

**Changes in the Distribution of Land in Denmark:
Village – manor – small holding – joint operation.**

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Abstract

In Denmark the number of farms has increased and decreased at different times through the ages: the 4 home farms investigated were established centuries ago upon the closing down of villages, after an act of 1919, they were parcelled out into small holdings in the 1920's, and many of these were again amalgamated into larger farming units in the 1960's.

Throughout the whole of Western Europe there has been a noticeable migration away from agriculture in recent years as part of a general social development, and in connection with this there has occurred a structural change, which is partly to be seen in an amalgamation of farms. Quite regardless of many attempts at counteracting this development artificially it is continuing at an increasing rate.

An increase in the number of farms has occurred several times in the course of history, just as their number has decreased at other times, both tendencies having different causes on each occasion.

From the Middle Ages, the Danish farming community has undergone a social structuralization. After the Reformation, the number and influence of the squires grew rapidly as a result of favourable export conditions for corn and oxen, conditions which were particularly rewarding for the big producers.

At the time of Christian II (1513 – 23) it was established that all land which was not laid claim to by any other, belonged to the king. When the Crown confiscated the episcopal and monastic estates after the Reformation, almost half the land in Denmark became state property. In the 17th century there were almost no farmers owning their own land, the majority were tenants under the Crown or on noblemen's estates.

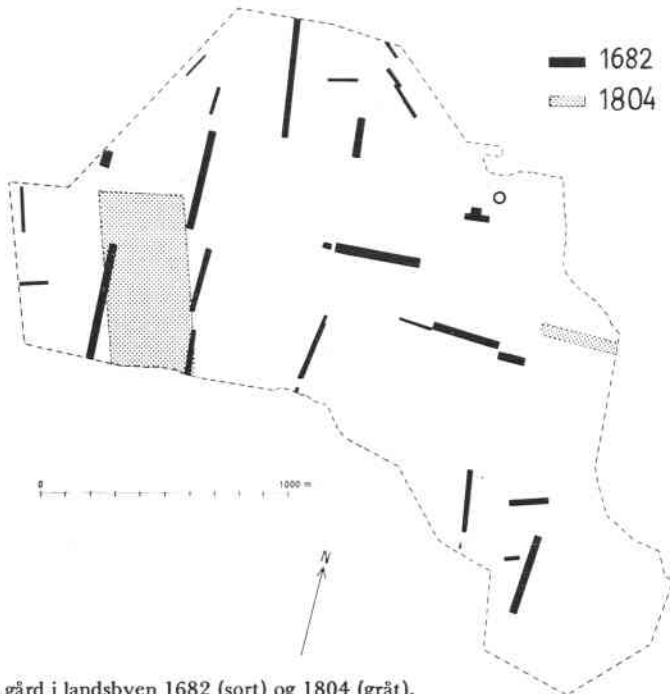


Fig. 1. En gård i landsbyen 1682 (sort) og 1804 (gråt).

Fig. 1. A farm in a village 1682 (black, the circle shows the site of the buildings) and 1804 (grey).

In the period following 1660, more and more state land was sold off, the last large sales took place 1760–1780, so that around 1800 the state almost only owned land in North Zealand, Odsherred, Bornholm and on Falster, and in these places it largely consisted of forests.

Around 1760 the nobility owned 60% of the land in Denmark, the middle-class landowners 15–20%, and the farmers only 4%. The Land Act of 1766 aimed at increasing the number of freeholders, and after the abolishment of the open field system in 1781 an exchange of strips enabled the owners to acquire the land attached to the individual farms (fig. 1). In the course of the following generations, Denmark achieved the best redistribution of land in Europe, with good conditions for labour, transport and crop rotation, thereby furthering efficiency and competitiveness. During the same period, many farmers were able to buy off their tenancy thanks to the high corn prices, and in addition, thousands of small lots (houses with land) were set up in areas inconvenient for farmers and squires, and on the outlying commons (fig. 2).

From 1900 to 1960, when the parcelling out was given legislative and economic support (*Kampp* 1959) an average of 500 farms per

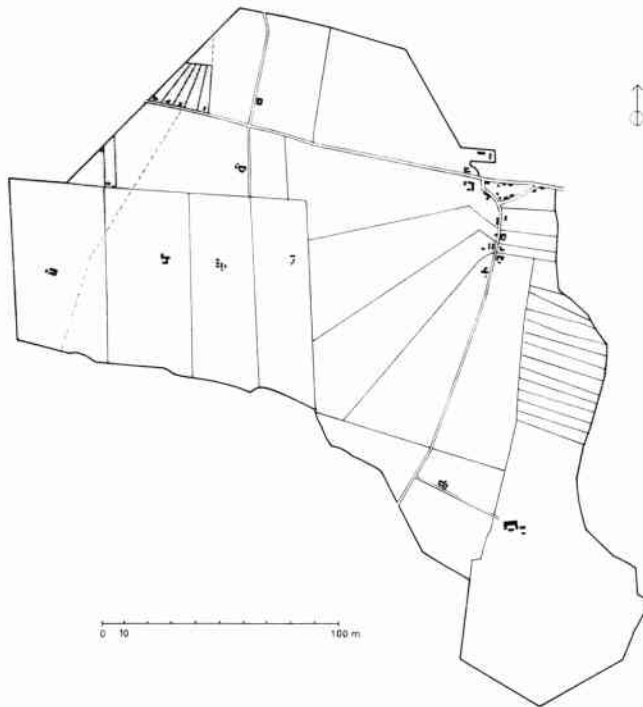


Fig. 2. Samme landsby som fig. 1, efter udskiftningen. Det skraverede areal er det gamle overdrev, hvortil husmandsbrugene blev henvist. Da bygningernes daværende form ikke kendes, er indtegnet de nuværende bygninger.

