Madsen’s overcoat to make me look fairly well-dressed. The widow was entitled to keep the lease for a full calendar year after the tenant’s death.

An extra Christmas present was born on December 14, 1912; the fourth of the crowd of children. The birth was fairly uncomplicated, but the boy was reluctant to breathe, so the midwife took hold of him in both legs upside down and gave him a sharp slap at the hindquarters. It helped the guy, he could scream now. We also had some difficulties when we had decided to take him to church after New Year’s. As was customary, we had arranged for the christening, enrolled the godparents, etc., with Head Teacher and Cantor Nielsen, Tybjerg school. There was heat in the church, and everything was prepared correctly. – A little before we were to leave home with the child Teacher Nielsen telephoned that the minister had just passed the school on the road to the neighboring Herlufmagle parish, where he was to preach, but without canceling the service of God in his own parish, Tybjerg. What were we to do now? We agreed with Teacher Nielsen that we would send a riding messenger to Herlufmagle to ask the minister to stop over in Tybjerg on the way back and perform the baptism. The messenger returned with the message that we could drive to Aversi (where the parsonage was located) with the child. He would baptize him when he came home. Teacher Nielsen did not accept that scheme. He asked us to come to Tybjerg church with the child. At the time the minister was expected to return from Herlufmagle, Teacher Nielsen would stop him and arrange for the baptism to take place in Tybjerg church, which was our parish

church. Teacher Nielsen's plan was implemented, the boy was baptized and given the name: Erik Immanuel Tolstrup Christensen.

Those failed attempts to gain possession of a bigger farm meant that we could not rest with the situation in Tybjerg. But if we came to buy something else, then we had to sell what we already had – one was dependent on the other. I began to work on plans for subdividing the farm in Tybjerg. By adding four acres of land to the house that I bought from Niels Just, it could be sold to a man named Thaulov Ludvigsen; the neighbor, Chris Hansen, intended to purchase 14 acres of land close to his own. These two transactions were completed during the winter of 1912–13.

I went out to look at various farms one of which was in Jutland, a farm near Limskov Station in the Vejle area, but it was a really bad farm. A farm in the community of Ornebjærg near Vordingborg, a well-built farm, but the fields lay spread in many different places. In Lille Rørbæk near Frederikssund, I saw a farm where there were 70 acres of fine soil near the farm and about 88 acres of light soil and salt marsh near Roskilde fjord. Out there, a barn had been built for the dairy cows.

At the end of the winter, I had a day visit from a man from Køge, Realtor Lars Larsen. He suggested that I exchange my farm for a farm in Kirke Skensved near Havdrup Station. This farm had an adjoining 136 acres of good soil with strong buildings, which were well placed at the fields. The farm was owned by Realtor Carl Olsen, who was prepared to make a deal with or without livestock. I was immediately interested and that was why I took a day train from Haslev to Lille Skensved where Carl Olsen picked me up. I saw the farm which appealed to me, although there was a relatively long private road on both sides. Still, the farm was fairly close to the railway stations in Havdrup and Kirke Skensved about two and a half miles to either town. This was an improvement from "Klintmarken," where it was seven miles to Ringsted and Haslev. It was about twelve miles to Næstved.

A few days later Carl Olsen and Lars Larsen came to Tybjerg where we negotiated and agreed on an exchange. I would take over Østermarksgård at a price of 65,000 kroner + an annual copyhold tax of 40 barrels of barley to Vallø Stift. Carl Olsen would take over the farm in Klintmarken at 27,000 kroner for 50 acres with an annual copyhold tax of 22 barrels of barley to Tybjerggård. Both

farms were traded without livestock, wagons or machines. The acquisition would take place on March 25, 1913. Now that it had happened, there was much that needed to be done. Auctions were held at the farm in Skensved where everything had to be sold. There was some plowing to do, but we were so lucky to have a nice and strong fellow who could work independently. Peter Madsen, was his name. He drove there with a couple of horses and was – thanks to good words and pay – quartered on the farm. The auction took place in early March, and I bought not a little: one cow, two bred cows, five heifers, one small bull, two calves and an old gelding. In addition to the above, I bought some hand tools. Tables, chairs, beds and bed clothes I bought from Tenant Jørgensen, Troelstrupgård, where we also bought some seeds, particularly seeds to be used as fodder but also some seeds to be sown.

During one of my visits to Østermarksgård prior to the takeover – as I wanted to get acquainted with the surroundings – I visited the cemetery in Kirke Skensved. The thought that it was to be my final resting place was probably not strange to me because we have never been given any guarantee as to the span of life allotted to us. Cemeteries have always made a certain attraction to me; there are usually peaceful and tranquil. The size of this cemetery as well as the church fits with the size of the parish and the population. The parish has an area of 1,546 acres with a total value of 131 barrels of hartkorn; and the population is about 350 people.

On another occasion, I visited Nylandsgård – the nearest neighboring farm to Østermarksgård. I was greeted by the owner, the noted Proprietor Lars Nielsen-Skensved and his youngest son, Ejner, who was at home and participated in the farm's operation. My particular concern was whether I could get permission to drive our cattle past Nylandsgård a few days later when we were to take them from Lille Skensved station. Actually, there was a private road and also a small part where there was no road, but a field sown with lucerne. For us, that would mean a shorter path by about half a mile. Lars Nielsen-Skensved promptly granted me permission, and then I was shown around in the stables, where there were only horses and bulls – the latter in large numbers. They had had contagious abortion in the herd, so the cows had been sold, and now they had only bulls which were being held for fattening.

Before the departure, I will add another few lines about our neighbors in Tybjerg. Especially we fondly remember Karen Sofie Madsen. She was married to an old, decrepit man, former owner of Ny Mølle, which had a small farm of 19 acres. They had five children – two sons and three daughters – of whom both sons and eventually two daughters have worked for us. Karen Sofie was always helpful in both word and deed. Another farmer, Christian Hansen, was married to Sheriff Jørgensen's daughter in Hjælmsøllille. They were young people at the time and had no children. He was a very diligent and clever man; he was born and raised in Vindstrup near Fuglebjerg. His father-in-law gave them 27 acres of land of his own to build on. He was particularly interested in dairy cows and had brought some excellent species from his home region. In the first years when I occasionally had financial difficulties, I could always borrow from Christian Hansen. He consoled me by saying: "When I have money, you do too!"

Østermarksgård

On March 25, the day of taking over, I was in Køge, where we had the documents written by Lawyer Sattrup, who at that time had his office in a building near the hotel “Norske Løve”, Nørregade 52, also housing the Køge Bank. The estate agent, Lars Larsen, then gave a lunch at Jens Nielsen’s inn in Jernbanegade.

The moving day was set for March 27. It was a Thursday. I had ordered two freight train cars for the cattle, about 30 in total. They were led along the road to Haslev, about six to seven miles. It was somewhat difficult, as a large proportion of them were young cattle, unfamiliar with the tether. We made it, though, and got them loaded in the cars. The farmhand, the farm boy and I went with the freight train in case something should happen along the way. Three to four men met us at Lille Skensved to help us with the last part. They were Rasmus Petersen and a former owner Peter Petersen and an unskilled laborer, Peter Nielsen, from Jersie. The pigs were driven by road the whole way by Anders Jensen, Buskegård, and Niels Peter Davidsen, Hjælmsøllille with two horse wagons. Christian Hansen drove Elisabeth, the children, and two maids to Haslev. After the short trip to Lille Skensved Farmer Hartvig Petersen from Solrød (formerly Ny Mølle) met them. He was waiting with his horses to take them to Østermarksgård. For Elisabeth, it was very exciting. She had not yet seen the farm, but even though the farmhouse was old, the dwelling was significantly better than the one in Tybjerg.

It was not an inexpensive matter to get started with the new farm. It had only half its livestock, no crops and almost no beets. We had to buy seed grain, fertilizers, and seeds as well as maize feed for the horses and pigs and feed cakes for the cows. The fields were very weedy, waterlogged and in need of lime. From my old Grocer Bang in Ringsted, I had a truckload of corn on a bill of exchange. From Jørgensen at Troelstrupgård, I bought seed grain on credit; fertilizers and seeds were also on credit until fall when the new harvest was gathered in and could be used to cover the many debts. A big auction bill and

paper costs together accounted for over 6,000 kroner. I was allowed to repay this sum over several years. In addition, I bought a new Simplex reaper-binder. The price was 600 kroner to be paid over three years. In addition, I bought an 11-tooth cultivator. From my old carpenter and wheelwright, Evald Henriksen in Tybjerglille, I ordered woodwork for two new vehicles, a farm wagon and a carriage with springs and charabanc seats. The blacksmith in Hjælmsølle, Christian Jørgensen, our good friend, would mount both of them. I did not receive the spring cart until the fall of 1913.

Despite all these expenses and debts, we started excavation for a large liquid manure tank – after finishing the spring work in the fields. It was thirteen by forty feet in size and eight feet in depth. The ground was very hard and solid to dig in. We loosened the upper layer with a horse and plow; further down, it was necessary to use a pickaxe. The tank was bricked with $\frac{1}{2}$ stone clinkers in cement with a four-inch inner wall of concrete; the deck was concrete on iron beams.

In 1913, we had a rather mild winter with early and drying spring weather, but with a very severe late winter. In the first half of April, it froze so hard that we had to use a pickaxe to break up the soil covering the beet pile. We began to sow on April 15 and were finished with the seed grain on the 26th of the same month. The beets were sown between May 10 and 20. The harvest was not great. The weedy fields could not produce the potential crop. There were about eight acres of wheat that were so damaged by smut that the men doing the threshing looked like Negroes. They were so black from the smut dust. A field of oats was so filled with coltsfoot that the wings of the binder could not take it onto the platform, so it stopped in front of the machine. One field of barley was heavily loaded with thistles.

In the first years, I had one rotation of fallow ground and one of beets. This represented approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the area. This, combined with ample use of fertilizers brought rapid improvement in the yield. The first summer we had no herdsman. But Johannes Madsen (age 15) took care of the cows, the maid and I helped with the milking. On November 1, 1913, we engaged a little boy, the son of Farmer Poul Andreasen, Lille Havdrup. He wanted him to get prepared, so a believing minister could confirm him. The name of the little guy was Johannes. He slept in the same room as our own children, and he said his prayers every

night, an example to follow. At the same time, we hired an unmarried herdsman, Christian Thomsen, who had to take care of the cattle, cleaning the pigery and milking, helped by two farm boys.

On May 29, 1914, we needed a midwife again. Girl No 2, the fifth one was baptized as Else Christine Tolstrup Christensen. Miss Dagmar Jørgensen, from Troelstrupgård near Haslev, carried her; Dagmar's two brothers Aage and Richard were godparents.

1914 was a year rich in events. Elisabeth's older brother, Master Builder Peter Søndergaard in Vejle, had long been ill with tuberculosis and had repeatedly been at the Vejle Fjord Sanatorium, but without bringing lasting recovery. The disease was now so severe that he was still bedridden. He had a wife and four small children aged 1–8 years. There were three girls: Lissi, Else, and Dagny and the small boy Holger only one-year-old. He had a big business and had built several large apartment blocks in Vejle. You will understand that he found it difficult to say goodbye to all that bound him to life here on earth. Around June 1, I was in Vejle to see him. That was the last time I saw him alive, and we were both aware of that. With unique foresight, he had set everything up for his wife and children. Shortly before his death, he had bought a large property complex that he himself had built for another. It provided the family with an abundant livelihood.

Peter Søndergaard died on June 24, 1914, and the funeral took place on June 30. We participated in the funeral, and on the return journey onboard the ferry crossing the Storebælt, newspapers were sold in which the assassination of the successor to the Austrian throne and his wife was announced. This murder was the prelude to the Great War that began around August 10, 1914.

At first, it meant for us that we had to let go our two best farmhands: first farmhand Christian Davidsen and herdsman Christian Thomsen were called up for the militia. We were then left with two farm boys and a young maid and that just prior to harvest. But it was a time as so often before and since, that God gave us amply what we needed. There were some companies in the town of Havdrup Station, which had to stop because of the war, and for that reason, we could get the men we wanted for harvesting.

The state of war caused a great disturbance in our normal way of life. The fear that Denmark would be involved in the war dance, too, probably seized

most of us. In many churches across the country and also on weekdays evening devotions with prayer were held that we would be spared the horrors of war. Most people talked about it and figured that it would be impossible for the battle to last long as the armies were equipped with these modern weapons. Most thought that in the course of a month or so, it would all be over, but that appeared far from correct. In defense, they used trenches and barbed wire extensively. Here in Denmark, where the militia was called up, it was used in some part for excavation and construction of trenches from Køge Bugt [Bay] to Roskilde Fjord, known as the "Tune Position." The construction of these fortifications resulted in concentrating large forces in the immediate neighborhood. Accommodating them placed a great burden on the residents of the neighboring communities, which included both night's lodging and meals. Many of the larger farms had four to six men and the smaller farms accommodated two men. The soldiers in the communities of Jersie and Kirke Skensved were a long distance from the place where they were working, about seven to eight miles. They had to get up early and bring a lunch package, and they were usually back home again in mid-afternoon. Thus, their mealtimes never occurred at the usual times on the farm. From this, you will understand how much extra trouble this meant for the households at the various farms.


 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Jersie and Kirke Skensved parishes

These two church parishes together constitute a community parish, with a total of 800 inhabitants and a total area of 3,900 acres with a land value of 311 “hartkorn”. The parishes are located in Tune District, Gammel Roskilde County. Kirke Skensved is the smallest parish in the district, with only 1,600 acres with a land value of 131 “hartkorn”.

The connecting of these two parishes is not especially long-standing. According to Trap Denmark the four church parishes Havdrup, Solrød, Jersie and Kirke Skensved were separate in the Middle Ages. By a decree from the King in 1555, it was determined that the churches in Havdrup and in Kirke Skensved were to be demolished and the inhabitants were to be sent to Jersie church, to which Solrød would be an annex. This scheme was not implemented. Indeed Jersie and Solrød parishes were merged, but the churches in Havdrup and Kirke Skensved remained and the two parishes shared one minister. Only in the year 1812, did Kirke Skensved parish become an annex to Jersie.

For the most part, the soil is of fine quality and the fields are very flat, which of course is a great advantage. In Jersie, however, you have some areas with bog and seaside salt meadows of poor condition.

With regard to the lifestyle, political and spiritual interests of the inhabitants, then they probably were very much like Danes in general in their ordinary way of living. Earlier the large farmers were decidedly conservative and would not, for example, participate in the same dairy as the more liberal “left-ies” [farmers who associated with Venstre, the Danish political party standing for agricultural interests]. Thus, Naurbjærg dairy was built by conservatives and Solrød dairy by supporters of Venstre [Liberal Party].

They tell about a farmer in Jersie, Niels Jørgensen, who had the rectory's farm in tenancy in addition to his own farm. He was also the local sheriff and a member of the county council. He kept a strict regime at home. He tolerated no contradictions and gave boxes on the ear at the slightest provocation. All the various minor tasks at the farm like taking grain to the mill, cutting chaff, and sweeping the courtyard were saved up for Sunday. This same Niels Jørgensen was a glutton as far as his own food was concerned, whereas in contrast he would not permit his farmhands to have fat on their bread. He was later appointed *Kammerråd* [a title of honor].

Ministers in Jersie-Kirke Skensved parishes include Hans Gammerød from 1816 until his death in 1851. He was followed in the same year by Adam Vilhelm Holm, who himself managed the large rectory farm, which was about 140 acres. He was transferred to Gladsakse-Herlev near Copenhagen in 1868. In his place, Adolf Emil Fritz moved into the Jersie rectory. In his time, a tenant farmed the part of the rectory's farmland that was located in Jersie parish, whereas the part of the farmland that was located in Kirke Skensved parish was sold off as copyhold to different owners, of which "Naurbjerggård" represents the major part.

In 1884, the Rev. Caspar Christian Ulrich Kragh was called to be the pastor for Jersie-Kirke Skensved congregations, and he worked here till 1909. In the last eight years, however, he was assisted by his son, Ejner Kragh as personal curate. Kragh was replaced by Valdemar Blauenfeldt, whose preaching significantly differed from the previous ministers. He joined the Inner Mission; he greeted the missionaries and regularly summoned ministers of the same opinion for meetings and missionary weeks in the parishes. Bible conversation meetings were started, Sunday schools were set up, and the minister and his wife also had the youth come for meetings in the rectory. Choosing Blauenfeldt as the minister of Jersie was probably some kind of an "accident". Around 1901, we had the first church parish councils, however, at first, they consisted of only two members from each parish. One of the members from Jersie was Teacher Højby, and he became chairman of the council.

Højby was a teacher in Jersie from 1901 to 1928. He had previously been a teacher in Stjær in Jutland, where many came to church. That was why he

could not really come to terms with the empty church in Jersie nor with the ungodly lifestyles of the people from Jersie.

When the post became vacant and the application deadline was reached, Teacher Højby received the applications from the bishop. As neither Højby nor any of the others in the council knew any of the applicants Højby took the whole bunch and traveled to Copenhagen to consult with the Rev. A. Fibiger, who then was minister of Eliaskirken in Vesterbro. In reviewing the applications, Fibiger marked with an x those he knew and would recommend. Among these was also Valdemar Blauenfeldt who then was minister in the communities of Vandborg and Ferring near the west coast of Jutland.