Fig. 2. The village shown in fig. 1. The present buildings are situated on lots from 1804, the small lots on the former common (shaded area).

year were set up as opposed to a rate of 900 per year 1850-1900 without legislative support. But at the same time there was an increase of 20-30% in the amount of agricultural land.

Already around 1909 there was a general desire for larger units than the state farms that had so far been set up, a desire which was relatively strengthened from 1940 onwards.

European agriculture has reached its present stage by means of 3 phases: 1) the agricultural population increases at a slower rate than the population as a whole, 2) the agricultural population rate decreases, 3) not only does the number of people fall, but also the number of properties falls. Denmark entered the 3rd phase around 1945 with 208.000 agricultural properties, in 1970 there were 140.000. The rate at which farms are being closed down is increasing, so that at present 6-7,000 properties are disappearing each year. On the long view, this development has determined the course taken by Danish land legislation, and not the reverse, Danish

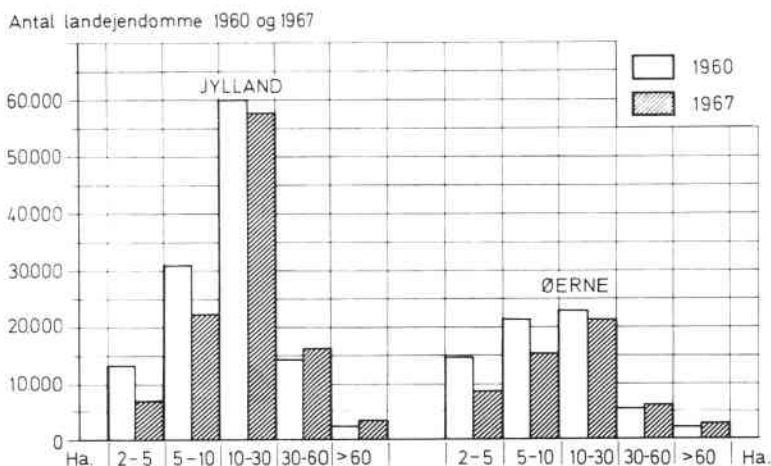


Fig. 3. Antallet af gårde i Jylland og på øerne 1960 og 1967.

Fig. 3. Number of farms in Jutland and on the Islands 1960 and 1967.

land acts begin as reform bills and end as anachronisms, the present agricultural subsidy is based on the present structure.

Throughout the first half of the 20th century the government has set up small state holdings by means of parcelling out land, and until 1960, legislation attempted to prevent farms from being amalgamated. But even then, practice had long been working counter to the Land Parcelling Acts (Kampp 1959) in that there were fewer farms in 1960 than at the turn of the century despite the 30,000 new state holdings.

The decision to discontinue parcelling out of land was thus a consequence of the development, and the movement in the opposite direction is now proceeding at a more rapid rate. As might be expected, the geographical distribution of this regression shows that there is a greater fall in the east than in the west, 3.3% in West Jutland in 1960-67 as against 5.5% on the Islands (Funen and Zealand), (fig. 3).

Freehold ownership has dominated in Danish agriculture for more than 150 years, and today over 66% of Danish farmers are owner farmers, to the great envy of other European farmers. However, many have begun to understand that the right of use is more important than the right of ownership, and it has become common practice for many owners of a property to lease the neighbour's land, so that the latter only uses the buildings for habitation. At present it is only allowed to lease such land for a maximum of 8 years, and therefore not many investments are made on it.

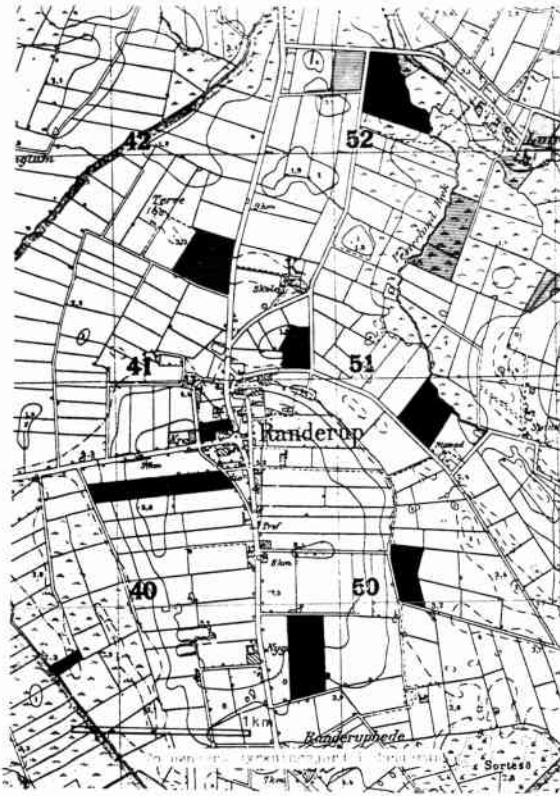


Fig. 4. To bønders dyrkningsjord i Randerup.

Fig. 4. An example of two jointly operated farms 1968

This has led to a disturbing tendency towards a diffusion of farming land, with property being bought and property being leased (fig. 4). The joint operating of farms is becoming more and more common, this was twice as frequent in 1967 than in 1964 and is twice as common on the Islands as in Jutland, for the whole country it is a matter of 25% of all properties of over 60 hectares (1 acre = 0.4047 ha) (for the Islands as much as 40%), but only a few per cent of the properties under 10 ha. It is in fact those between 5 and 10 ha that are disappearing, in 1968 there were 3,000 in this group. The greatest increase in numbers took place with properties of between 60 and 120 ha (fig. 5).

In recent years the demand for larger units has been growing faster than the actual increase in size, and as there is in many cases only one middle-aged or elderly couple to run the farm a structural rationalization by means of amalgamation or closing down will take place at a faster rate in the future.

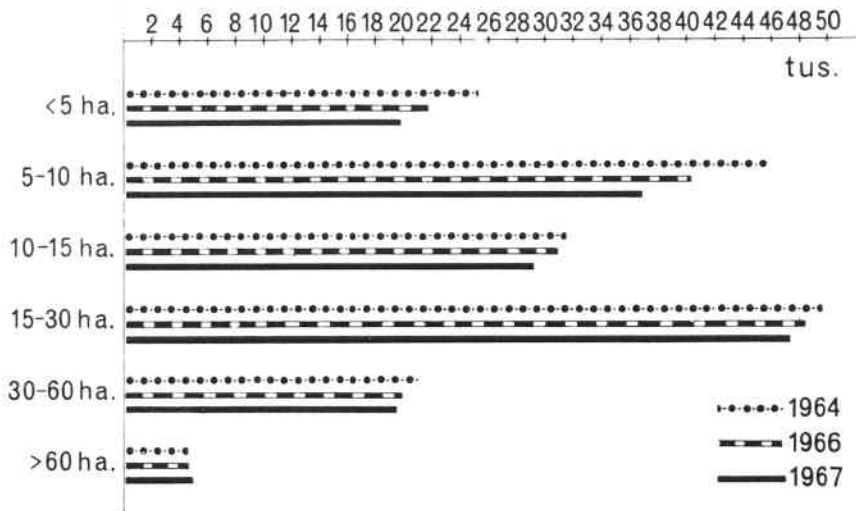


Fig. 5. Antal landejendomme i forskellige størrelsesgrupper 1964, 1966 og 1967.

Fig. 5. Distribution of farms according to size 1964, 1966 and 1967.

3 localities are traced through 4 and a 4th one through 5 different phases of division and amalgamation:

In the Middle Ages, *Spanager* was a village with a nobleman's manor farm. *Spanager Farm*, established on the basis of 5 farms, became a home farm through a royal concession of 1680. In 1688 it is estimated to have had 72.2 tdr. htk. (hartkorn = a Danish unit of land valuation based on estimated productivity) with 283.9 tdr. land (1 acre = 0.7336 tønder land) under plough (*Trap II*, 3, 1960). Fig. 6 shows its fields with a specification of their quality in 1808 according to the oldest existing cadastral map, original I.

Fig. 7 shows the parcelling at the conversion of entailed estates into fee simple in 1923, traced on M3427 (*Kampp* 1959): 44 ground rent farms totalling 287.7 ha + 9 supplementary plots with 34.4 ha and 1 garden plot with 0.1 ha. The main buildings with a plot of 33.1 ha were sold to the city borough of Copenhagen, which has set up a home for children here. Immediately prior to the parcelling out, the farm thus comprised 322.2 ha, corresponding to 585 tdr. ld. which is considerably more than that given above for 1688. On the one hand, the figure for 1923 not only includes land under cultivation, but also meadow, and on the other hand, an extension of the area of *Spanager Farm* to the south was carried out between 1808 and 1923, as can be seen from a comparison between figs. 6 and 7. An extension was possibly also carried out between 1680 and 1808.

Spanager Hovedgårds Jorder 1808

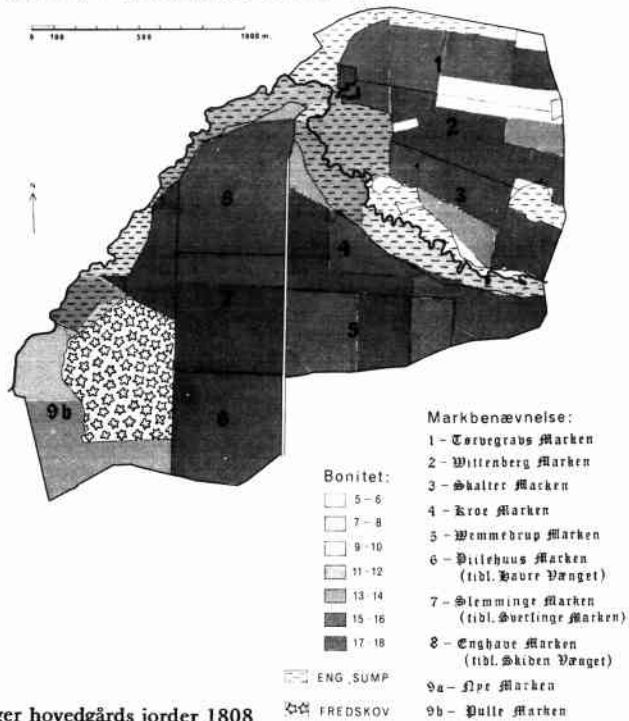


Fig. 6. Spanager hovedgårds jorder 1808 med de daværende marknavne og bonitetsansættelse (kilde: matrikelskort, original I).
Fig. 6. Spanager Estate 1808. 1-9b: The old field-names, Soil quality, Meadow, Wood.