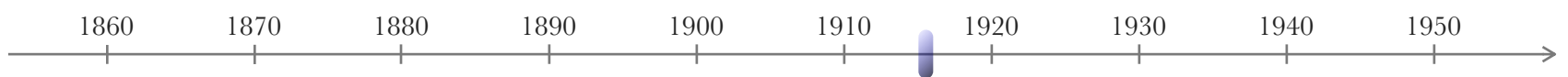


Acquisition of a wind motor

1913–14

At the time, when we moved to Kirke Skensved, a believing manufacturer and cabinetmaker named Sørensen lived at Havdrup Station. He was a Jutlander, born on the small island of Jegindø in the Limfjord. He made chairs. In the summer of 1908, a wind motor from the manufacturer Dahlgaard in Holbæk was exhibited on the cattle show area at Roskilde. Sørensen bought it and had it rebuilt at his factory in Havdrup. It was to supply the power for the saw and other machines; but that motor was too unstable, so Sørensen wanted to resell it. In the summer of 1913, we met together and I ended up buying the wind motor as it was with saw, axles and other accessories + ten dining chairs – for a total of 800 kroner.

In the following autumn and winter, Nielsen the millwright at Havdrup Station with his son Thorvald and a few assistants took the motor down. We drove all of it home, where it was rebuilt with new timber next to the left wing – as a replacement for an old four-winged house mill on top of the barn. The new mill would power the threshing machine, the grinding mill, the saw and the chaff cutter. It worked very well for many years.



1915 Purchasing farmland – Building a house for the herdsman

Farmer Peter Andreasen in Kirke Skensved had a farm with 120 acres of land. 70 acres were separated from the rest by the railway to Masnedsund so that he was forced to use a private gate by crossing the railway track. Only he used the gate, so it had to be opened and closed every time they had to pass through it with vehicles or livestock, which was a lot of trouble and a waste of time. Thus, he wanted to sell this farmland. There had also been buyers, but the biggest obstacle was that you could not find any proper access to the area. So there so far had been no trade.

Now it was so fortunate that I already had the road privilege along the nearest field. During the winter of 1915, we negotiated with the result that I from April 1 same year would take over these 70 acres for a price of 30,000 kroner + 40 barrels of barley each year, the value of which would be calculated yearly based on an official quoted price.

What about money? Well, some I borrowed from the Haslev Bank and some Peter Andreasen remained invested. I myself had probably 2,000 kroner. At the Haslev Bank, I had Niels Johansen, Haslev and V. Jørgensen, Troelstrupgaard as guarantors.

The increase in the area of farmland necessarily led to an expansion and increase of the buildings. In the same year, I had already built a house in which a married herdsman could live. Master mason Hans Mortensen from Lille Skensved did the bricklaying, and I had the old Peter Hansen, Jersie, grandfather of Kamille Nielsen, Jersie Strand, as master carpenter. The joinery was performed by Joiner Hans Jensen, Lille Skensved. The cost of labor amounted to: Masons 383.50 kroner; Carpenter 174.00 kroner. The joiner delivered all the windows

and doors for 256 kroner. With bricks, tiles and cement the total was some 2,000 kroner.

An increase of the livestock was also desirable. Since the local sheriff Hans Larsen, Balstrup near Ringsted advertised 22 large heifers for sale, I suggested to Peter Andreasen that we go to check them out. We were well received – the heifers looked OK – about half were with calf – and before we left the farm we had bought the whole lot for a total price of 5,000 kroner + 39 kroner for freight from Ringsted to Viby Station. We received them on May 22, and Peter Andreasen put the money out. We shared the heifers so that Peter Andreasen got the heifers for slaughtering, and I got those which were with calf.


 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

The private road

The increased farmland area and the relationship with the maintenance of the private road: In 1913, the private road between the villages of Jersie and Kirke Skensved passing Bleghøjgård and Østermarksgård was in a very bad condition. Just before we moved to the parish the community parish council had presented an apportionment of the road so that each of the landowners concerned was allotted his part of the road to restore and maintain. It very quickly turned out to be a very inconvenient way to improve a road. There was always someone who did not do anything.

After my purchase of farmland, someone was of the opinion that I ought to have a longer part of the road to maintain, and you might say that it was a fair opinion. Especially eager was a farmer, Niels Olsen, Toftegård in Jersie. He brought about an inspection on the ground on the reasons that I should have a longer part of the road to maintain, and he together with the others a somewhat shorter part. During the following negotiation, I said I would be willing to accept such a long part of the road, which reasonably could be allotted to me, but at the same time I also wanted another mode of distribution (of costs) and suggested a distribution according to size of farmland area, the election of a chairman responsible for the purchase of road materials so that the road was put in order, where most needed, and the amount of expenditure distributed by acres. However, for those who had little use of the road, the area calculated would be reduced.

This proposal gradually won acceptance except for Niels Olsen. He protested strongly and refused to sign the settlement. He said: “No! I will not do it – anyhow not tonight.” The chairman of the community parish council, Farmer Christian Svendsen, Kirke Skensved then remarked: “Well, it must be tonight.

Otherwise, it will be up to us to decide how it should be.” Niels then had to defer and bite the bullet and put his name to a settlement which gave him 50% more in costs compared to what he previously had paid. Now that really was not intended.



The position of the Solrød Co-operative Dairy on an increase in farmland area

I also had troubles with the cooperative dairy. In the dairy's statutes was a provision saying that if a member of the cooperative society increased his farmland area by purchasing from a farm that was not a member of cooperative society, then this member of the cooperative society would have to pay a per-acre entrance fee for the purchased farmland area. As Peter Andreasen (from whom I had bought land) was a member of and supplier to Naurbjerg Dairy the case was evident, although I tried to explain to the Board the advantage to the dairy of having a milk supplier that was as large as possible. This they willingly admitted, but the statutes had to be respected, and I had to pay this offensive fee. After this, the statutes were on this point were changed and completely revised.



“Scheel’s Eng”

One day in the summer of 1915 as I drove my horse-drawn rake near the northern boundary of the newly acquired farmland area, the neighbor, the small farmer Lars Nielsen, “Scheel’s Eng”, approached me. He was an elderly man who had a farm of approximately 20 acres. The buildings were old, the fields very poor and weedy. He felt the inconvenience of the farming and asked me to replace him. At first, I was somewhat apprehensive, but after a few days consideration, we agreed on the price. It was set at 10,000 kroner without livestock, but with the harvest which was, however, of minor value. Most of it was mown and used to feed the cows in the barn.

For Christmas in that same year, Søren Søndergaard returned home from America. He was immediately keen to buy the small farm “Scheel’s Eng” and anticipated having his sister, Marie Larsen help as housekeeper. During the winter, he negotiated with his family, and he managed to persuade not only his sister but also his father and mother to agree to move to Zealand in their old age. Then Søren bought the farm with 25 acres, of which 14 were part of the farmland area bought from Peter Andreasen. The price was set at 18,000 kroner for only the land itself.

On March 15, 1916, an expected event occurred as yet another citizen of the world showed up, a girl, the sixth in the crowd. At her baptism, she was given the name Ingeborg Eleonora T. C.

Around April 1, as previously arranged, Jens and Mariane Søndergård, Marie Larsen with her two little girls Johanne and Mary arrived after they had loaded all their furniture and household items in the freight wagon at Dronninglund. In numerical terms, Søren therefore immediately got a large family, but as assistants two of them were too old and two of them too young. Further-

more, Marie was not of strong health. However, he got to work with a good heart and gradually acquired livestock. From me, he bought one cow, five heifers, three sows, grain seed and various farm implements.

By May of the same year Henrik Søndergård bought a small farm at Solrød Vestermærk and moved with his wife and four children over here. Now almost the whole family was gathered here on the island of Zealand.

1916 was a rainy year with a big harvest especially as far as straw was concerned, but what particularly characterized that summer was the extensive quartering of soldiers. For a short period on this farm alone we had 25 men from the infantry, later it dropped to 10–12 men. It presented a lot of work for the household. Thus, we were granted a man to help in the kitchen. But when we were about to build a shed for machinery and storeroom, and since there was a bricklayer among our quartered men, I asked whether we might have him cook. He then did the masonry work in the construction of this building.

Later in the harvest time, we also had a lot of help from the soldiers. When the farmer hosting the quartering wanted it, the soldiers could have the afternoon off to help by moving the crops to a storage area and also by threshing.

After the harvest, large maneuvers were organized. With this, we got an extra large quartering. We had artillery with many horses for a few days; later we got a greater part of the Horse Guard's band led by the staff drummer quartered for several days. From my old notes, it can be seen that the amounts paid to me for quartering were: for infantry 688.00 kroner, for artillery 177.94 kroner, and for the Horse Guard 159.00 kroner, totaling 1,024.94 kroner. The quartering continued in the following fall and winter, though with a significantly smaller number. We had four men, and in the new house, we had set aside a room, where they could stay.

Søren and Henrik Søndergård had difficulties adapting themselves to the Zealand environs. By the following January after about half a year, Henrik sold the farm at Solrød, and with Søren, it was no better. He very soon realized that he could not manage the work on the 25 acres. He was also tired of the road conditions. It was difficult to get away [from the farm] in the wintertime. Søren wanted to change to a smaller farm, so I bought "Scheel's Eng" from him again. Then he bought a farm at Egegårdens Mærk in Gammel Havdrup. There were 10 acres of arable land besides a little bog.

The year 1917 was a memorable year. A prolonged drought caused the harvest to be very small. After steam threshing, we got 590 barrels of crops – altogether a little less than half of a normal harvest. In addition, there was some unthreshed oats for chaff cut for the horses. The beet harvest was not great either.

Some farmers, however, were so prescient that they had already sold their livestock in late summer and in autumn, even though prices were low. Heifers that I had bought in the spring and that had grazed all summer were sold for less than I had purchased them.

Because of the submarine warfare feedstuffs could not be imported. That was why roughage for the cattle went only a little way, and for many farmers roughage came to an end too early. Then what should you do? In several cases, you had to try with heather from the Jutland heaths. A lot of truckloads were purchased at high prices; and the nutritional value was low – actually, a great part was quite worthless as feed. It was so rough that it was useful only for fuel.

Early in the spring of 1917 I submitted an offer to deliver chaff to the cooperative bakery at Havdrup, which had about ten horses. The offer was for 9.50 kroner per 100 kilos of chaff delivered at the bakery. It turned out to be a rotten deal as straw rose greatly in price in autumn, and as the offer was valid for one year. I bought some old straw from my neighbor Ejner Nielsen, Skensved. The year before he had sold his entire herd of cattle when a disease caused the cows to abort their calves. He thus had all the straw from the big harvest in 1916, although the quality was not very good. Barley straw with many thistles sold like hot cakes for 0.20 kroner per kilo. I bought quite a few loads at this price to secure enough straw for myself. I knew heather too well to buy it as feed for the livestock.

Before it was foreseeable that the year would bring such a small harvest, I had made plans to build a new barn for young cattle with a fireproof ceiling. I bought the lumber in the woods; bricks and cement were OK, too. On the other hand, it turned out that it was very difficult to procure the necessary iron beams in the lengths which I wanted. I tried both in Roskilde and in Copenhagen, but without success.

Finally, I found a few pieces at a grocery store in Køge. They were far too long and somewhat stronger than was necessary. They were 36 feet long, but Master Mason Mortensen thought that we could make use of them by cutting

them into 24-foot lengths and then weld together the cut stumps, so we got three beams out of two. We got a barn out of it with room for 36 young cattle.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue dot is placed on the timeline at the year 1920.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Purchase of Jersie old school for a mission house

In the year 1916 after much consideration, the Jersie-Kirke Skensved community parish council built a new school on a site purchased from Farmer Emil Sørensen, Jersie, about 1 km east of the village. The following year a little group of friends of the Inner Mission bought the old school to establish a mission house, strongly urged by the minister and his wife. His wife worked especially hard on the proceedings. A committee of Christian Christiansen, Naurbjerg, Master Mason H. Mortensen and H. Tolstrup Christensen, Kirke Skensved, was authorized to negotiate with the community parish council. We agreed on a purchase price of 5,000 kroner with takeover on August 1, 1917. The money was raised partly from a 4,000 kroner loan from the Roskilde Savings Bank, partly by voluntary donations. Among others, we received a gift of 345 kroner from the Rev. Blauenfeld's former parishes Vandborg and Ferring in Western Jutland.

Quite large alterations were required. Among other things a new roof on the school building to replace the defective cardboard and shingle roof, which was on it. The roof of the building was renewed in the fall of 1917 before the hussars moved in. The Horse Guard Regiment wanted to rent the school to quarter some personnel. We signed a contract with Captain Ahlefeldt-Laurvig with a rent of 45 kroner per month. The hussars stayed there from December 1, 1917, to May 31, 1918.

After consultation with Master Builder Christensen, Haslev Højskole, the rooms of the old school were remodeled in the summer of 1918. The schoolroom was usable as a large hall; the rest was arranged in a way that a smaller room could be connected by a double door to the large hall. In addition, two living rooms and a kitchen were established to provide a room for the host and

hostess. On the first floor [under the roof] was a guest room. A thatched half-timbered house, probably the oldest school building in Jersie parish, was sold for demolition together with the playground for 500 kroner.

The inauguration of the house, which was named Bethesda, was scheduled for sometime in November, but due to wide spreading of a contagious disease (the Spanish flu), it did not take place until January 1919. The inauguration was performed by Rev. Andreas Fibiger, Elijah's Church in Copenhagen.

In early March 1918, Rasmus Jensen, the former director of Høng Agricultural School and now the owner of Vejbjerggård, and the then director Laurits Hansen arranged an eight-day course. Farmer Niels J. Larsen, Jersie Åmark and I signed up as participants in this course. It was very enjoyable as well as very educational for a short time to sit on a school bench.

There were skilled teachers, including Graduate in Agriculture Hans Clausager who also owned and operated a farm next door to the school. He lectured about cattle farming. Later, he was a highly regarded member of the Folketinget [The Danish parliament]. O. P. Nielsen was the teacher in plant growing. We also had lectures in plant diseases.

Notably, however, former director Rasmus Jensen's lectures on seed growing were incentive; he simply spoke from experience, as he was the one who founded the agricultural school and grew seed on the school's fields with very good results and now in the war years got huge prices, e.g. yield from one acre with orchard grass seed was 1,200 kroner. And for those 1,200 kroner, he had a lecture room built for the school where there was room for more than 100 students. Later, he had ten acres with carrot seed that gave him 50,000 kroner. Unfortunately, he could not cope with the high income. He sold the agricultural school, but kept the adjoining farmland, and also bought Vejbjerggård with 220 acres, located three miles from the school. He had this farm rebuilt with a modern barn, and the main building rebuilt in a villa style with salt-glazed tiles and all modern facilities. He invested in livestock of the Jersey breed, Belgian horses; everything had to be tip-top; he wanted to show the farmers that he was up to it. In addition, he bought $\frac{1}{3}$ of a manor on Lolland, "Store Riddersborg", now called Bogøgård. It was supposed to be suitable for seed production.

It was precisely in his glory days that we were at Høng. A few years later when seed prices fell, this talented and gifted man committed the stupidity of burning down Vejbjerggård with a fire mechanism, so that through his fire insurance he would get compensation for his almost worthless stored seed lots. He was away when the fire arose, but came home during the fire-fighting operation and with tears regretted that there were animals burned. The police soon realized that it was the Old Man himself, who had caused the fire – he got three years in the correctional facility, no compensation, and dishonor. – It is a striking proof of what greed can lead to.

The consequence of my participation in the seed grower course was that we sowed about ten acres with yellow mustard. It was sown in late May, grew well, and was mown with a mower. But because of very unstable weather, it was very late in the fall before we took it home and placed it in the barn that was built the same year. Threshing took place in the first half of November. There were 63 sacks of 100 kilos; however, by drying and cleaning it dwindled down to 54 sacks of 100 kilos. It was sold immediately to Grocer Christoffer Pedersen, Havdrup, at a cost of 128 kroner per 100 kilos on the condition that I in return got feed cakes [for livestock] according to the size of the delivery. This was a big plus in a time of poor feed supply. Unfortunately, the grocer probably lost money on that trade as the armistice was agreed on in the same day, November 11, 1918, and the price of oil thus fell. Several sold their mustard too late and had to settle for a low price.

When we settled in Kirke Skensved in 1913, I made an agreement with the owner of the company C. F. Petersen & Son in Køge to sell me fertilizer, and what else I needed that summer on credit until after the harvest. The first year both parties honored the agreement, but when we came to August 1914 when The Great War broke out, I got a nice letter from the company: as they were facing large payouts, they look forward to have a larger repayment of my debt. I disagreed with this. I expected that an agreement had to be respected. Therefore, after having already scraped the money together for C. F. Petersen, I bought my products elsewhere; among other things I bought lumber for the heifer barn at the lumber trader F. A. Hansen Ltd.