Fig. 8 shows conditions in the same area in 1969: joint operating has become common (26 original farms are now run by 13 farmers, (purchase or lease) in addition to which 3 other farms have been leased by farmers outside the area). A 12-m-broad belt along the whole south side of Køge brook has been purchased by Copenhagen Water Board in connection with the Regnemark works. When the newly-planned West Motorway is opened to traffic, it will probably have an influence on the ownership of the intersected plots of land. (In drawing up fig. 8 I have made use of information provided by schoolteacher K. Kamp Larsen, Borup).

Lindersvold was set up on the basis of two villages, Akselhoved (mentioned 1463) and Hyllingskov by Christoffer Lindenov (d. 1593), in 1596, his widow destroyed 2 farms in Akselhoved and "put the land under tillage". In 1606 his son acquired 2 farms in the village of Akselhoved by exchange of real property. The estate was further enlarged through purchases and property exchanges between 1680 and 1704. In 1688 it comprised 33.8 tdr. htk., 120 ha under plough (*Trap* IV, I, 1955).

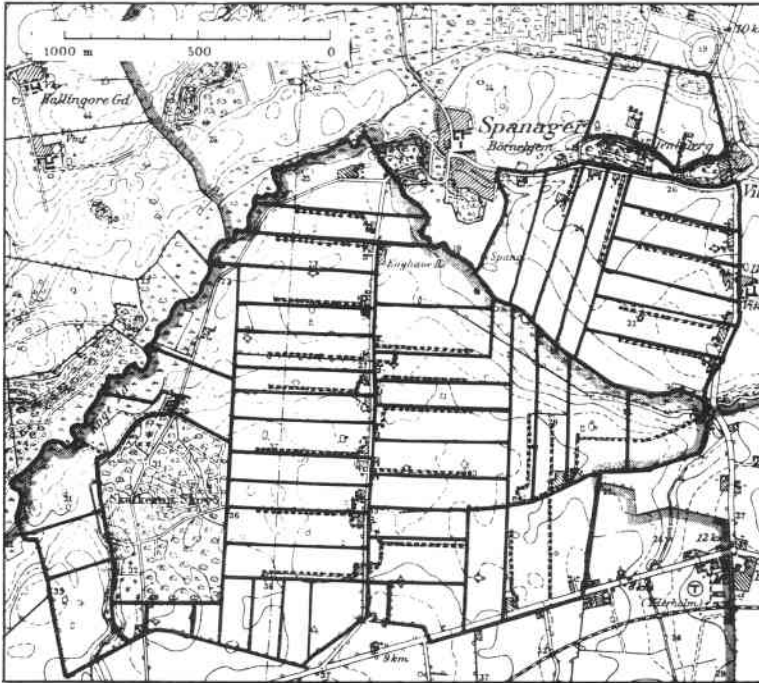


Fig. 7. Statsudstyknngen af Spanager 1923, indtegnet på M 3427.

Fig. 7. The parcelling of Spanager at the conversion of entailed estate into fee simple in 1923, drawn on the Ordnance Survey Map 3427.

Fig. 9 has been drawn on the basis of the cadastral map, original 1, 1778, and shows the fields and their quality at that time.

Fig. 10 is a plan of the parcelling out at the conversion of entailed estates into fee simple, reduced and traced on M. 3827 and 3927 (*Kampp* 1959). The plan is partly from 1922, when 38 ground rent farms were parcelled out with 222.2 ha + 7 supplementary plots with 22.5 ha, and partly from 1926, when 2 ground rent farms were set up with 10.8 ha + 5 supplementary plots of 9.5 ha, which were given to the farms set up in 1922. At the time of parcelling out, the estate comprised 55 tdr. 4 skp. (1 'skæppe' = 1/8 tønne) htk. Buildings and park have been taken over by the Christmas Seal Committee and are used as a convalescent home for children from Copenhagen.

Fig. 11 reveals that 9 of the farms had purchased or leased land outside the area in 1970, and that in addition 36 plots have now been merged into 15 farms. (Fig. 11 has been drawn up with the help of information from schoolteacher *Erik Olsen*, Høng).