However, the head of C. F. Petersen noticed that I had moved away from him, and when it reached his ear that I was planning to build a barn, he sent

his first man, Christoffersen, now a grocer in Hårlev, out here. It was in April 1918; we were in the field; I was driving the sowing machine on the other side of the willow alley. Christoffersen initiated the conversation by saying that they had heard that I was planning to build a barn, and for this, they would like to offer to supply lumber, boards, and roofing felt and so forth to use. I argued that they were probably not cheaper than others. No, they said that they would provide good materials at the price, and furthermore, they had the Icopal roofing felt, just what I needed; it was usually difficult to obtain. In addition, they would grant me credit until fall. I was persuaded and did not regret it. It is my opinion that the handling of the delivery for the barn was very advantageous for me. Although for the most part I ordered fourth quality boards, the master carpenter considered them very suitable for the purpose. The bills from the lumberyard for the boards, roofing felt, and nails amounted to 4,925 kroner. All lumber from the forest for the beams, rafters, posts, and top plates amounted to 610 kroner. Labor cost for the master carpenter amounted to 1,500 kroner. Labor cost for the sawmill, cement, gravel, and fittings amounted to hardly 1,000 kroner.

At settling of accounts with the merchant, he asked, if I was planning to build farmhouse in the following year. If so, he would suggest me that I buy boards and laths now, as large price increases were to be expected before spring. He offered to bring materials out here and store them in the newly-built barn in winter. After some consideration, I accepted his bargains with thanks. I had negotiated in advance with the master builder Christensen, Hårlev Højskole to supply drawings and calculate the costs. Master carpenter Christiansen calculated the numbers and lengths of what was needed according to the drawings. It became a big pile of boards and laths, which was stored in the barn.

What was to be used for doors, windows, door frames and skirting boards were brought to the woodworking factory in Køge for processing. Everything was top quality.



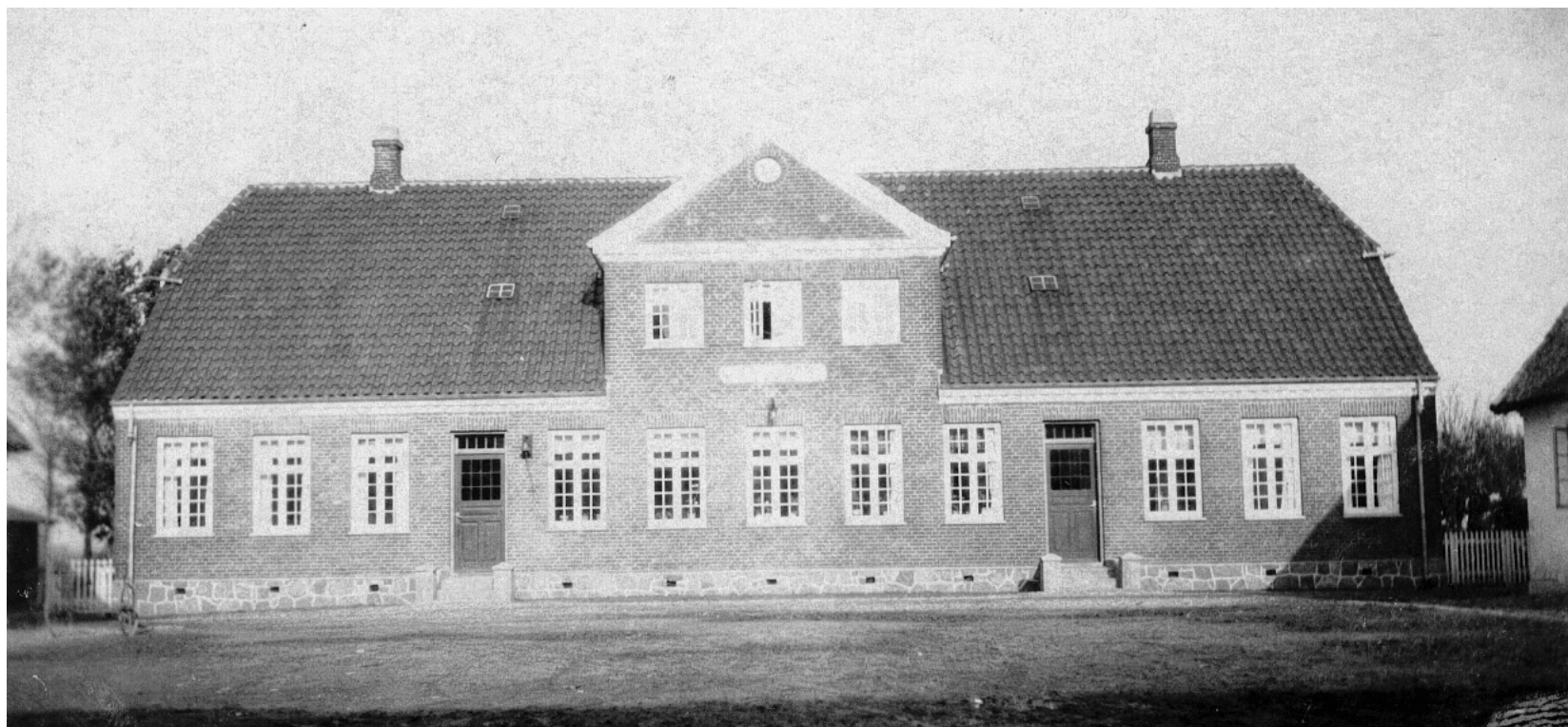
Farmhouse build in 1919

The year 1919 – the first year after the Great War ended – was a year with a strong increase in the prices of almost any goods. During the war, many things, particularly construction, almost came to a halt. This resulted in a strong demand for housing, and thus many wanted to build. But the scarcity of building materials required that everyone, who wanted to build, had to apply to a distribution board for allocation of the necessary bricks, lime, cement, and tiles. Timber and boards were freely tradable. If a new house was to replace an older one, it was particularly difficult. In this case, a statement from the appropriate builder or master builder was demanded saying that the old one was damp, leaky and almost ramshackle.

We were determined to build a new farmhouse. The old one was really not ramshackle, but narrow and planned impractically. Another important reason was the lack of space for our many assistants.

Boards and battens, everything we needed, was stored in the barn, the timber was ordered in the woods, but without the bricks, lime and cement there would not be a real house. The merchant applied for me and master builder Hans Mortensen wrote the needed statement that the house was hazardous to live in. I was awarded the red hand-molded bricks for the outer wall and limestone for the inner wall and all partitions and the necessary cement and lime. Roof tiles were not immediately granted, but we would not need them for the moment.

I entered a piecework contract with master builder Hans Mortensen, Naurbjerg, and master carpenter Christiansen, Ølsemagle, for the construction. We began with the excavation of the basement, building concrete basement walls and laying a concrete floor. The plinth was set with granite and done by a stone-



The farmhouse of Østermarksgård, build 1919. Photographed from the courtyard.

mason named Jacob from Everdrup. A couple of years earlier he had made the plinths for Christian Stobbe's newly-built farm in Store Røttinge near Præstø. He was a very skilled stonemason. He himself supplied the stones from down in Everdrup. He was about to deliver many cubic meters of stone to the municipality of Copenhagen. While splitting the stones, he would sort out those most appropriate for making the plinth; it became a whole truckload. He came in proper time along with an assistant and did the work to my entire satisfaction. The bricklayers could now begin and on July 23, 1919, the house was raised. But now there was a problem with the missing roof tiles. The merchant told me that since he had applied repeatedly without success, he advised me to see the distribution board myself. I went to Copenhagen and found the address where the Board was housed, but the door was closed. It was not very encouraging. Somewhat annoyed I walked slowly down the stairs. Then I met a man and I asked him if he perhaps knew when and where the Board in question was to be found. It turned out that he was the secretary of the Board. I started to explain him the absurdity in the fact that the Board had granted me bricks, lime, etc., and now that the building was raised, it persistently refused me tiles. He understood the unfairness of this situation very well. He advised me to "immediately send us another application; we shall have a meeting on Monday, and I dare to almost promise you that you will have tiles." I alerted the merchant immedi-

ately to mail a new application, and we were granted the tiles. So we got the roof on the house.

The work on the interior of the farmhouse showed only little progress – installation of ceilings, plastering walls and ceilings, laying floors and hanging many doors, of which there were no less than 30 interior and five exterior. Fortunately, we still had the old house to live in. Weather conditions were not very favorable for us. We had an unusually early winter that year, already on October 11, we had the first frost at night with a temperature of -4 degrees (Celsius), and again on the 16th, there was frost at night, and around November 8, a storm, frost, and snow started lasting to the 19th, when the thaw came. On the 21st, the weather was beautiful, and we took the opportunity to move from the old house to the new. It was an uncomfortable transition as many things in the new house were unfinished. The carpenters used the office as a workshop – the living room, kitchen, and bedroom were far enough along so that they could be used, but with some confusion as everything now would have a new place. The phone was still in the old house, so there was much running to and fro.

It was high time that we got moved since we already needed both doctor and midwife on the very first night. That was when Ejner, as the seventh and last in the family, announced his arrival.

The delivery was quite normal, so the doctor's presence was almost needless. He was interested in the new house, and I had to show him around from top to bottom. He admired the arrangement. When we returned to the bedroom Ejner was in the cradle. The doctor stood and watched him. Ejner had a rather big head and he said: "I wonder what will become of this child."

What was most wanted in the new house was lighting. Carbide lamps were the only source of lights available in the country in the last years of the war and the first few years thereafter. Tubes were installed in the house for the cables, but the installation was only done the following year.

Materials and wages for building the farmhouse in 1919:

18,000 hand molded clay bricks	1,341.00
32,500 sandstone bricks	2,095.75
5,500 tiles	380.88
Foundation and stones	500.00
103 bags of cement	1,207.00
1,300 lbs. plaster	711.00
Timber from the woods	583.00
Roofing tiles	1,489.04
Boards	5,961.72
Castings	1,752.18
Plumber	518.00
Woven reed and tacks	430.65
Bricklayer	4,800.00
Carpenter	3,800.00
Woodworking	995.80
Window and door hardware	580.27
Glass and putty	497.50
Concrete goods and tubes	488.60
Sewerage	400.00
Gravel	250.00
Painting and materials	2,434.00
Miscellaneous materials	500.00
The master builder	500.00
	32,216.39

[In 1919, the yearly income of a Danish police officer was around kr. 2,000]

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

A trip to Bornholm

Although the summer of 1919 was very preoccupied with construction, I ended up having my first real summer vacation lasting for eight days. My mother had the habit of visiting us every summer, usually for 2–3 months. We looked forward to these visits very much. She was in high spirits and very eager to help Mom with sewing, darning and mending clothes for the many children.

Our maternal uncle Rasmus Madsen, who owned Aspesgård near Pedersker on Bornholm, regularly visited us. He was chairman of the Council of the Danish Cooperative Fertilizer Association. This resulted in frequent errands in Copenhagen, and then Østermarksgård was not far away. One of his visits occurred while my mother was with us and he strongly encouraged her to visit them on Bornholm. However, having reached 69 years of age in April, she did not want to travel such a long journey on her own. After some consideration, we decided that I should go, too. Søren Søndergaard was with us that summer and Mom wanted us to have the excursion; she herself would rather stay at home.

My mother traveled a few days ahead of me with my cousin from Røns-lunde. Then I would follow and accompany her on the trip home. In strong winds, my journey took me over the Baltic Sea on a steamer to Rønne. A cabin was not available. At this time of year, they were pre-booked long in advance. There were many travelers and many seasick people. I entered the mission hotel in Rønne where the host was my old folk high school buddy Blicher Hansen. The Rev. Kildeby stayed there on holiday, and I was allowed to rest a bit in his room.

At Aspesgård, I was well received. A lot of young people were present. There were cousins, also from Jutland. I was the oldest among the young, and I was

given the honorary name “old cousin.” During the following days, Uncle Rasmus took us around the island by horse-drawn carriage. He wanted to show us everything worth seeing. We went to worship in Åkirkeby and to a large open-air meeting in Almindingen where thousands from all over the island were summoned together. We were in Ekkodalen [The Echo Valley], at Helligdomsklipperne near Rø, at Hammershus on the northern tip of the island, and at Johns Chapel near Hasle. A couple of times we stayed at Palmegården near Vestermarie, owned by my maternal uncle’s son-in-law, *Adolf* Hansen. The trip home was unfavorable because of a storm, so we were happy when we were again on solid ground. It was a great experience for my mother.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue circle is positioned on the line at the year 1920.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Electricity – subscription and installation

One thing of great interest, too, especially in the countryside after the war, was the providing of electricity both for light and power.

In the neighborhood of Havdrup, we had several preparatory meetings at Havdrup Hotel in the winter of 1918–19. This resulted in the election of a three-man committee to conduct a preliminary subscription in the [eight] neighboring villages: Kirke Skensved, Ladager, Ørsted, Havdrup Stationsby, Gammel Havdrup, Solrød, Solrød Strandmark, and Karlstrup. These villages joined together in a planning association with a committee of three members acting as the executive committee. They were J. P. Jacobsen, Ørsted, brewer Lars J. Andersen, Havdrup, and myself with Jacobsen as chairman. We were to negotiate with the power plant in Haslev, procure deals for installation, motors, etc., at each home. As the technical advisor and supervisor lecturer, sectional engineer E. von Holstien-Rathlou, Copenhagen, was engaged.

Each of the above villages formed its own loan association in which all members were jointly liable. We borrowed the money from the Bondestandens Sparekasse [The Farmers' Savings Bank] with a repayment period of 20 years. To conduct the installation, we accepted an offer from the company Bros. Hansen, Nørre Farimagsgade 13, Copenhagen. As for the engines, we accepted an offer from a Swedish company "ASEA."

A very long time passed by, and the committee, particularly its chairman, had a myriad of negotiations. It was difficult to get the necessary materials, and the prices of labor and materials steadily increased. Because of that the installing company (Bros. Hansen) met with us several times to demand an increase in the offer to which we had agreed, but no matter how long the road, one day the end is reached.

On November 10, 1921, the planning committee had their final meeting on Havdrup Hotel where the boards of all loan associations were presented with a modest treat. There was a small surplus to share, 1½% of all the installations. Furthermore, the three-man committee was awarded 500 kroner to share in covering their travel expenses and the time they spent.

How much did it cost?

From the electricity plant's specification, I can read the costs:

High voltage network construction	72,830 kr.
Low voltage network	104,250 kr.
Construction of sub-stations and mounting	45,240 kr.
Meters in each house	29,250 kr.
Service lines to wall in each house	14,300 kr.
Lifting up the telephone wires	45,700 kr.
Contribution to the plant in Haslev	62,300 kr.

This was the costs of reaching the wall of the house. In addition to that, was wiring inside the house, lamps, chandeliers, and motors.

To cover the costs we raised via a loan association in which all participants shared liability, loans in Bondestandens Sparekasse in two series.

Series I for purchase of shares and bonds in the plant with 5% interest rate and 20-year repayment period. For my part, this amounted to 6,000 kroner. Series II to cover installation and price increases, 5½% interest rate and a repayment period of 10 years. For my part, this amounted to 7,500 kroner. Moreover, whoever invested in motors, had to pay in cash since the loan funds were not sufficient to cover this.



A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A vertical line is drawn at the year 1920, with a small purple square at its base.

Laying out the garden

As the new farmhouse was built around the middle of the old garden, an enlargement of the garden was needed. For that reason, in the spring of 1920, a little more than an acre to the north was added to extend the garden down to the road.

My old teacher and friend Augustin Hansen, Haslev Højskole, drew up a plan specifying the different varieties of fruit trees that we should plant. He was absolutely tireless in helping and guiding us so we could make the best out of it. He brought cuttings and plants from the garden of Haslev Højskole, and he did everything for free.

Nursery owner Julius Rønø, Roskilde, delivered all the trees, plants and shrubs. They amounted to approximately 400 kroner.

Gardener Jensen at Naurbjerg helped me with planting.



Immanuel, Johannes, Else, Elisabeth, Ejner, the author (HTC), Ingeborg, Emil and Margrethe. In the background the relatively recently planted garden.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

At hospital in Haslev

For years, Elisabeth was troubled by swollen glands in her throat and went to see our local doctor S. P. A. Pedersen, Havdrup. He advised light treatment. This took place at Sankt Marie [Saint Mary's] hospital in Roskilde. The results did not come up to our expectations. After trying a few times without any effect, we were advised to see doctor Christian Gøtzsche, Haslev. After examining Elisabeth, he said that there was nothing to do but cut away the inflamed area. After prayer and consideration, we decided to follow Gøtzsche's advice. In April 1917 after having placed the smallest children in care – Else with Proprietor Jørgensen in Haslev, and Ingeborg with maternal aunt Marie in Gammel Havdrup – we went to Haslev.

On April 27, Elisabeth was hospitalized in Haslev and a few days later was operated on both for appendicitis and glands by surgeon Boserup with doctor Gøtzsche as his assistant. The surgery went well.

I will reproduce a letter which Mom wrote the day prior to surgery, now 38 of age.

My own dear friend.