The home farm *Nislevgård* emerged towards the end of the 1500's out of a freehold farm. In 1618 it had 36 tdr. htk., but in

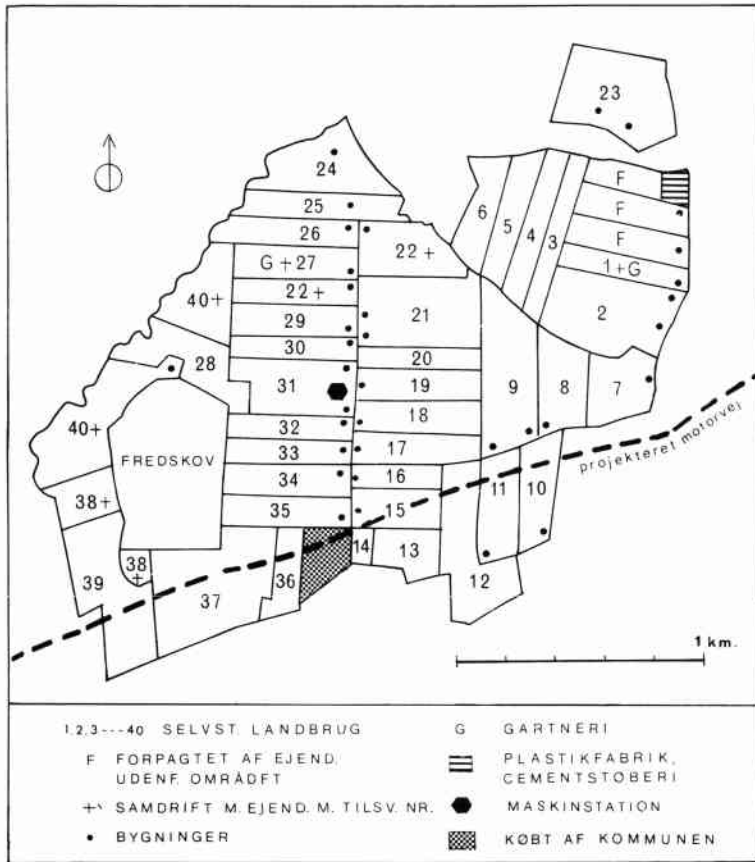


Fig. 8. Spanagerudstykningens skæbne 1969.

Fig. 8. Spanager 1969, with planned motorway. Legend: 1, 2, 3, ... 40: Independent farms, F: Rented by farmer outside the area, +: Jointly operated. buildings, G. Gardening, Factories, Machine pool. Bought by the municipality.

1689 the village of Nislev was with royal assent placed under the home farm tariff, which thereby became 120 tdr. htk. (*Trap V*, 1, 1956).

Fig. 12 is copied from the cadastral map original 1 from 1809 and shows the field names and quality of that time. At the conversion of entailed estates into fee simple, it became state property in 1922, and the whole of Nislev Farm was parcelled out in 1925, the old village re-appeared on its original land, though admittedly in the form of a state agricultural colony.

Fig. 13 is reduced from the parcelling plan to fit M. 3415 and 3416. 45 ground rent farms totalling 242.5 ha were set up together with 11 supplementary plots totalling 33 ha. The remaining Nislev

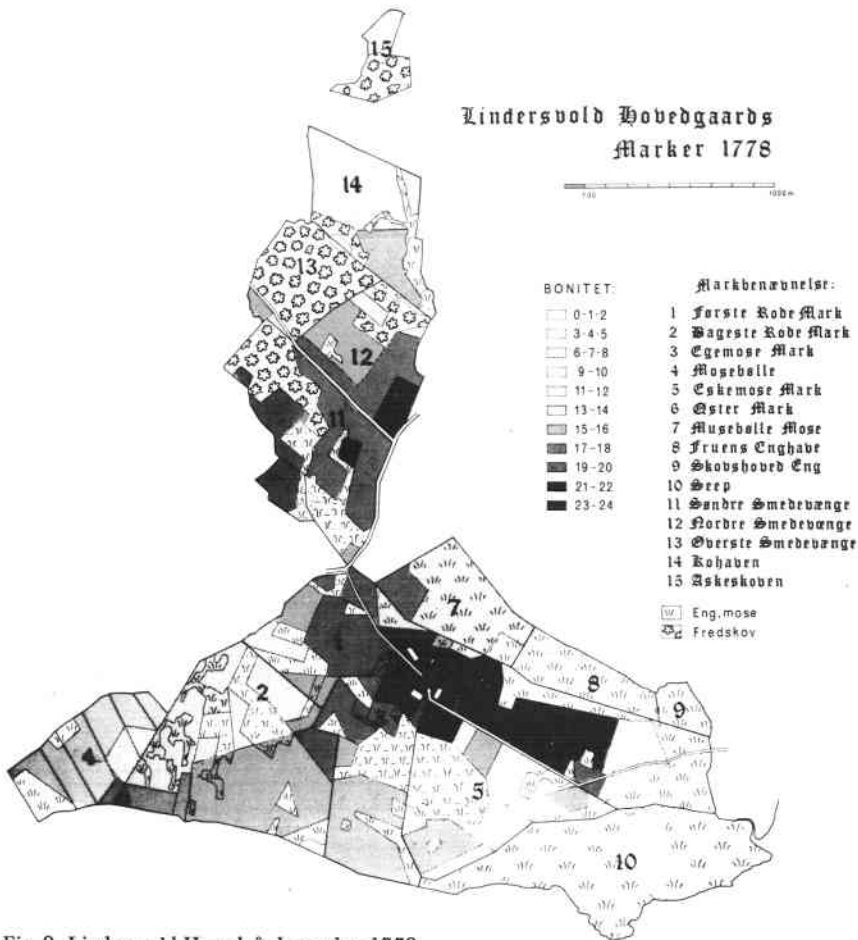


Fig. 9. Lindersvold Hovedgårds marker 1778.