I really want to talk with you, my own dear friend. Well, now you have been here, thank you for that. Now I am prepared, ready for the operating table. I am not anxious at all of the thought of that. I know that I am in the hands of the Lord; He will be near me and with you at home. We often have talked about how well we have had it. We have avoided diseases, but now the Lord maybe will try us and cleanse us, we assuredly need so. May we just bow down and accept it as

a favor from Him. I often have had difficulties this winter, which has been dark for me. But thanks to the Lord, it starts to brighten again, although I have to beg and plead with the Lord, there must be lighter.

Well, I now have to stop. Doctor Boserup just was here to say goodnight. He was here for the sake of the miller – poor man, it is hard to pass away in that way.

I do not know when I mail this letter. I will wait until tomorrow. If I am able, I will add a greeting. My very most loving greeting to you, my true friend, and thank you for coming. The doctor asked if you would be here tomorrow. I was happy that I could say that you had been here today. Well, take care of yourself. Your Elisabeth.

Greet the children many times. I long very much for my sister. Greet the maids, too.

It will certainly be understood how difficult it has been for a sick mother with six young children, the oldest 9 of age, and a big house, to leave home and go into a hospital facing a major operation, but how sweet it is with a new experience of God's faithfulness. The Lord is us closest when most needed.

The miller mentioned in Mom's letter is a young miller from Lysholm mill. He got into trouble by letting himself slide down from a cart load of straw and getting a broken stick of a hay fork up in his waist. He died shortly after.

The stay at the hospital lasted just 30 days. With a private room and surgery, the bill was only 207.50 kroner.

There was joy when Mom came home. During Elisabeth's stay at the hospital, I took several trips down there. It was just before and during the time that trees were leafing. On one section the train runs through Grevindeskoven [The Countess Forest] between Tureby and Haslev, where the forest floor is teeming with flowers. Indeed, everything in nature is awakening to new life.

How this can fill one's heart with joy. Death is not the end. Ahead a new life sprouts again.

When I visited the hospital, Proprietor Jørgensen very much expected me to visit his family, too. I was happy to comply with that expectation. Else was in their care.

I also had to see Ingeborg, who stayed in Havdrup with maternal Aunt Marie. Normally it was a bike-ride after work. How happy she was when she saw me, and she did not want to let me go again. She was only a little more than one year of age.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

At hospital in Haslev – the second time

It was a busy summer during construction with many extra cups of coffee to brew and Ejner's birth in November while we were moving into the partially finished house. All of this taxed Elisabeth's strength. After some time, her condition developed in a manner that made us realize a stay at the hospital with subsequent surgery would be necessary.

On March 18, 1920, mother was admitted to Haslev hospital with the same doctors as the first time, but this time, she had company, with her nearly four-month-old boy, Ejner. He was still being breast fed and was probably of much consolation to the mother. Moreover, Ejner caused much happiness down there. The nurses spoiled him. He was probably a good boy. He was quite bald. They said he was like a peeled egg. Headmaster Olsen's 12-year-old son was also hospitalized with bad knees after football games. That was why Mrs. Olsen daily came and often said hello to Elisabeth. She regularly had a tidbit from the kitchen of the high school.

Mrs. Jørgensen was also nice to visit. Furthermore, several of our friends from Haslev came to visit.

This second operation, also on the glands in the throat, was worse, more radical than the first one. Doctor Gøtzsche several years later confided to me that he was not fond of the operation. They had to cut very deeply, and it was more than they dared expect that they would succeed. On April 14, just 28 days after admission, mother and child returned home. This caused happiness among the large and the small.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue dot is placed on the timeline at the year 1920.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Visitors from USA

After my father's death in 1910, my mother stayed in Vejle, where she had her small apartment on a street called Enggade. We had the pleasure of having her visit us every summer, and she was pleased to see the grandchildren grow and thrive and to see the farm prosper. She diligently darned, sewed and modified clothes for the kids, and was always in a good mood; so we were all pleased when grandma's arrival was expected. She lived to see the new farmhouse built and put into use.

She also lived to see 2 daughters and a son at home on a visit from the USA and as well a daughter-in-law from Argentina with 2 kids. In August 1919, we had a visit from my eldest sister, Sidsel Marie Christensen, b. March 19, 1869, in Kejlstrup in Nørre Snede parish, now living in Omaha, Nebraska, USA. She left for the USA in the spring of 1892 along with our 4 years younger brother, Christian Sørensen Christensen, b. February 22, 1873, in Kejlstrup. Tickets for the both of them were sent to them by our uncle, Andreas Christensen, Omaha. [Nels Christensen]

Our brother died over there a few years later. Our sister had various jobs for some years, after which she married a Dane named Chris Christensen. They began modestly by keeping cows; they bought fodder for them and sold the milk to private households. They began with a few cows, but with incredible diligence and work, they gradually generated a big business and gained solid prosperity. In time, they sent tickets to another five of our brothers and sisters to follow. They either had them work for them or arranged jobs for them. Around 1915, they sold the entire company to our two youngest brothers Marinus and Andreas. Then there were about 50 dairy cows and a significant land area.

Chris was sick, worn out and died a few years later. They had three girls, two of whom were twins.

During her stay at home, Sidsel Marie met an old friend from her youth and school friend from her childhood, Søren Danneværn. They agreed to join in a closer relationship. The consequence was that he sold his bicycle shop in Copenhagen about six months later and traveled to America, where they married and lived together for many years until my sister's death in the year 1943.

Along with Sidsel Marie, my younger brother Marinus Christensen visited us as well. He was born in Gludsted, Ejstrup parish on December 7, 1887. When he was 10–11 years old, he worked for our old Uncle Jonas Sørensen in Harild in Ejstrup parish, and later for another uncle Carl Høltzerman in Hansted near Horsens, and his wife, our aunt. Marinus was very fond of her. The last few years of his school days he went to classes in Vejle. Then he was apprenticed to a bicycle mechanic in the same town. Afterward, he went to a technical school where he was granted a diploma for his diligence. After the completion of his apprenticeship, there was no work available in his profession. He went along with a friend, Ejner Haase, to Germany, where they were “on the Waltz”, as they called it. They scraped together a bare living, and after a couple of months, they returned home again. There was not any work for them. They saw and heard a great deal, including Count Zeppelin's newly built airship and heard the Germans' wild enthusiasm for this wonder. Incidentally, they got their shirts filled with lice when they stayed in some barely fine German hosteleries for traveling men.

In Hess's factories in Vejle, he got employment as a skilled worker, but it did not satisfy him. He did his military service in Odense; had a job a short time in Viborg at a factory making chaff-cutters, later at a cultivator factory in the town of Holbæk. Still nothing suited him. An offer from his sister in the United States to help them with milking and sale of milk was decisive. He traveled with his youngest sister Debora [Deborah], probably in 1912 to Omaha. It was a tough job for Marinus, who was quite inexperienced in milking by hand. He worked with our youngest brother Andreas [Andrew] with whom he later jointly bought the entire operation. Debora kept house for them until Andreas got married. The day came that too few had volunteered and the United States lacked manpower to train for warfare against the Germans in 1917. For that rea-

son, all unmarried young farmers were included in forcible conscription. Marinus had to go, as opposed to his six years younger brother Andreas who got off, solely because he was married.

Marinus had to sell his share in the business and put on a uniform. The training took place in the United States and as his unit reached Europe, the ceasefire was concluded or signed, November 11, 1918. In the early days after the ceasefire, his unit was in France and later in Germany in the Rhine area between the cities of Cologne and Koblenz. I have a letter that he wrote there to his mother: I am reproducing it here:

*Division of the United States military camp in Germany
1918-19. Neumahn am Reihn, Germany. January 18, 1919*

Dear Mother.

We arrived yesterday in Germany, we are close to the Rhine, and yesterday we marched through the town where I had a night's lodging 10 years ago. Yes, it is weird how it goes in this world.

There are really beautiful surroundings here, possibly the most beautiful in Germany, and we stay in a fashionable neighborhood –in a hotel at that. There are a lot of beach hotels in these parts, and we stay in one of them.

I reckon that you have read in the newspaper that the British, French and American armies have occupied a part of Germany, and I belong to one of the divisions. The city we are in is located between the cities of Cologne and Koblenz. From here there is just two days' travel by rail to Vejle. I must confess that it's hard to be so near home, the closer I come to Denmark, the stronger becomes the desire within me, but there's always a "but": I will get my leave only with the best recommendation, and I will get that only by doing my duty, neither you nor Uncle Sam must be disgraced by me.

We have the best quarters we have had since we left America, so you can probably understand that I am comfortable here.

The Germans are not so snooty now as they were before the war. They have probably found out that there are people in the world other than themselves. We were in France for about a month but we had rain every day, so it was not much fun. I have not seen snow yet this winter, this is the first time in my long life that that has happened, but there are of course so many strange things happening these days. You should see the house that we stay in, it looks like a castle. It has been used as a hospital for wounded German soldiers before we Americans took it in possession. We have first-class beds and some of the finest furniture I have ever seen. However, it is a convenience to lie in a real bed for once. I must confess that I have not been spoiled recently, but I have been in good health, and it is a very important thing.

I read a little German when I was a kid, and I benefit from that now. I can go to town and do some shopping, and I can help my peers. We are allowed to buy anything from the Germans that we need. The British and French soldiers say that we Americans treat the Germans too well, and frankly, they do not deserve it. But the Americans make it a point of honor to be gentlemen, and by the way, it is not the civilian population, but the soldiers who have committed atrocities. I guess that the culprits are not punished unless God himself finds them culprits and punishes them on merit.

Would you be so kind to write me when you have received this letter; I have not had a letter in the last 6 weeks, so I long to hear from (somebody). [Marinus cannot remember the Danish word for somebody]

Love

Marinus – C. and B. Unit. 325 American Ex Forces, France

A.P.O. 715

This letter gives you a vivid impression of a man who does his duty. First, he did his military service at home, where there would not seem to be any use for him, then he traveled to the United States. There he worked his way into a good position but suffered a great loss by having to sell his business at a time when there were many who had to sell for the same reason. He took his stint in a U.S. army unit with a good attitude, and will not bring shame on either his mother or his new homeland.

Now, in August, he reached back to his mother and the old country, having been in the United States and been discharged from the army with honor. When they left the service, the returning soldiers were handed all their equipment, weapons, uniforms, etc. Marinus went home in his uniform, and it was a suit of honor that opened many doors for him.

During his home stay, Marinus found a life companion as well: a daughter of the workshop foreman Christian at Hess's factories in Vejle. Marie was her name, and as far as I know their acquaintance derived from the Sunday school in Vejle.

Visits in 1920. My eldest brother Mads Sørensen Christensen, born April 20, 1871, in Kejlstrup even as a boy had the desire and aptitude for using a needle as he embroidered collars and uppers of slippers in school. Because of that, he became a tailor's apprentice with a skillful master, Jens Rasmussen, in Brande. This master was also chairman of the community parish council. After his apprenticeship, Mads worked at different places as a journeyman. Subsequently, he took a foreign journey that lasted approximately five years, in Germany, Switzerland, and France. After returning, he was engaged to a young girl from Varde, the daughter of a confectioner: – Baker Kiertzner – her name was Margrethe. The wedding was celebrated in Varde in the winter of 1901. I remember that the minister in his speech said that Margrethe means pearl, and he has probably hinted to my brother that he take good care of the pearl. I recall in this connection that Margrethe's brother, a lawyer, told Mads after the ceremony: "the minister probably considers you a large pig because you know that one should not cast pearls before swine."

Moreover, it was a very lively wedding, which saw tasting of the good wine, besides a little dance. [With this sentence Hans possibly dissociates himself from this sort of lively festivities.]

Before my brother got married he had already started a business in Esbjerg on a street called Kongensgade. A few years later they moved to Aarhus, where he ran a business for several years at Store Torv, but it was not really satisfactory to Mads. Suddenly they closed down their business and moved abroad to Argentina with the whole family, three children – two girls and a boy. They must have left around 1912–13. As far as I estimate it went well for them – they quickly had plenty of work, especially during the war years. As many Scandinavian seafarers sailed regularly between North and South America, many sea officers arrived at the port in Argentina's capital. Because profits were good, they needed new uniforms. This gave extra earnings to Mads. After the war, he could afford a journey back home for Margrethe with the boy and the youngest of the girls to visit family and friends. They visited us some days as well in the summer of 1920.

Margrethe had a sister who was married to a merchant named Jørgensen in Brørup, and a sister was married to Bertram Larsen, a watchmaker in Esbjerg. Since this visit to the homeland, we have heard very little from them.

The Rev. Søren-Pedersen, who was a minister in Buenos Aires for some years, told me that my brother died suddenly over there and that the Rev. Søren had confirmed the son. Since then I have heard nothing.

In the autumn of 1920, we also had guests from the United States, since my youngest sister Debora and her husband Christian Cramer with two children, Rosa and Christian 3½ and 1½ years, visited us. They came home with the intent to stay for my mother's sake. Debora intended to give her mother the care that a good daughter can provide to a beloved mother. With this goal in mind, they bought a smallholding near Vejle. When they were in the process of moving out there and getting organized, my mother suggested that they should let the boy stay with her the first few days, until they got things in order. The boy should not be around and feel cold in all the mess. Debora was happy with that, thus, she was able to get down to work. My mother went to bed at the usual time that night, with the little boy at her side. My mother died the same night, without anyone noticing it. The neighbors thought she had gone to the

country to the new property. Deborah and her husband thought that both of them were safe and sound in the city. Not until the second day after, the neighbors in the house began to talk about it, did something seem mysterious. There was a letter in the mail slot, and some claimed to have heard a child crying from inside the apartment. After some discussion, they agreed to send for our good friend Ejner Haase, and they asked him to get out there. He brought the tools for breaking the door into the apartment. He opened the door and it turned out that my mother was lying there as if she was sleeping. The little boy sat behind her. He was more dead than alive after sitting and lying there for almost two days without food or heat. It was late in November. The doctor was called immediately. He could see that my mother had died and that it had probably already happened during the first night. The little boy was taken under expert medical care, and the doctor said, "they say that miracles do not happen in our time, but that this little guy has survived, this is a miracle." He recuperated surprisingly quickly after this mishap.

After my mother's funeral, which took place from the Baptist Chapel in Vejle, probably on Saturday, November 27, 1920, Christian Cramer sold his small farm and returned to the United States where they have since lived and operated a dairy farm. The small Christian and Rosa grew up. During the war between the United States and Japan, Christian was in the United States military forces in the Philippines, and he lost his life to his parents' great sorrow. The rest of the family refers to him as an exceptionally fine young man. The daughter Rosa is married to a skilled farmer. They have a pair of boys and live a little outside of Omaha where they do traditional farming. Cramer and Debora have another daughter, Ellen May. She is 10–12 years behind the first.

On October 18, 1921, we had guests from the USA again. It was my youngest brother Andreas Christensen, who came back home. He was born in Gludsted in Ejstrup parish on May 15, 1894. He attended public school in Vejle and afterward, he was apprenticed to a mechanic at a bicycle dealer in the same town. After my father's death in 1910, Andreas came to our place in Tybjerg and helped us there. But in the same autumn, he left for America along with my eldest sister's son Johannes, who was visiting Denmark. Immediately Andreas was employed by our elder sister and her husband in tending cattle, milking and selling from a milk cart directly to consumers. He stayed with them until a

few years later, when he together with Marinus bought and took over the business. They ran it together until Marinus was drafted in 1917. Andreas married a beautiful young Swedish girl whom he met when selling milk. Her name is Olga.

Now they came back home to visit their families and old friends. They brought along their two lively kids, too. They stayed with us a short time, and then they left for Sweden to visit Olga's parents and family. They returned to Denmark and stayed here for a while before they returned to their new country, where they continued with their dairy farm for many years. They are a hard-working couple, who continuously have made improvements to their farm with new buildings and equipment. Their two boys, whom they brought home in 1921, were to their deep sorrow lost a few years later during a short interval. Fortunately, they had replacements for the losses as they got another two boys, who both are grown-ups now. The eldest – Austin – is 27 years old and is at a dairy school, where he is said to be doing very well. For three years he has been at a dairy school in Ames, Iowa. It is a school complex, where 10,000 students are educated in all branches of agriculture. He has one year left of his education. In 1951, he participated in a competition in Detroit with participants from all of the country. He was the best and was praised a lot and got two gold medals.

But the best of it all is that he is a serious Christian who is doing missionary work in his spare time among other young people. It would be good if we had more of his kind. He may be considering becoming a minister or a missionary after finishing the dairy school where he has one year left.

Milton – 24 years old – recently finished his military duty. He is now at home helping his parents at the farm, which in recent years has been run as an ordinary farm. It has 160 acres and approximately 50–60 head of livestock. The milk is delivered to a dairy.

In the summer of 1939, Olga and their eldest son went on another holiday in Denmark and Sweden. They returned back home to the USA, just before World War II broke out in September 1939. (written in November 1952)



1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

The fight against tuberculosis

The livestock, which we brought along from Tybjerg in 1913, consisted of 16 red dairy cows and a similar number of heifers and calves. These cows had been in Kontrolforeningen [The Control Association] for several years and a selection of the best has also been led to bulls purchased by Kvægavlsforeningen [The Cattle Breeding Association] from recognized good breeding herds, so there was some basis to build on.

But as considerably more cattle were needed for the larger area, some more were purchased partly at auctions and partly from various traders. Through that we got contagious bovine abortion and tuberculosis in the herd, and in particular the latter ravaged it badly. Several animals died from it. After much consideration and consultation with my vet, Veterinarian Larsen from Højelse, I decided to have the entire herd tuberculin tested. At that time, it was such a rare event that the veterinarian in his entire territory did not have any herd owner who embarked on anything so crazy (1920). The subsidy from State was free tuberculin and veterinarian assistance, but the test itself, as it was done at that time, was quite laborious.

Prior to the injection, all animals had their temperature taken and after the injection again had it taken every three hours for the following eighteen hours. Taking the measurements and recording them was a lot of work. Three men were helping the vet. All animals with rising temperature were to be declared to have failed the test. All the dairy cows, around 50, failed without exception. Only four heifers with calves and most of the smaller heifers and calves passed the test. The heifer barn was now thoroughly disinfected and whitewashed, and the animals passing the test were placed there. All dairy cows stayed in the old barn and were looked after by the herdsman. I myself took care of the heifers in

the small barn, and afterward, as the heifers calved, I also milked them with the children's help. The best part of that was that the kids now had an opportunity to learn milking.

The tuberculin test was to be repeated each year to monitor whether any of the animals had become infected during the year. It was rarely the case. On November 4, 1920, the vet did the first injection. The separation in two barns lasted 3½ years. In that time, we had come so far that we had about twenty young healthy dairy cows, of which, however, some heifers and bulls were purchased from tubercular free herds.

At Rosenholm in Jutland on September 16, 1920, two young bulls were bought at auction. They cost 1,460 kroner + freight. At the same place on May 5, 1924, three heifers and one bull calf were bought for 1,597 kroner + 91 kroner freight.

At a cattle show in Roskilde, I met Inspector Johannes Krarup from Holsteinsborg. I knew that at Holsteinsborg they were also in the process of removing animals from the herd that did not pass the tuberculin test. So I asked him if they might have cows or heifers, which had failed the tuberculin test, and which they thus wanted to sell. He replied that they had twenty large heifers in a pen in Snedinge, which they wanted to sell. He invited me to see them. As a result, I bought twelve heifers, most of which were far along in gestation. The price of the entire collection was 5,100 kroner + freight. We received them in September. I wanted to buy them as some cows in the old barn still departed. They were to be replaced by buying, as the breeding were placed in the new barn. Furthermore, I wanted to have as much and as good breeding as possible, and since these heifers were of good origin (all with pedigree), it was also an opportunity to get some good heifer calves from them – they calved during the autumn and winter.

On May 23, 1924, an auction was held on the farm. 38 dairy cows and two heifers were sold, all with the assurance that they had tuberculosis, but despite that people were very willing to bid. The average price was 500 kroner per cow. Now we had cleared out the herd, and the barn was ready for cleansing.

It was my plan to start with milk sales in Roskilde. Preparations had all too long been underway. The milk car was ordered and purchased, bottles for milk

and cream, too. Boxes for bottles were purchased, centrifuge, milk chillers, and a bottle washing and flushing device as well.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue dot is placed on the timeline between 1920 and 1930, specifically at the year 1924.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Sales of milk from truck in Roskilde

Until the spring of 1924, the town of Roskilde was provided with milk mostly from two dairies, “Roskilde Mejeri” at the corner of Borgeget and Støden and “Roskilde Mælkeforsyning” on the corner of Ringstedgade and Bredgade. These dairies got a large part their milk from herds in the nearby surrounding area, which were largely fed with dregs from the town’s liquor factory. Dregs were blamed for the cows’ giving lean milk, and the cleanliness was not very good. The veterinary claimed that the milk was so dirty that samples taken of the milk would show sediment after a short time.

However, two dairy cooperatives had each started to drive to town with a few carts of milk. They were the “Højvang” dairy in Gøderup and the “Brokilde” dairy near Store Salby. However, they only sold milk in bulk. No one had bottles and none had milk from tuberculous-free herds.

Indeed, the young municipal veterinarian Godtfred Hansen, who supervised the farms, from which the milk was delivered, was so unhappy with the quality that he himself would not use it in his own household. Instead, he had two goats, which he milked.

He strongly urged me to supply milk to the town. From the day we started, he bought two one-liter bottles of whole milk, and he sold the goats.

On June 22, 1924, we were ready to begin sales of whole milk in bottles. An entire new 1½ ton truck with a white lacquered, closed box, painted with large red letters “Østermarksgårds Børnemælk” [Østermarksgård’s Children’s Milk].

House painter Niels Pedersen’s son Bernhardt was hired as a driver and our own Johannes as an assistant. They were each equipped with a strong money bag. In the beginning, our entire milk yield amounted to only 120 one-liter bottles and 10 half-liter bottles. The sales went very well. In the first days, we also

hired Dusinius Petersen, Kirke Skensved. He was a good promoter. Except for a few bottles we were nearly sold out every day, and it was not long before we could not supply enough milk.

From my bookkeeping I read that the quantity of milk steadily increased, so in September, we had approximately 160 one-liter bottles and 40 half-liter bottles daily, and were almost always sold out. At the beginning, the price was 0.42 kroner for a one-liter bottle and 0.24 kroner for a half-liter bottle. The price, however, gradually was increased during the summer and in November, the price was 0.50 kroner for a one-liter bottle and 0.27 kroner for a half-liter bottle. It was 0.06 kroner above the price of milk in bulk, but since our milk was fatter than the milk conventionally traded, we were easily sold out. When we came to December we could sell 170 one-liter bottles and 40 half-liter bottles and in addition to that we had another 50 liters at home to skim.

On December 13, foot-and-mouth disease was found in the herd, so provisionally the sale of milk was stopped. During the time of the disease, Solrød Andelsmejeri [Solrød Cooperative Dairy] was so kind to accept our milk. On January 6, 1925, we started out again, now we also had cream and buttermilk. We had lost some customers due to the stoppage, but rather quickly we daily sold up to 150 one-liter bottles and 40 half-liter bottles. We also sold 8–10 liters of



Østermarksgaard – Children's Milk – Havdrup Telephone 21

cream and 14 - 20 liters of buttermilk. The YMCA took 5 liters of sweet milk in a bucket. The weekly sales added up to 7–800 kroner.

On November 1, Bernhardt Petersen left and was replaced by Oluf Andreassen, and on May 1, 1925, Johannes went to Eskilstrup to learn farming with tenant Krarup. He was replaced by Emanuel Andreassen. But late in summer sales declined somewhat: now you could see that the other dairies had been purchasing bottles and found herds that could deliver tubercular-free milk. I ended the business and joined the Solrød Andelsmejeri. All the milk bottles and coolers were sold to “Roskilde Mejeri.” The truck was traded in for a new Fordson tractor with Niels Johannesen in Haslev.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

Golden Wedding at Østermarksgård

In the spring of 1923 at Østermarksgård, we prepared a larger family celebration, because Jens Søndergård and Mariane, born Pedersen, would celebrate the 50 anniversary of their wedding on April 5.

Elisabeth was somewhat apprehensive as to whether grandfather would last until then. He was not so well, but then she came to think that if it should happen that he died before, so there will be a funeral; thus, the preparation was not futile.



Group picture, April 5, 1923.

Invitations were sent out especially to grandmother's family in the neighborhood of Løgstør, her brother Søren Forpagter, Toftegård and the cousin in Brøndum, in addition to all the children, children-in-laws and grandchildren.

They turned up in large numbers from Løgstør, Dronninglund, Copenhagen and Tappernøje, so we were not a little crowd to celebrate the day, and the gold bridal managed very well, so we had a good day together.

A photograph, taken outside, with the barn as a backdrop, possibly the only place where there was shelter from the wind, reproduces the participants.



 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Purchase of salt meadow by Køge Bay

At the court-ordered bankruptcy sale of Director Theilgård's estate in March 1927, I bought a salt meadow [a meadow close to the sea that is sometimes watered by seawater] at Ølby Lyng, land register 7c and 8c of Ølby, situated next to Køge Bugt. It was an area of about 35 acres at mean sea level and included a wooden barn. The price was 9,100 kroner + costs, which amounted to 340 kroner. Including a full load of oak posts from Grevindeskoven near Tureby and several rolls of barbed wire. The total purchase price amounted to 10,000 kroner.

It was a fairly good pasture. There was adequate feed for 30–40 heifers and some colts from late May until toward October. The main difficulty was the lack of fresh water. We tried to make an artesian well and also reached an aquifer, but the pressure was not strong enough for the water to rise. Another drawback occurred in winter when high tides and heavy frost occurred simultaneously. Then the thawing ice would take the fence into the sea. So very often we had to re-fence next to the beach in spring. As the heifers were not particularly interested in using the wooden barn, it was rented to a man who made bands for kegs from twisted young willow branches. In the fall of 1933 a buyer showed up through an intermediary, lawyer Christoffersen in Køge, and since the land taxes on the meadow had risen sharply, I was not unwilling to negotiate. We agreed on a price of 17,000 kroner + the wooden barn. In addition, I also had the lease of the area for 600 kroner per year; the first two years free of charge. It turned out that the rubber factory was the purchaser, and it undertook to lay a water pipeline from the factory, so the heifers could always get enough fresh water to drink.

The barn was sold later to the factory for 1,000 kroner.


 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Harvesting year of 1927

The two harvests, which gave the lowest yield, were decidedly in 1917 due to drought, and 10 years later, in 1927 when it was too wet. Although the harvest in 1917 was small, the prices were good and the work of salvaging the harvest was easy. Thus, the financial result was bearable – actually, quite satisfactory. By contrast, the harvest in 1927 was poor as it rained periodically throughout the early summer, so everything grew strongly. The barley flopped over even before it got heads, and the excessive moisture hampered the hoeing and cleaning of the beet field. The harvest came late and was extremely difficult and costly since the crops were flattened and in many cases lying in opposite directions, which greatly hampered the use of the self-binders. Mowers and scythes had to be used and for much of the oats we had to buckle finger-plates on the mowers to go beneath the oats. As a result of this harvesting method, many men were required. The crops were so brittle that they were hand-bound using bands of rye straw.

During the harvest periods, we had so much rain that the man who mowed the first swath with a scythe in the cock's-foot grasses [*Dactylis glomerata*], walked in the water halfway to his knees, and the soil was so soaked that the machines could not work.

All this meant that the harvest, which contained a lot of straw, also was very expensive to recover. Threshing results were small; about eleven-fold barley of very poor quality. A large sack of oats weighed just 110 lbs. From a financial point of view, it was the worst year I have experienced.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. The year 1930 is highlighted with a blue oval.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Buying Farelund in Gammel Havdrup

In June 1928, I met Farmer Anders Poulsen, Farelund, at cattle dealer Holger Jensen in Havdrup. I knew that Anders Poulsen wanted to sell his farm. He had only one child, a son, who did not intend to go into farming. Because of that he had bought a large villa near Frederiksborgvej in Roskilde, and now he wanted to sell his farm. I asked him how the sale had gone, and he replied somewhat ruefully that nothing had taken place. I then remarked that perhaps I had a man who would buy it. He was immediately interested, and we agreed that I should come over to look at things.

It was a farm with small and old buildings; a small and rather tacky stock of cattle; quite a few sows, some with young, and some quite fine horses. There were about 115 acres, of which 6–7 acres were bog. The fields needed to be marled and drained, but generally, there was good fertile soil. After seeing all of it, I told him that I myself was the buyer and offered him 85,000 kroner for the farm with all the accessories (including livestock and machinery). He insisted on 90,000 kroner, his recently reduced price.

I drove home, but already in the afternoon of the same day, Anders Poulsen phoned and asked me to come over again by evening and also to bring along Mom. We drove with our little Iceland pony and the red wagon. We received a friendly welcome and were very well treated. Before we drove home in this quiet summer night, we had made the deal, and we had to take over the farm with an adjoining workman's house with two apartments as of July 1 in the same year. There were now many things to do in order to hire men to manage the farm. It was so fortunate that my good friend, Farmer Poul Andreasen, Degnegården, Kirke Skensved, had two adult sons at home, and Emmanuel, who had previously been first farmhand with me on Østermarksgård, later at the ag-

ricultural school in Haslev, was engaged as manager and his sister Anna as housekeeper.

In the workman's house lived a family where the wife was obliged to milk a certain number of cows.

There was room for only 18 cows in the old cattle barn, but the next year we pulled it down and built a new cattle barn with a fireproof ceiling and space for 25 dairy cows and one bull. In addition to the cow barn, we had a wooden barn built with a tin roof. In order to secure enough space for this, I bought 0.1 acres of land from the neighbor, Proprietor A. Bech, for 1,000 kroner. The young stock was placed in an old building next to the farm. The fattening pigs were placed in an old barn. In the horse stable, the old clay walls were replaced with bricks, and new cribs of concrete and stalls of oakwood were made.

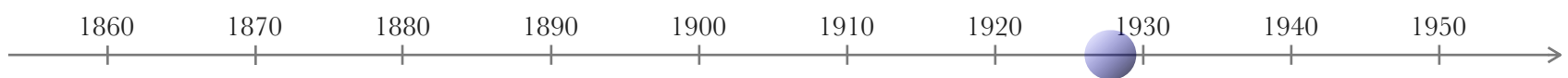
As assistants, the manager had two farmhands and one unmarried herdsman. There were three teams of horses. A field or two were now marled each year. The wettest hollows were drained; fertilizers used very amply. The harvest yield and milk volume increased a great deal, so the milk coachman had to extend the floor of his carriage to hold the additional milk.

A merchant who visited me shortly after the takeover said that it could not be a sign of poor times when I bought more land. To this I replied, yes, it may be a sign of poor times, namely when a farm yields too little for a family's subsistence, then it must be an improvement to have two farms.

We had the good fortune always to have competent helpers. Imanuel Andreassen was very diligent and skilled, reliable and faithful; he stayed for 2¾ years. Then he wanted to get married and bought a small farm in the community of Sigersted near Ringsted. The reason for this was also that I did not want to have a married manager. Our own Johannes, who now had been at Haslev Agricultural School, took over as manager on April 1, 1931. Anna Andreassen stayed as housekeeper until May 1932. She was then replaced by Margrethe, who looked after the house during the following two years until Johannes took over the farm in tenancy on July 1, following his marriage. However, this was only of short duration, as they were persuaded to move to Kolding, where Johannes was to be a partner in his father-in-law's shoe store. This happened on November 1, 1935.

Now I took over running the farm once again with Joseph Larsen as manager; a young girl from Jutland, Karen Sørensen, was responsible for housekeeping. 1937 Johannes Stobbe from Store Røttinge took over as manager and with his sister Ellen Stobbe as housekeeper. Ellen was employed one year, and she was replaced by her sister Ruth Stobbe, who six months later was replaced by Margrethe Stobbe from Sølperup near Bækkeskov.

In July 1939 Farelund – with livestock, 25 dairy cows and a similar number of young stock, six workhorses, and several pigs – was sold to Åge Thomsen for a price of 125,000 kroner.



Poor times

The late twenties and early thirties were far from favorable for agriculture. The prices of our products had turned out to be so low that you might rightly call it a crisis. To illustrate: A large bull at 1,300–1,400 pounds for slaughter cost 140 kroner. An ordinary cow 70–80 kroner. Older cows 30–40 kroner. Ordinary slaughterhouse pigs 30–40 kroner. Piglets 6–10 kroner. One summer the butter was down to a price of 0.60 kroner per pound, 1.20 kroner per kilo. Sucking calves were almost worthless – 2.50 kroner for a living one and 2.00 kroner for a dead one. So it was 0.50 kroner for a calf carcass, as the skin was the 2.00 kroner. But despite the low prices, people did not quite lose their spirits. Once, at a general meeting in the dairy, wages and prices were discussed. Some expressed the opinion that wages were too high in relation to food prices, so there were only very modest amounts to the shareholders after all the expenses were covered. My elderly neighbor Rasmus Pedersen took the floor and said: “We should probably soon be satisfied when we deliver the sweet milk to the dairy and get skimmed milk in return – if there can still be a little left over for the shareholders.”


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue vertical bar with a white dot is positioned at the year 1934.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Family events in 1934

The year of Our Lord 1934 can probably be described as the richest of events; it is almost as if they are linked. Not to forget myself, we will start just before Christmas 1933. One day I walked across the courtyard with a bucket of water in each hand, slipped on the icy ground, fell backward and struck my right arm and shoulder pretty bad. So it took half a season before I overcame the consequences despite massage and other treatments.

From my accident insurance account, it can be seen that I received a daily allowance from December 22, 1933, to June 24, 1934, a total of 185 days.

On February 13, 1934, Emmanuel was badly injured at Lille Skensved when he ran his motorcycle into one of Haulage Contractor Peter Nielsen's feed trucks that suddenly emerged from a private side road. After the collision, an ambulance took Emmanuel to the district hospital in Roskilde. There it appeared that it would be necessary to amputate his right foot, which was crushed on the impact – it was a loss that could not be replaced.

April 8, Ejner was confirmed in Haslev Kirke by the Rev. Immanuel Bang, as he received his education at Haslev Gymnasium.