Fig. 9. Lindersvold Estate 1778, according to the cadastral map, Original I. 1-15: Field names. Soil quality. Meadow. Wood.

Farm land was sold as building land to the borough (*Kampp* 1959). The main building is now used as a maternity home. In addition to the land around the farm, each farmer was given a meadow plot on the marine foreland a few km south of the main area (*Enemærket*).

Fig. 14. Of the 45 farms, there were 7 market gardens, 1 fruit orchard and 37 farms, 9 of which were being run jointly in 1969 with one or several others, with the result that in all there are only 26 farm units, 11 less than in 1925. (The figure was produced in collaboration with schoolteacher *Eigil Pedersen*, Ringe).

Aalebæk Farm arose out of the sale of the Møn Crown estates in 1769 on the land from 16 farms in Aalebæk, where there had

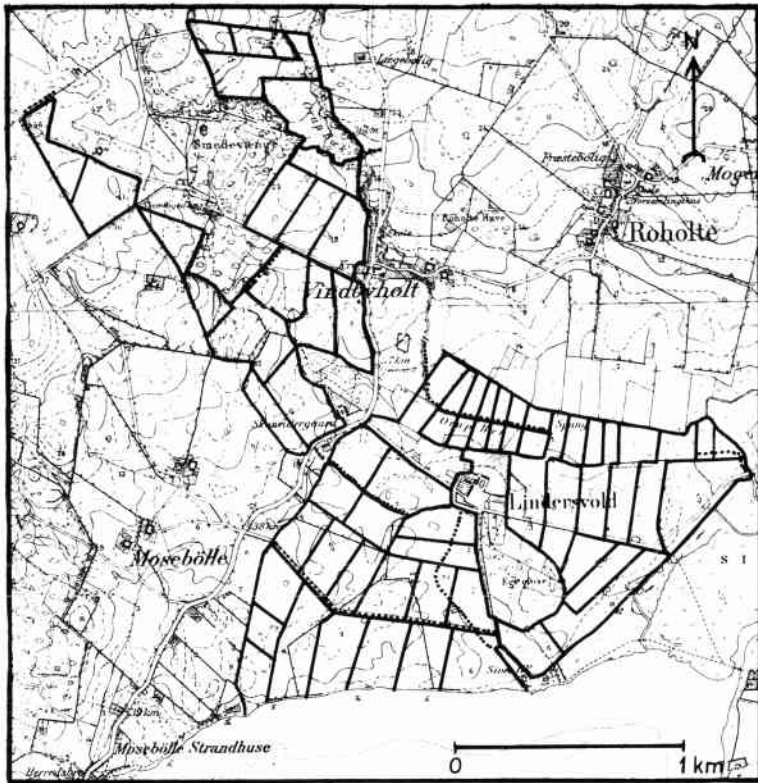


Fig. 10. Lindersvolds udstykning 1922-26.

Fig. 10. The parcelling of Lindersvold 1922-26, drawn on Ordnance Survey Maps 3827 and 3927.

already stood a farm in the Middle Ages (*Trap* IV, 1, 1955). There are traces of an old road, paved with shingle, leading down towards the densely-built village of Aalebæk, which lies about 1 1/2 km away.

Fig. 15 has been drawn after the original 1 from 1798, the small figures indicate the serial numbers of the farms in Aalebæk, from where they were cultivated before 1769.

Fig. 16 shows the parcelling into 16 state holdings (after the 1899 Act), which took place in 1922 after the main building was burnt down at the end of December 1921. The area to the west is shown as having been placed under Aalebæk Farm as early as in 1770 (handwritten records, *R. Olsen*, it is therefore curious that it is not included on the map from 1798. The area to the south, the so-called "Bondeavling" (= "peasant' farming"), was placed under Aalebæk Farm in 1880 (one of the two farmers who were forced to