July 1, Lydia Mogensen, daughter of footwear retailer Marius Mogensen and wife Marie, born Thiele, was married to Johannes in the Immanuel Church in Kolding. The party was celebrated at Højskolehjemmet in Kolding. They had their home at Farelund in Gammel Havdrup, which they took over in tenancy.

On September 7, Mom was admitted to Diakonissestiftelsen [Deaconess Hospital] in Copenhagen after Doctor Thyra Fischer-Rasmussen's advice to undergo abdominal surgery. The same day, Emil was hospitalized at Roskilde County Hospital's epidemic department for malignant eczema on the neck. These two patients took leave of each other on the bridge over the railway track

at Roskilde, uncertain about when and under what conditions they would meet again. After twelve days, the doctors in Roskilde advised that Emil be transferred to Rigshospitalet [The National Hospital] since they could not cure the disease. Peter Nielsen from Lille Skensved drove us to Copenhagen on September 19, where Emil was admitted to Rigshospitalet, but already two days later he was transferred to Blegdamshospitalet under the assumption that he might have poliomyelitis. He lay there with other patients who had died of the disease, but Emil survived. Later, doctors came to the conclusion that perhaps had not been polio, but meningitis that he had had. On Saturday, October 13 he was allowed to come home after having visited his mother, still at Diakonissestiftelsen. He was very pale and run down, but happy to get back out into the country air.

On September 27, our dear 85 years old grandmother, Mariane Søndergård, passed away at the home of her daughter and son in law, Kristen Stobbe, in Store Røttinge near Tappernøje, where she enjoyed loving care. She was buried at Kirke Skensved cemetery on October 3 next to her late husband. Family and friends gathered at Østermarksgård after the funeral for a cup of coffee. Margrethe and Else were in charge of the household because Mom was still at Diakonissestiftelsen.

It took a long time with Elisabeth. Her stay at Diakonissestiftelsen lasted for 72 days. The cost was 5 kroner per day + Operation 200 kroner. Only small amounts relative to the prices we have now in 1954, but revenues were also small at the time, for example, 75–80 kroner for a slaughterhouse heifer of 300 kilos. It was a rather difficult operation, and in addition to that, a blood clot occurred shortly before Mom was expected to be out of bed. This gave rise to anxiety, in fact it was beyond the doctors' expectation that we were allowed to keep her. Thus, you will understand that the joy was great for all parties when Mom returned home on November 17.

Elisabeth's own feelings she expresses in a letter:

Diakonissestiftelsen, October 6, 34

Dear all! Well, today I think I shall write you something. I know that you have visitors today and that is why you can-

not come and see me here; I actually lie and feel well, only I think I remain so tired, but it will probably not be better as long as I lie in bed and it is not to say how long it has to last. They have been afraid, but how good and nice everyone is to me, so I should be happy and grateful. I also think I am, but I yearn to be home with you all. How I would like to have been home a few days in the holiday, while my little Ingeborg is at home. But this will probably not happen, so you shall come in here instead. It was nice to see the Hansen family here, and Lissi was here, too. I have had a letter from Aunt Marie today, I was very happy, and how nice it was to see Margrethe here on Sunday; did you return home safely? I thought of you at midnight; indeed it was a stormy night. Did someone come to pick you up? Or how did you get home?

Now I will not write more today, I am uncomfortable writing when I lie in bed. Here is nothing particularly new (to tell). I hope you all are well, maybe Dad shall come here tomorrow evening, but even if you do not come, I shall not be sorry, if you are tired or otherwise busy. Then I may have a little letter? Yes, so farewell all together and may the Lord be with you. The warmest regards to you all from your mom. Greet Agnethe Dam.

But what a plentiful lesson of God's love and care we gained through all these experiences and occurrences.

1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950 →

A speech that was not made

March 7, 1955. In my desk, I find an old yellowed paper with the headline “Mom’s 60th anniversary.” Those are the thoughts I wrote down and intended to use at her birthday on June 13, 1939, but after an urgent request, I did not do so. Here follow the contents:

Mom’s 60th birthday.

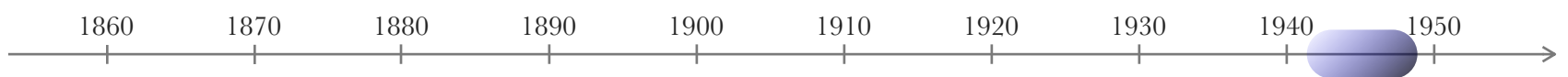
In Solomon’s proverbs, chap. 16, verse 31, we read: “A hoary head is a crown of glory; it is gained in a righteous life.” and in the same book, chap. 18, verse 22: “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord.”

A wife has many tasks. She should be the good genius of the home, she must see that the home is kept clean, and everyone in the home has their food at the proper time. That is the case in general, but a housewife in the country and in particular on a larger farm with many children and helpers needs to perform even greater care and readiness to work. She must make sure that dinner is ready in time while she looks after the telephone; remembers to pass on telephone messages from whom and to whom. She must know where everything is, such as rubber boots and collar buttons; if something is misplaced, it is her fault; she must see to it that the shirt is washed, the collar is ironed and the underwear is not short of buttons. Furthermore, extensive correspondence is often required if some of the children are absent; this task is for her,

too. Let me mention some other tasks: Up early in the morning at 5 o'clock, set the maids to work, see to it that porridge, milk and coffee are as they should be – see to it that open sandwiches for the farmhands are made as well as lunch packets for the school children.

Hens, chickens, ducklings and goslings are to be looked after. In spite of all this, the housewife must always be kind, always ready to lend a helping hand; she must not be in a bad mood. When the husband returns home, she must always show a smiling face and say welcome home.

Whether Elisabeth has been able to respond to these requirements, after 33 years of happy collaboration I only can say, "THANK YOU." She has a good will and has managed to do the best possible for her husband and children.



Mom's later years of life – at The old school in Glim

Every winter for many years, Elisabeth suffered from bronchitis with a strong cough. In 1939, from February 23 until March 8, she underwent a cure at Roskilde County Hospital on Doctor Petersen's advice. This brought recovery for some time, but in October of the same year, things went wrong again. We then got a new doctor in Havdrup, named Bendsen. From October 6 until November 11 he visited us four times. On April 1, 1941, we sold Østermarksgård to Johannes and Lydia and moved to The old school in Glim, which we bought for 10,000 kroner. Now Mom was free of the large household and she was allowed to live a quieter life.

For the last winter in Skensved, we had Margrethe and Ingeborg at home. Margrethe helped us move to Glim and stayed home until August 1. Ejner came home from Hammerum Agricultural School on April 1 and stayed home in April and helped with the move. After this we cleared some old fruit trees at the school, erected fences around the playground, cultivated the ground and planted a lot of new fruit trees. On May 1, Ejner traveled to "Eskildstrup" where he was to be a farmhand in the cow barn.

In July, we bought the 90-acre "Bosagergård" in Smørumnedre near Måløv with all livestock and harvest for 84,000 kroner. The takeover took place on August 1, and at that time, the fields were quite ready for harvesting. Ejner was allowed to leave Eskildstrup so that he and Margrethe could manage the farm together. We also had a couple of farmhands to help, but as the buildings were very neglected, especially the roofs, major repairs, and partial reconstruction were needed. So there was plenty to work on. We two old ones closed down the home in Glim and helped as much as we were able to during the harvest and throughout the fall. Three wings were roofed with new tiles. One of the wings

was completely rebuilt. In the cow barn, one wall was moved to give more space, and the stalls were made bigger. In essence, all this work was completed before Christmas. However, the kitchen wing, which also was to include farmhand bedrooms and a WC, was not finished. The cooking stove was temporarily set up in the daily living room, and the farmhands stayed in the garden room.

In the next 3–4 years, I shared my time between Glim and Bosagergård. In the summer, I was mostly at the farm, however, almost always at home on Sundays. There were long cycling trips, around 15 miles, home Saturday evening, and Monday morning again on the move. If the weather was fine and there was no headwind, it was easy and painless. Because of this Mom was at home alone a good deal in the big house. She also strained herself with work in the garden so I could spend as much time as possible helping with the farm's operation. In the first years, there was a lot of extra work: drainage of many holes and hollows, cultivation of the bog, etc.

The winter of 1941–42 was very severe; in late January the temperature came down to 26–27 degrees below zero Celsius, and as late as March 18, a heavy ice layer came that made roads and fields smooth as a mirror. It almost made all traffic impossible for since the ice layer blocked some points. A heavy layer of ice, 1 x 2 inches thick, hung on the telephone, telegraph and electrical wires, which meant that virtually all the telephone lines snapped under the heavy weight. Glim was without a telephone connection for several weeks. Ingeborg was at home these days for a month's holiday, and we had a good time indoors. The skies were blue with glittering sunshine in the daytime. Winter lasted a long time. On May 3, there was still snow under the conifers at the railway tracks. We were able to use the snow to freeze the ice cream at Ingeborg's wedding with the Rev. Paul A. Gaub.

On Christmas 1945 we were at Bosagergård; New Year's Eve [at Solbakkegård] in Bringstrup. After New Year, the usual bronchitis with coughing turned up. We had Doctor Cedergren from Roskilde; he would like to have had Mom go to the hospital or, at least, stay in bed. He discovered a bad heart and prescribed various pills and potions. However, Mom tried to be on her feet continuously. When the condition worsened, and we again had to have the doctor one night after she had got out of bed, fainted and fallen on the floor. As Ceder-

gren had been sick, we had Miss Inge Nilausen come; she wanted Mom to stay in bed and decided that a nurse was to come daily to make the bed and tidy up Mom. The bed was moved into the office, so Mom could be in a warm place; we both wanted to avoid hospitalization. I had to manage the household as best I could; my counselor was near at hand. For my birthday, Johannes and Lydia, Peter Andreassen, and Karen pleased us with a visit. They came by sled. Things always livened up when someone came to visit. Margrethe and Else were also diligent about coming home when there was an opportunity.

When spring and summer then came with sun and warmth, for some time it gave us health and vigor with new courage.

In the summer of 1943, Ejner decided to study at the Agricultural University in Copenhagen and he began the same autumn in September. So we looked for a non-family manager.

When we bought the farm, Margrethe, Ejner, and I agreed to share equally the amount for which the property could provide after interest, taxes, wages and repairs, etc. were covered. This agreement continued even after Ejner traveled to Copenhagen. It turned out his third covered his studies.

The managers were regularly changed, so my presence was no less necessary than it had been before. However, Margrethe was faithful and persevered at her lonely post.

In autumn 1945, we hired as manager a young man from North Slesvig, Svend Nissen, son of the deceased farmer and member of the "Folketing" (The Danish Parliament) Johan Nissen, Strandelhjørn. Else, who was a nurse in Copenhagen, came regularly to visit Margrethe. Before long this resulted in an engagement between Else and Svend.

With about the same haste, things turned into reality between Margrethe and a young farmer Thomas Krogh, son of Farmer Christian Krogh in Malle, Horne parish near Varde. They had probably been peering at each other for several years. For ten years, he had owned and operated his ancestral farm of 135 acres in Malle.

Now we were facing two weddings. It provided food for lots of thoughts and reflections. Mom played her part, even though she did not directly have anything to do with the organization of the festivities. As previously agree Johan-

nes and Lydia willingly undertook the challenging work that precedes and follows such celebrations.

On October 2, Margrethe's and Thomas's wedding was celebrated. A nice feast favored by beautiful weather. The family on both sides showed up in large numbers. The wedding ceremony was performed by Paul Gaub. After the wedding, the bride and groom drove to their future home, Bosagergård where during the previous weeks craftsmen had been busy restoring the apartment.

A few days after this celebration, we had the great sorrow in Glim of losing our popular young Rev. Johannes Korsholm. He was hit by a truck on Highway 1 and killed instantly. He and his wife were on their way to visit a woman who had recently lost her husband by lightning. It happened on a Saturday night with light fog and rain.

The minister's sudden death caused great compassion in the parishes and gave rise to a major fundraising for a gift instead of wreaths – later another fundraising took place, which was used for purchasing a seven-armed candelabra for each of the two churches as a memorial. They were to bear the name of the minister.

At the funeral, which took place at Nørre Bork near Tarm, the minister made a speech and so did Assistant Professor Larsen, his former teacher. Furthermore, Korsholm's own sermon, which he had written down just before he died, was read. The text was Lazarus' awakening. It was a suitable funeral oration with comfort and hope for the bereaved.

After the interment, the mourners gathered in a village hall, about 200 people. Beef soup, roast and ice cream were served. Many took the floor to offer eulogies. The church councils were represented by three members from Rorup and two from Glim, of which I was one. It was a very solemn funeral. Together with the teachers Nielsen and Larsen and their wives, I drove home at night – a long way in the fog.

Svend Nissen's and Else's wedding took place on October 16. The families were equally well represented as at the first wedding. The Slesvigiers had rented a bus for the whole trip. They took the opportunity to go sightseeing, including visits at Roskilde Cathedral and Frederiksborg Castle. On this occasion, too, the wedding ceremony was performed by Paul Gaub. The feast went on more or less in the same manner as the first. A tent for dining was placed in

the yard, so the living rooms were available between meals. There were about 70 for each of the celebrations. After the celebration, Svend and Else drove to The old school in Glim where they stayed for a few days before they assumed their position as managers at Gallebjerggård near Dyssekilde.

On November 1 Thomas took over Bosagergård at a price of 120,000 kroner including harvest, livestock and equipment after he had sold his ancestral farm at Malle to his younger brother.

On July 21, 1947, in the manager's home at Gallebjerggård a happy event occurred, as Svend and Else had their firstborn, a girl. On this occasion, Mom went up there and stayed for a dozen days to look after housekeeping, the patient and child together with Mrs. Johanne Nissen. As Svend did not want to continue at Gallebjerggård, we looked at different farms and decided to buy Korsbjerggård in Veddelev near Roskilde. A farm with 170 acres with full harvest and a large herd of livestock consisting of 30 good dairy cows, 31 heifers, plus some calves, six workhorses, two colts and one foal, a tractor and all other machines. The price was 270,000 kroner. The purchase took place in August and the takeover was on September 11.

We were busy with removing things and placing them in the new home. However, we managed to have Else with us for a few days in The old school in Glim, and the christening of little Else Marie took place in Glim church on September 7.

There was great joy at Bosagergård on November 28, 1947, when a little boy first saw the light of day. Here, of course, Mom would also like to have been present, but the cold season was an obstacle. We were up there for christening in the morning on January 18, 1948, in a blazing blizzard. Johannes, who was to be godfather together with Else, drove for us two old ones. Svend and Immanuel took the bus.

On Christmas Eve, we were at Korsbjerggård. Svend's and Else's stay at Korsbjerggård was not of long duration. Svend was concerned about the huge debt in case of future declining prices for agricultural products. In addition to that, the buildings needed several repairs. Thus, when a buyer with sufficient capital showed up in the following autumn, we sold the property, which also gave us a very nice profit.

Now we had to find another farm that suited the wallet. After various excursions with Johannes as the driver, Svend finally decided to buy “Stoksgård” in Stigs Bjergby near Mørkøv. A farm of 70 acres of fine land, mediocre buildings. The harvest, livestock, and equipment came with the deal. The seller was the same one who sold us Korsbjerggård, Proprietor Jacobsen, Frederikskilde, Slagelse. The purchase price was 127,000 kroner. The takeover took place on October 15. Svend himself could now afford the necessary down payment.


 A horizontal timeline with tick marks for every decade from 1860 to 1950. A blue circle is positioned at the 1950 mark, and an arrow points to the right from the end of the timeline.
 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

The last summer in Glim

The last summer that Elisabeth was alive, she was considerably better than for several years before. To illustrate this, I can relate that on a warm summer evening she wanted to participate in the Bible discussion meeting with Nielsen, the level crossing keeper, near the railway to Korsør. It was just before harvest; we walked along a dirt road that led down between the crops and grass fields. We had to cross the railway to Kalundborg before reaching the railway tracks to Korsør, a trip of 1.5 miles. She did well while she usually often had trouble just walking the short distance up to Immanuel's farm, about 100 yards. When Svend and Else moved from Korsbjerggård to their new home "Stoksgård", Mom wanted to participate, if she could be of help. She had baked æbleskiver and joined them. Later this autumn, we both visited them. Furthermore, autumn 1948 was a time of anticipation, as we awaited Ejner's return home from the United States before Christmas.

One day in the first half of December, I started to fell a large tree in the garden. The branches had to be cut down first to avoid spoiling too much when the tree fell. The work was interrupted by Mom who wanted some groceries from the coop. I took the bike and did my errand. On the way home I had to cross Highway 1 with a lot of passing cars. In the hazy weather, I was not able to judge the correct distance, as I drove directly into a little car. Nothing happened to the car nor strangely enough to the bike; on the other hand, my left hand was injured and I banged up my left hip, perhaps by falling on the asphalt. However, I was able to get up and place the bike up against a railing next to the road. Just then Immanuel's Ida came from school. I called her and asked her to go to Grandma with my bag of groceries and tell her that I had taken a little trip to Roskilde, but would return soon enough. The car that I ran into

stopped as soon as possible. The driver, Director Åge Balle from Hotel Vinhuset in Næstved, came over and asked sympathetically whether he could do anything for me and added: "I dare say you forgot to get off the bike." I asked him if he would be kind enough to take me to the hospital in Roskilde; as he was driving in that direction. He did so willingly; and he helped me into the emergency room, where the nurse and doctor promptly showed up. I had to take off all my clothes; I was not exactly dressed for hospitalization. The examination was very thorough including X-rays. Fortunately, the injury was not very severe – a small bone on the left hand crushed + little abrasions at the elbow, and some bruising around the hip. As soon as I got to the hospital, I asked the nurse to call Glim 70 to tell Mom about the situation, since uncertainty can be worse than the reality. After being bandaged, I got a taxicab owner to take me home to Glim. Ida had told her grandmother that grandfather probably would be home at 3 o'clock, and it came to be true. It was a moving meeting, we could not hold back the tears; we saw it as God's gracious protection that I had not been injured by the collision. I got to bed, and Mom called Østermarksgård and asked Johannes and Lydia to come to Glim. They came in the evening bringing encouragement and joy for both of us. Some time passed where I was able only to tiptoe around with a cane and with my left arm in a plaster cast. For some time, I was unable to wash the floor or go into the basement and carry firewood into the house; so Mom had to do all the work herself. On December 20, Ejner came home. Johannes, Margrethe, and many more were in Copenhagen to greet him at the ship. They came to Glim at bedtime, and there was joy at the reunion.

It was decided that we should celebrate Christmas at Østermarksgård. Johannes came with his car on Christmas Eve morning to pick us up; we put our house in order and were prepared to be at Østermarksgård for eight days. Mom said as we drove: "Indeed, it's weird to leave home and be away for eight days." She did not think that it would be her last drive alive. Mom wanted the whole family to be together on the First Christmas Day [December 25] at Østermarksgård in particular on the occasion of Ejner's homecoming. In the morning we went to church; Mom, however, did not, as she did not feel well. But she was up all the time and welcomed the company of her children and grandchildren. After drinking coffee, however, she wanted to rest a bit, and she went to

bed. I asked Else (formerly a nurse), if she did not think, it would be best to call the doctor. We agreed to do that but would ask Mom first. Mom answered:

“Why is Dad so determined to have a doctor today; it can wait for another day, I’m no worse than I was before.” The doctor came from Roskilde, as the doctor in Lille Skensved – because of the holiday – was not at home. He gave Mom an injection and some pills; so he thought she would fall asleep. Else looked in on Mom once in a while, but after some time, Else came to me and said: “Please come and see Mom. I think she’s so strange, she is getting cold hands.” We all gathered quickly at Mom’s bed, she still breathed weakly, but her awareness was gone. The doctor was called again, this time, it was the doctor from Lille Skensved, but there was nothing to do. Mom had slipped quietly and painlessly within the veil. We gathered in the death room and helped each other sing No 652 in the Danish Hymnal: “Oh thank God for returning home.” Our voices were pinched. It was a solemn moment. We prayed together, thanked our Father in heaven for what Mom had been for us. Johannes was to deliver the message of grief to Ingeborg and Paul, and to the aunts in Tappernøje and Vordingborg. When death visits a home, one truly feels powerlessness. But how nice and safe it is, when you dare to believe that the one who has passed away has entered a happier life. Then the sting is taken away, and there is a reason to raise our hearts to thank for the unspeakable love and grace that has been shared with us sinful people through Jesus Christ our Lord. We were happy and thankful that her death occurred in her old home and that all of her children except Ingeborg had gathered at her deathbed. The coffin stayed at Østermarksgård until the funeral took place on December 30. It turned into a fine party and day of commemoration with much kindness and participation from friends and neighbors. Ingeborg and Paul came home on the day before. Paul made a speech by the coffin at home and remembered his mother-in-law with thanks, and he mentioned that she had almost all her wishes and prayers fulfilled. Ejner came home for Christmas; she avoided a long and painful sickbed and had a gentle and quiet death surrounded by her loved ones. The coffin followed by approximately 30 cars was brought to Kirke Skensved church where Dean Otzen made a speech based on the words from 2nd Corinthians, chap. 9, verse 15: “Thanks be to God for His gift beyond words.”

Reference is made to his script:

At the funeral of Mrs. Tolstrup Christensen on December 30, 1948.

The Word, which I will bring to your minds, is written in 2nd Corinthians, chap. 9, verse 15, where the apostle Paul writes to his friends in the church at Corinth:

“Thanks be to God for His gift beyond words!!”

When we hear these short words, we may not immediately realize what the apostle has in mind. Some interpret them to refer to Jesus Christ, who is called God’s gift to us. And so interpreted, it’s a fine Christmas message; When we hear it, we can think of God’s great Christmas gift to the fallen human race, when on Christmas night He sent down His son with the joyous message about the fatherly mind of God, with life and salvation to us who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. And in the same letter in chapter 8 the Apostle has mentioned his thoughts about Christmas where he writes that Jesus Christ was rich at home with God, but for our sake, He chose the earthly life with all its poverty – so that by His poverty we should become rich. (2nd Corinthians, 8.9)

By reading more closely, we understand that what the apostle particularly has in mind in writing of God’s gift beyond words. We see that he is not thinking in general of Jesus Christ as the savior, but is especially considering that the gospel of Jesus Christ has created the generous minds of the Corinthians, to whom he writes: They have collected a gift, not to the apostle personally but to the mother church in Jerusalem. And this generous Christian mind which he has found in them, causes him to thank, not so much the Christians in Corinth, but rather he extends his thanks to

God who has sent His son and through His gospel has created this gift beyond words. It is as if the apostle with these words summarizes everything good and blessed that he has received from his friends in Corinth. But it is God he thanks, for it is He who in His mercy has influenced the minds of those who gave the gift and has led them to give it.

And I think that Mrs. Tolstrup Christensen's husband and children may in this moment like to repeat the apostle's word: "Thanks be to God for His gift beyond words." For there is something indescribable in the gift of God to have a wife and mother with a good Christian mind. There is in the mind of any good mother something indescribable in her selfless love for her children, just as the Apostle gives thanks for a generous Christian mind. But especially we can say that about a mother with a Christian mind. It is indescribable; those, who have had a Christian mother, know that there is basically something we cannot fathom, in the gift of God. It is easy to understand the exterior, her care for the family's physical well-being. We know that Mrs. Tolstrup did not spare herself. As long as she had her strength, she was active in creating a good home both for the children and for the friends who came there.

But when I particularly came to think of God's gift beyond words, I do not refer to the exterior, but to what Mrs. Tolstrup has been spiritually for her loved ones. Together with her husband she has influenced their home and their children with a good Christian spirit. And one cannot predict how it can bind children to a home. There is a strength in a home where God's name is sanctified and where one's concerns are brought before Him in prayer, both in joy and in sorrow.

I think that one of the greatest joys Mrs. Tolstrup had in life was that none of her children were tempted or joined in something that was foreign to or hostile toward that in which those in God's church believe and live. And when this is the case, then we must also think of what is indescribable: a mother, who with her intercession has followed her children from their childhood, a significant woman, who with quiet authority has controlled her home.

She did her part in marking the home with Christianity, not in a way that was artificial and forced, but so that it was the strong and obvious basis for life. You felt so when you came to her home. Yes, in this way her home came to be important not only for her husband and children but also for the life of the Church here in the parish. Those of us who are here today also want to express our thanks, as we are gathered by her coffin. And I personally have to give her my thanks, because when I came here she met me with confidence and came faithfully to our church (despite our differences and a few things she probably would have liked to be different),

And when we have thanked God for everything He has given through her to her loved ones and her friends, then they will thank God for all His goodness to her, too.

We want to say thank you, as she has had much happiness in her life. Through many years, she has known the joy and had the strength and health to be part of a great family farm and see it grow and flourish around herself and be able to fill her place in the home. We shall give thanks for the many years of happy family life that she has been able to live with her husband, to whom she looked up and with whom she shared the opinions on the highest issues of life; and that she was allowed to see her children grow up and find and follow good roads.

Yes, let us pray:

Lord, we turn to you with thanks for all your kindness to her. Thank you that her loved ones were allowed to keep her, that you first let the evening come when her days of life had been lived through. Thank you that death eventually came quietly and mildly as when a man, who is tired, lies down to rest. And first and foremost thank you for the Christmas gospel with the good news that you have sent your Son, the Only Begotten, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life. Thank you that we may believe that your words had found their way to her heart and has been received in faith. Therefore we now boldly command her soul to your grace and paternal goodness. And for her loved ones and all of us, we ask that you will keep us as yours so that once we can meet at your home with our loved ones who have gone before. Amen.

by Dean Poul Otzen, Jersie

Then Johannes Bjerrum, the pastor of Rorup-Glim, spoke from the words in Hebrews, chapter 13 verse 7–8: “Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

A wealth of wreaths filled the aisle and porch; even outside the church were many wreaths. Mourners could not nearly be accommodated in the small church. Carried by sons and sons-in-law the coffin was passed to the grave, where Dean Otzen threw in the three shovels of soil, and then we sang “One is not of God forsaken.”

Johannes said thanks for the great participation and invited mourners to Østermarksgård for coffee. At the coffee table, several took the floor to say thank you for what our mom had been for her children, home and friends. Johannes, Tenant Krarup, Superintendent Thorlø, Nielsen-Skjensved, and Peter Andreassen. I myself mentioned the word from Romans 11, verse 33-36, which

says: “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths which we cannot discern! Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them? For from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen.”

After Mom’s funeral Ejner and I stayed some more days at Østermarksgård and benefited from Johannes’ and Lydia’s hospitality. But as the house in Glim was empty and things needed to be done, Johannes drove us there. We would now try to manage the household ourselves.

Although the void left by a dear deceased can be large, life must continue, and if we believe in God’s Son, our Lord Jesus Christ and recall His parting words to his disciples, see John 14: 1–2: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?” Then we dare to believe that the deceased has entered into a far more glorious life, yes, it is even a question whether it is wrong to mourn; this can be a kind of self-love.

Ejner was not unfamiliar with cooking, so we managed very well. I still had my left arm in a plaster cast. After a time we visited the family, Bosagergård, Bringstrup, and Stoksgård near Mørkøv; for several days we were in Tapernøje. One day, Holger drove us to Vordingborg. The winter passed and spring came with sunshine and growth. Now I could not imagine continuing to live alone in the big house at Glim, especially since Johannes and Lydia offered to have me stay with them at Østermarksgård. I accepted that with thanks. Our neighbor in Glim, Blacksmith Larsen, wanted to buy the school, and we quickly agreed upon the price of 22,500 kroner. Takeover on April 1, 1949. The majority of the household effects were distributed among the children, because there was no room for so much in our old bedroom, and I did not need so much. Immanuel Andreassen from Ringsted moved things for me, and Emil participated, and Margrethe helped me pack. Ejner was still at home and helped me to clear out. Johannes moved paintings and various notions, and finally, he accompanied us to Østermarksgård. My stay was longer than first thought. I entertained the idea that my course of life was drawing toward its end.

In May Ejner traveled again to the United States. My stay at Østermarksgård lasted over three years. I was happy to stay here and am very grateful for the time. In the spring of 1951, from March 5 to April 16 I had to go to the Diakonissestiftelsen [a hospital run by Deaconesses] in Copenhagen, a stay I remember with pleasure.

In the spring of 1952 I bought a house in Køge, 30 Tordenskjoldsgade, as the house's location, appearance and plan appealed to me, and no other buyer showed up. It was my idea to sell it again, but I decided to move my movables to Køge, and I took possession of the house. The first year I was alone in the apartment and cooked the food I needed myself. However, when I received a letter in the following spring from my brother Andreas [Andrew] in America that he and his wife Olga intended to visit Denmark in the summer of 1953, I had to make an extra effort, and I managed to persuade maternal Aunt Minna to come and help me and further take care of the household for me.

While this is written, I have lived at Køge about three years, and I'm happy to live here. We live in a house together with good friends. We have a biblical study circle, where we feel comfortable, and we are happy to go to church and chapel. I am also pleased when the children come here. Indeed, there is much for which to thank God.


 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 1930 1940 1950

Positions of trust

Well, how do we define positions of trust? Must likely they entail tasks entrusted to a person to solve or perform on behalf of others; they can be onerous or honorable, depending on how you approach the task. I have often been very pleased to hold entrusted positions; by it your skills and understanding of social life will develop; it may help make your life richer; you are in contact with people with whom you otherwise would not have anything to do. In a democratic society, as we know it here in our dear little country with its innumerable associations, you easily can have one or more positions for every member of society. In agriculture alone you will find cattle breeding associations, dairy control associations, horse insurance associations, cooperative societies, dairy and feed associations, also the more public associations like community parish councils and church parish councils. As time has passed, I have played my part in dealing within these organizations, too.

My first position of trust was as the youngest member of the board of a bull's owner association for Tybjerg and Hjelmsølle. The task was to purchase a bull as well as to select the best cows within the different herds, which were to be serviced by the bull. It was quite interesting driving around an entire day to see the best herds in the area around Ringsted to find a bull that matched the size, appearance and our wallet. Later I was assessor in horse insurance and auditor of Tybjerglille Andelsmejeri. [Dairy cooperative society]

The church duties have always been of interest to me. Around 1910, a new village hall was built in Tybjerg. We had a small Bible group consisting of five families; we found it proper to have a week of missionary work in the new house. I was made responsible for organizing speakers for that. By the end of our life at Tybjerg the minister called for a meeting in the village hall; he

wanted a voluntary church parish council elected since the election period had expired for the statutory church parish councils and had not been renewed because of the fall of I. C. Christensen's government due to the Alberti fraud. Two members were to be elected. I was strongly recommended as one member by First Teacher Nielsen, Tybjerg school. However, since I was determined to move from the area, I instead suggested Farmer Niels Peter Davidsen, Hjelmsølle, and he was elected.

After moving to Kirke Skensved, various positions quickly showed up: appraiser for horse insurance for Højelse and other parishes. In 1929 we founded our own association for Kirke Skensved parish, over which I presided for several years. During the years of the First World War 1914–18, I was responsible for the fire wood in the parish. I had to take care of distribution and accept payment for the fire wood allocated to the parish.

I was a member of the board of Jersie Brugsforening [Cooperative Society] for four years; two years as treasurer and two years as chairman. Here, I succeeded in making a change so that the general meetings were no longer held on a Sunday. Auditor of Solrød Andelsmejeri for several years, also auditor of Jersie–Skensved community parish's accounts for a short period; member of a three-man committee during the construction of electrical service for the villages of Havdrup, Solrød, Kirke Skensved, and Ladager; arbitrator on decisions of disputes about payment of compensation for placing the high-voltage poles for the villages of Højelse, Ølby, Ølsemagle, and Lille Skensved. The power plant offered 10 kroner, the landowners demanded 80 kroner. The result was 40 kroner, of which 20 kroner was for damaging the field, as the power plant was reluctant to have the compensation fixed too high.

I was a member of Solrød Andelsmejeri [a dairy cooperative society] and vice chairman for four years. For a short time, I was on the school commission along with the Rev. Blauenfeldt and Farmer Hans Peter Hansen, Jersie. For many years, I was appraiser for The Ordinary Fire Insurance for Rural Buildings, deputy for the representative of the same company. I was appointed by the county as permanent assessor for lending out funds held in trust for minors. I was on the Standing Committee to appoint members to the jury panels. In 1933, I was elected to the community parish council representing Venstre [a political party representing farmers and other liberals], chairman of the school

commission and for the child welfare authorities. In my second term, I was also vice-chairman and chairman of the social committee. For several terms I was a member of the church parish council, church warden, and treasurer, also treasurer of the account for paying the minister. In 1941, when we moved to Glim, I was excused from all positions in Jersie–Kr. Skensved, but I gradually became involved in Glim. I was chairman of a committee for improving the sewer conditions at Glim. It brought me a lot of work, but I also saw results. The matter rolled on, despite resistance from people in the village. We started to make inquiries with the water commission and health commission, later with the rural administration commission. At Judge Thygesen's request, the parish community council contracted as the requestor and by that the entire process was helped considerably. It resulted in complete sewerage with drainage from the village in quite the opposite direction than before. It cost 45,000 kroner, shared with $\frac{1}{3}$ by the state, $\frac{1}{3}$ by the community parish and $\frac{1}{3}$ by the residents of Glim to be paid over 28 years. Later together with Dairy Manager Christoffersen, Gøderup Mejeri, I was elected auditor of the parish community's accounts. In the elections to the church parish council in 1945, when I was first on the common list, I became vice-chairman, church warden, and treasurer, and with Rev. Korsholm's death, I became chairman. From 1924, I was member of the board and executive committee of Haslev Højskole. In 1925, I was a member of the board of Haslev Gymnasium [college] – and now for the last 5–6 years, I have been a member of the deanery committee of the districts of Ramsø–Tune.

Well, this is the end of what I call my memoir. Whether they will have any impact, I cannot say. For my own part what has been important is the time I have spent reviewing old records and diary entries since it would be impossible for me to complete the work without these points of reference. In addition, it has been the cause of a detailed and thorough study of many branches of my ancestry – back to around 1700.