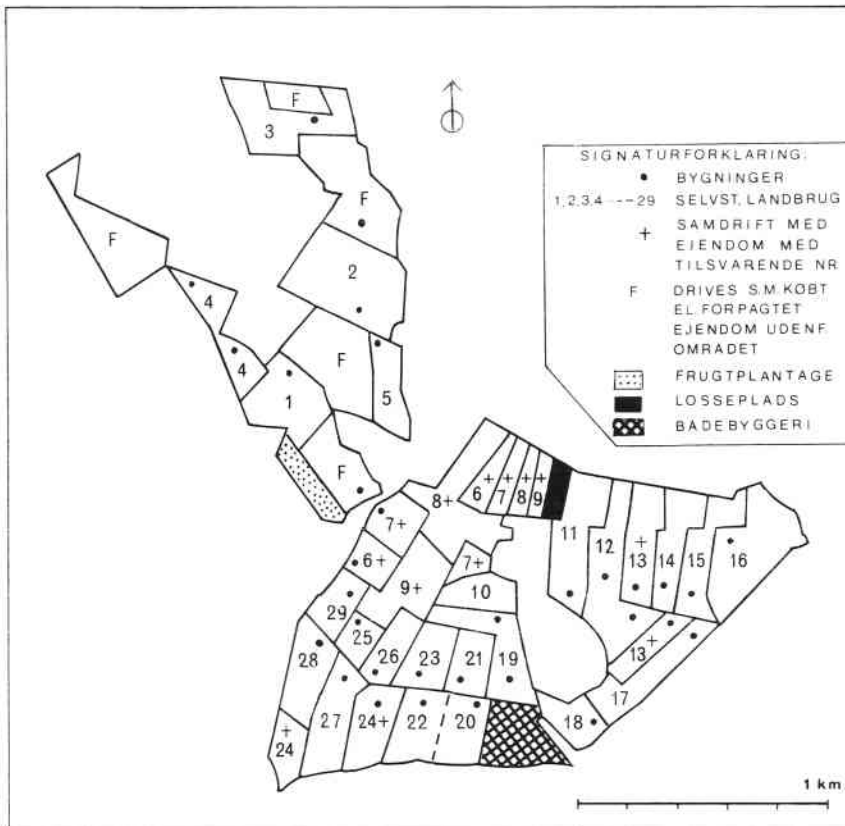


Fig. 11. Lindersvold's situation 1970.

Fig. 11. The situation of fig. 10, 1970. Legend: • Buildings, 1,2,3,4...29 independent farms., + Jointly operated, F: Bought or rented by farmer outside the area. Orchard. Refuse dump. Boat-builder's yard.

hand over their farms handed himself). The northernmost plot still belongs to Nordfeld manor, which owned Aalebæk Farm prior to the parcelling out.

Fig. 16 also demonstrates that there are now three properties less than in 1922, as well as that one property is run jointly with a property east of the area.

The number of properties has thus varied as follows: 1 – 14 – 1 – 16 – 12 1/2.

During the village phase the land was cultivated by copyholders, during the home farm phase first by copyholder villeinage, later by paid workers.

x) (on original 1 there are only 14 numbers, see fig. 15),

xx) (*Trap* IV,1, 1955 gives 15)

xxx) (*Trap* erroneously gives the date as 1930).

Nislevgaard's Hovmarker 1809

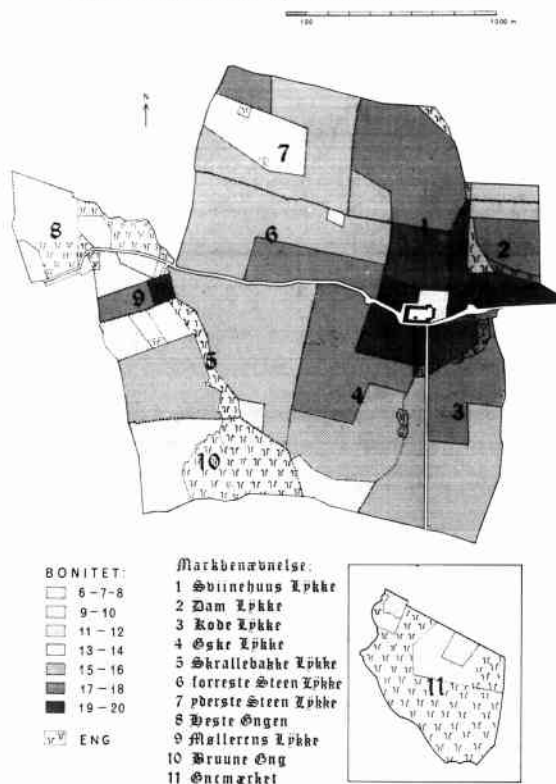


Fig. 12. Nislevgaard's hovmarker 1809.

Fig. 12. Field names (1-11) and soil quality of Nislevgård 1809 (according to cadastral map Original I).

The home farms 1, 2 and 3 belonged to majorats, which were tax-exempt and were to be passed on undivided, in the event of a cessation of the lineage the estate was to fall to the king, who thus theoretically owned the land. In the parcelling phase, all the farmers in the first 3 examples were originally "state copyholders" (ground rent farmers), later some of them became owner farmers. In example 4, all the farmers since the parcelling have been owner farmers as are the majority of Danish farmers today.

After the parcelling out in the 1920's, it was characteristic that farming became more intensive, dikes were demolished, hillocks levelled, bogholes filled in, field boundaries and other details were removed, and moreover areas with root crops were extended and animal husbandry increased. The farm could keep a family, and only few farmers had extra sources of income.