I am quite aware of the fact that there are many shortcomings, but no one can be committed beyond his ability. Now that the course of my life ap-

proaches its ultimate goal, I want to comment: “Thus far the LORD has helped us” and confirm the words of the Psalmist in Psalm 16.6:

“The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.” I grew up in a home where the word of the Lord was held in dear honor, and later on with a faithful wife who also wanted to follow the way, where God can bless you, having a good living, good nice children, many good friends; indeed, there is so much for which to thank God.

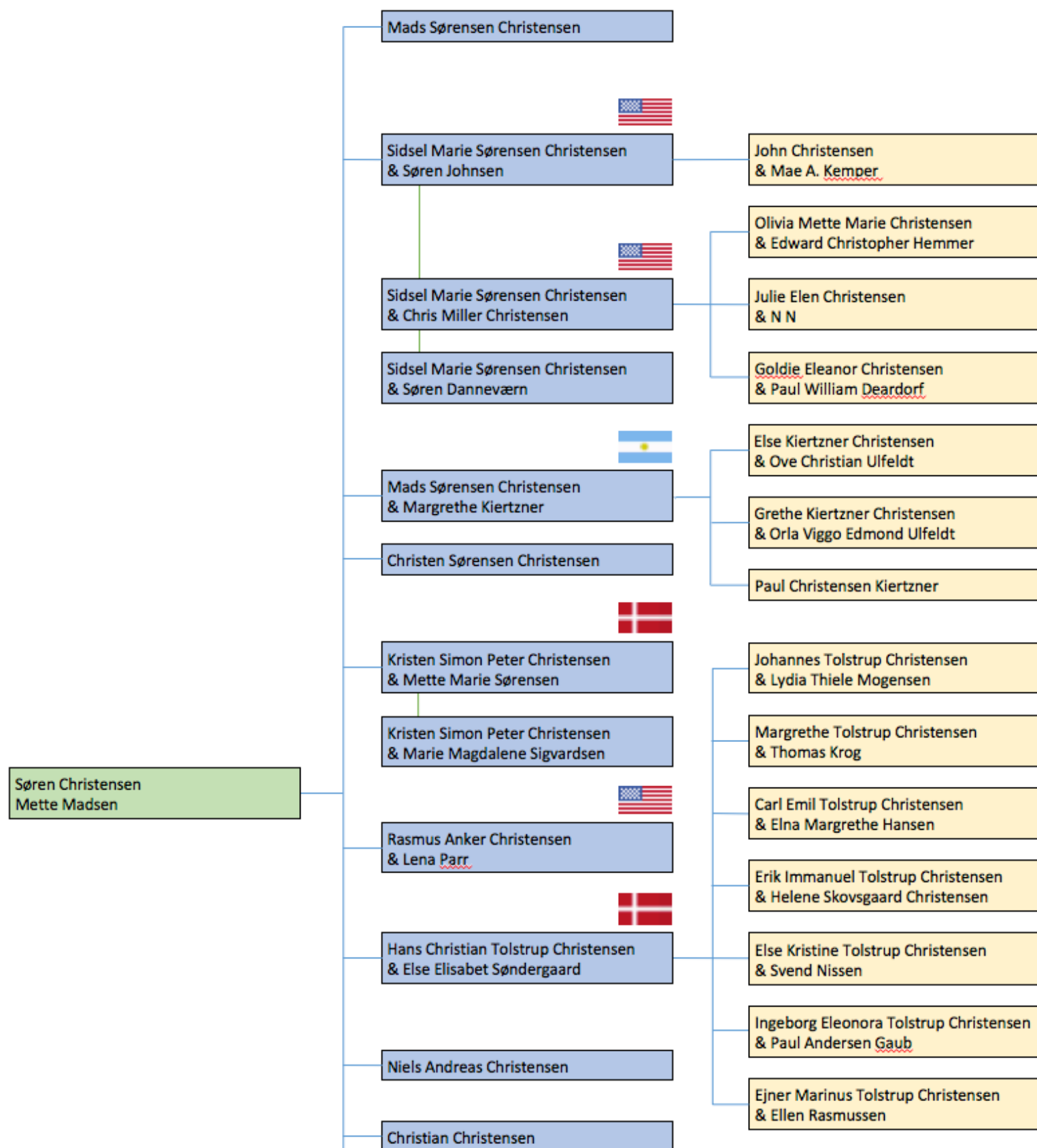
Køge, March 1955.

Hans Tolstrup Christensen.

Income and capital

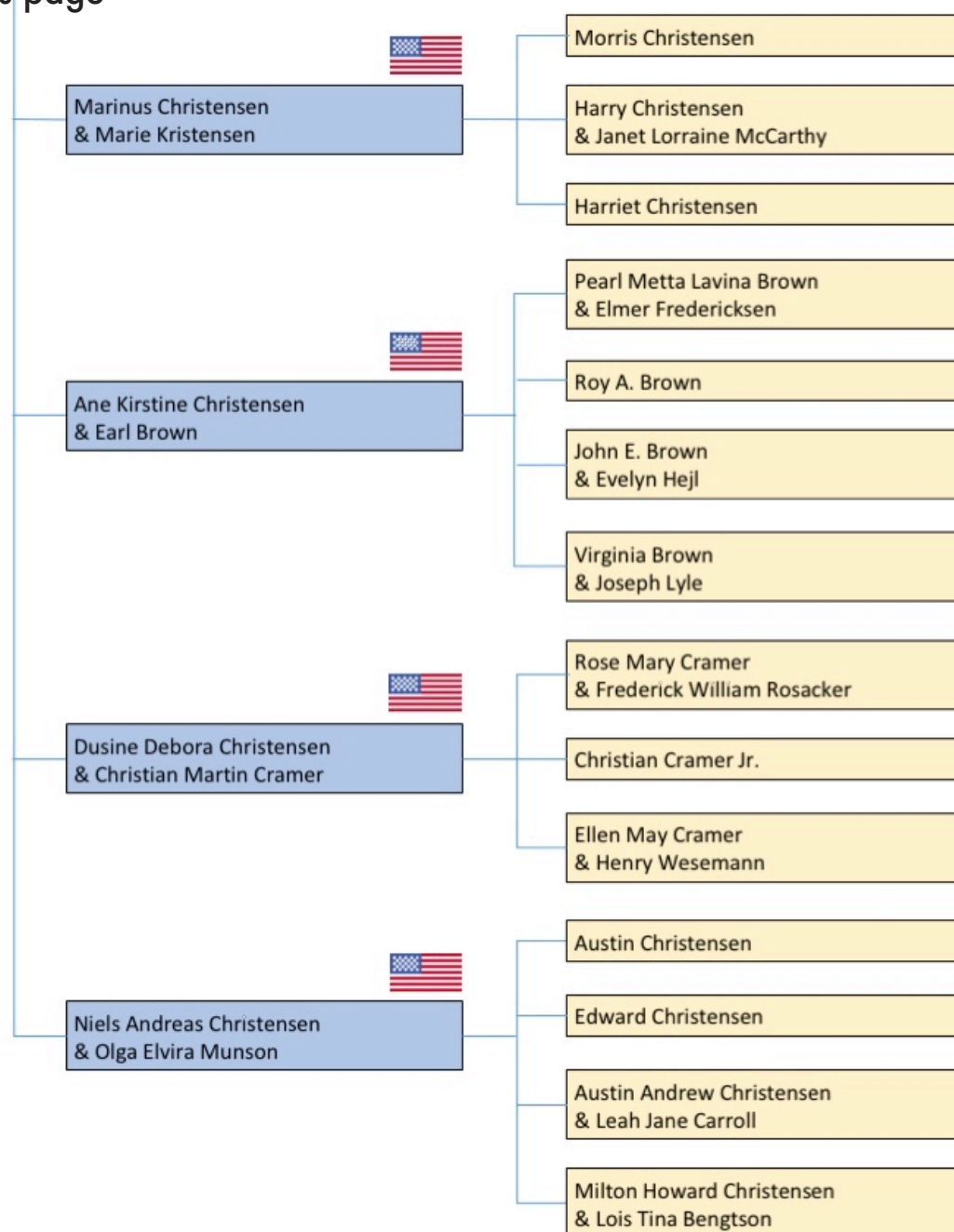
Year	Income	Capital
1913–14	1,850	–
1914–15	3,200	–
1915–16	3,800	–
1916–17	13,160	–
1917–18	12,300	–
1918–19		–
1919–20	13,170	–
1920–21	9,890	81,500
1921–22	6,400	77,700
1922–23	7,500	78,000
1923–24	23,226	90,990
1924–25	14,630	96,016
1925–26	9,712	96,380
1926–27	9,682	78,193
1927–28	2,669	73,866
1928–29	11,962	83,146
1929–30	14,527	82,578
1930–31	8,253	86,003
1931–32	4,179	48,835
1932–33	9,933	51,247
1933–34	9,176	59,829
1934–35	9,020	67,528
1935–36	9,980	79,840
1936–37	14,016	89,554
1937–38	11,873	68,006
1938–39	13,921	77,235
1939–40	15,904	118,794
1940–41	29,018	145,090
1941–42	7,222	113,224
1942–43	8,497	107,965
1943–44	13,417	115,474
1944–45	11,163	122,411
1945–46	10,815	206,492
1946–47	14,684	152,622
1947–48	8,069	138,809
1948–49	16,247	172,522
1949–50	18,027	140,881
1950–51	13,161	157,421
1951–52	17,666	152,367
1952–53	17,197	175,736
1953–54	11,751	176,498
1954–55	13,129	159,237
1955–56	16,333	171,196
1956–57	7,602	239,428
1957–58	12,055	207,663
1958–59	17,286	219,693
1959–60	16,218	226,764
1960–61	13,758	320,744

Søren Christensen's and Mette Madsen's children and grandchildren



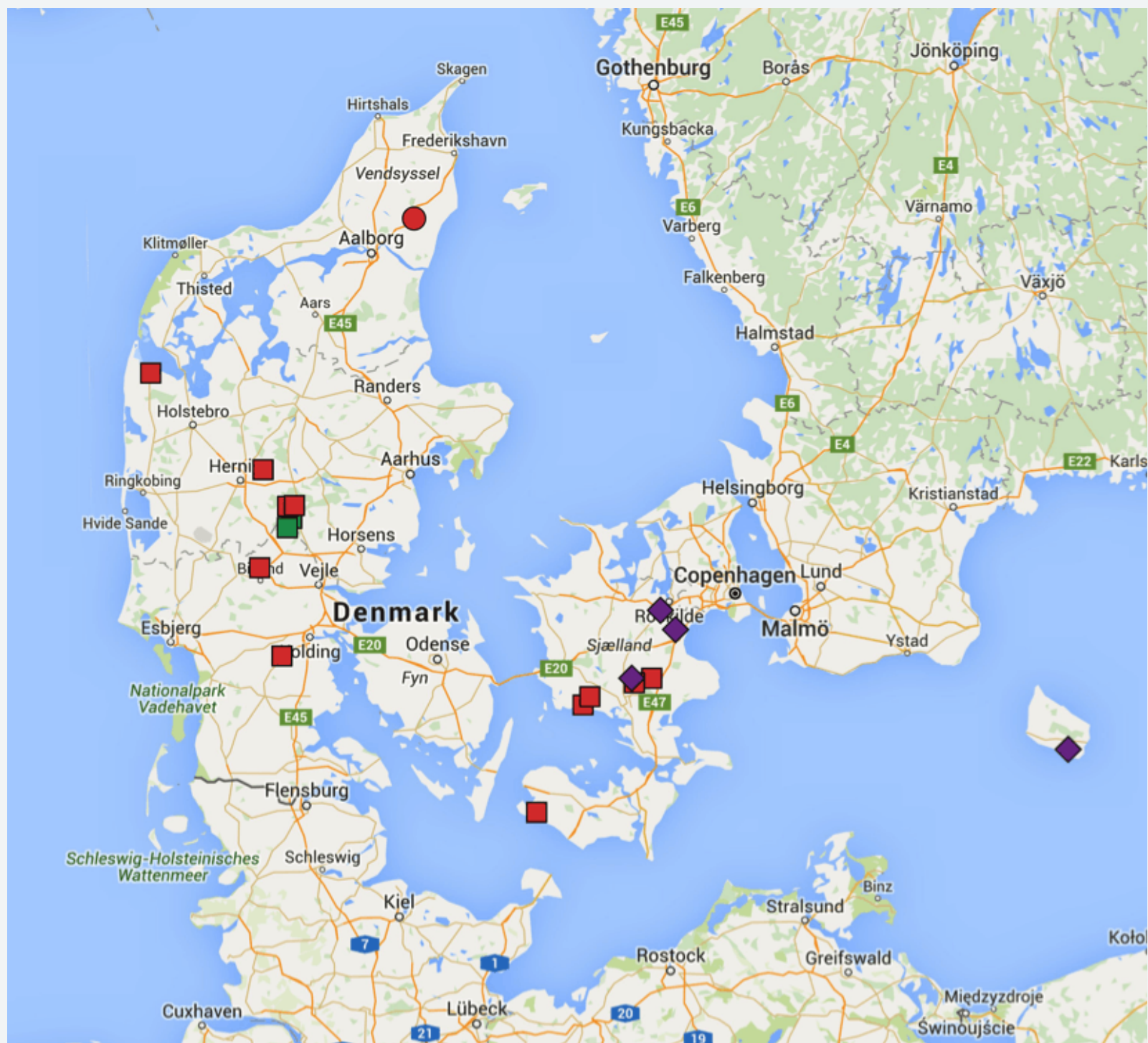
continues on the next page

continued from the previous page



Map

Places



Hover over each marker ikon to see place name and relevant chapter number.

Barrel of hartkorn

In Danish “tønder hartkorn” is a value of farmland: Today value of farmland is measured in kroner. In earlier days you used “tønder hartkorn”, where “tønder” = barrels and “hartkorn” = hard grain (barley or rye). The measurement of “tønder hartkorn” is a combination of the size of the farm and the quality of the farmland giving a fair base for taxation of farmland in days, when you paid in kind. In some parts of Denmark with very poor farmland one barrel of hartkorn equals perhaps 70–85 acres and in other parts of Denmark one barrel of hartkorn matches perhaps 11–17 acres.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Register

Find opslagsord

Chapter 5 - Our home in Keilstrup

Chapter 16 - At Kabbel by Lemvig

Chapter 21 - Rudbjerggård near Nakskov

Chapter 22 - Second time at Broksø

Chapter 23 - Klintsmark

Carriage gateway

A covered structure through which horse-drawn carriages and wagons entered a farmstead and which often could be closed for storage and other purposes.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Dean

A minister who is in charge of managing a deanery. A deanery consists of a number of church parishes.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Register

Find opslagsord

Chapter 14 - In Stilbjerg, Ringgive parish

Chapter 15 - At Haslev Højskole

Chapter 19 - At Broksø for the first time

Chapter 19 - At Broksø for the first time

Chapter 20 - At Fuirendal

Chapter 20 - At Fuirendal

Chapter 21 - Rudbjerggård near Nakskov

Chapter 48 - The last summer in Glim

Chapter 48 - The last summer in Glim

Chapter 48 - The last summer in Glim

Folk high school

The Danish folk high schools offer non-formal adult education. The concept of “Non-formal adult education” is associated with N. F. S. Grundtvig, a Danish philosopher, poet, educational thinker and clergyman, (born in 1783 – died in 1872), and his thoughts concerning free educational opportunities. The concept arose in the 19th century and is one of the cornerstones of the Danish educational system.

Source: <http://danishfolkhighschools.com>

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Parish

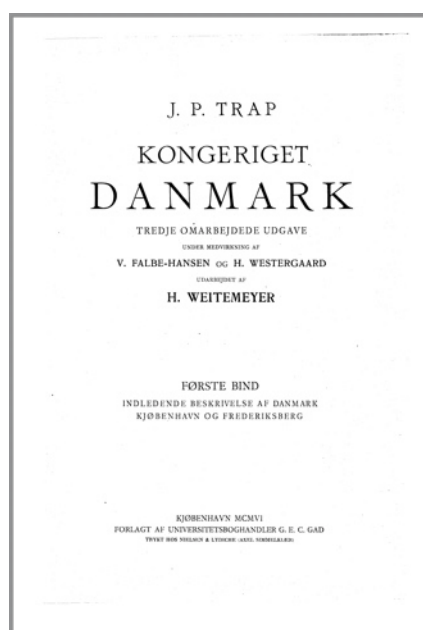
The area a church provides for. And until 1970 the smallest unit of local administration.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Trap: Denmark

Hans Tolstrup was the proud owner of “Statistisk-topographisk Beskrivelse af Kongeriget Danmark” (statistical-topographical description of the Kingdom of Denmark) – 3rd edition (5 volumes, 1898–1906).



Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Undersowing

An undersown field is the first year sown with both undersown seed (e.g. clover or grass) and a crop (e.g. barley). After the crop is harvested the clover or grass will continue to grow and be used the next year for grazing or hay.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil

Wardrobe

This piece of furniture was every farmhand's common tool for moving and storing the personal belongings.

Beslægtede opslagsord

Træk beslægtede opslagsord hertil