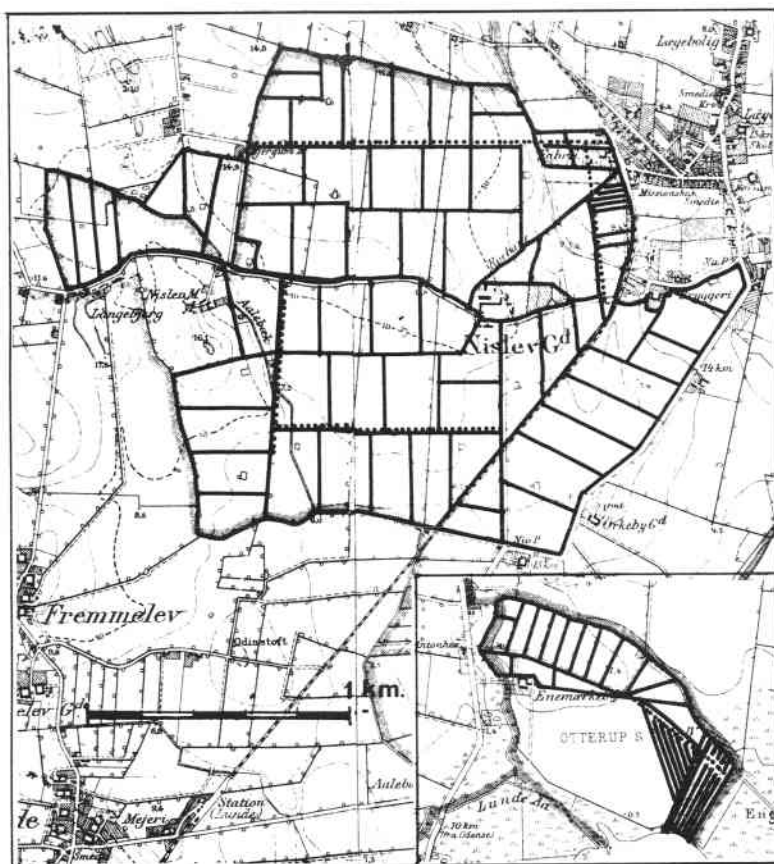


Fig. 13. Nislevgårds udstykning 1925.

Fig. 13. The parcelling plan of Nislevgård 1925 on Ordnance Survey Maps 3415 and 3416

Farming is becoming extensified along with the modern tendency towards amalgamation, where amalgamation has not occurred, the farmer frequently has extra sources of income. Thus in the Lindersvold area both man and wife have sought extra employment elsewhere in 4 cases, the man alone in 10 cases and the wife alone in 2.

Animal husbandry and the growing of forage crops in connection with this have declined sharply, the growing of corn and especially of barley has increased enormously, and the single fields have generally increased in size, an adaptation to the increased mechanization.

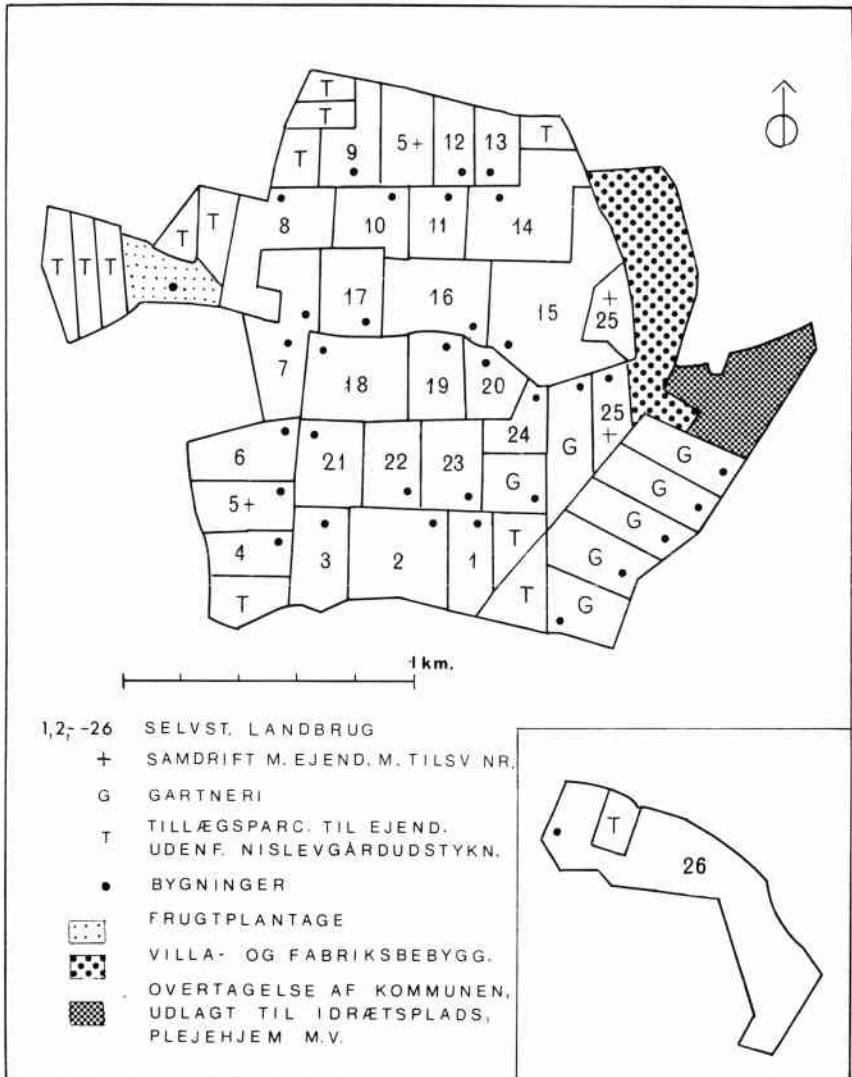


Fig. 14. Nislevområdet 1969

Fig. 14. Legend: 1,2...26: Independent properties. +: Jointly operated. G: Gardening. T: Supplementary allotments to farms outside Nislev.. •: Buildings. Screen areas as follows: Orchard. Cottages and factories. Bought by the municipality and used for different purposes (sportsground, rest home etc.)

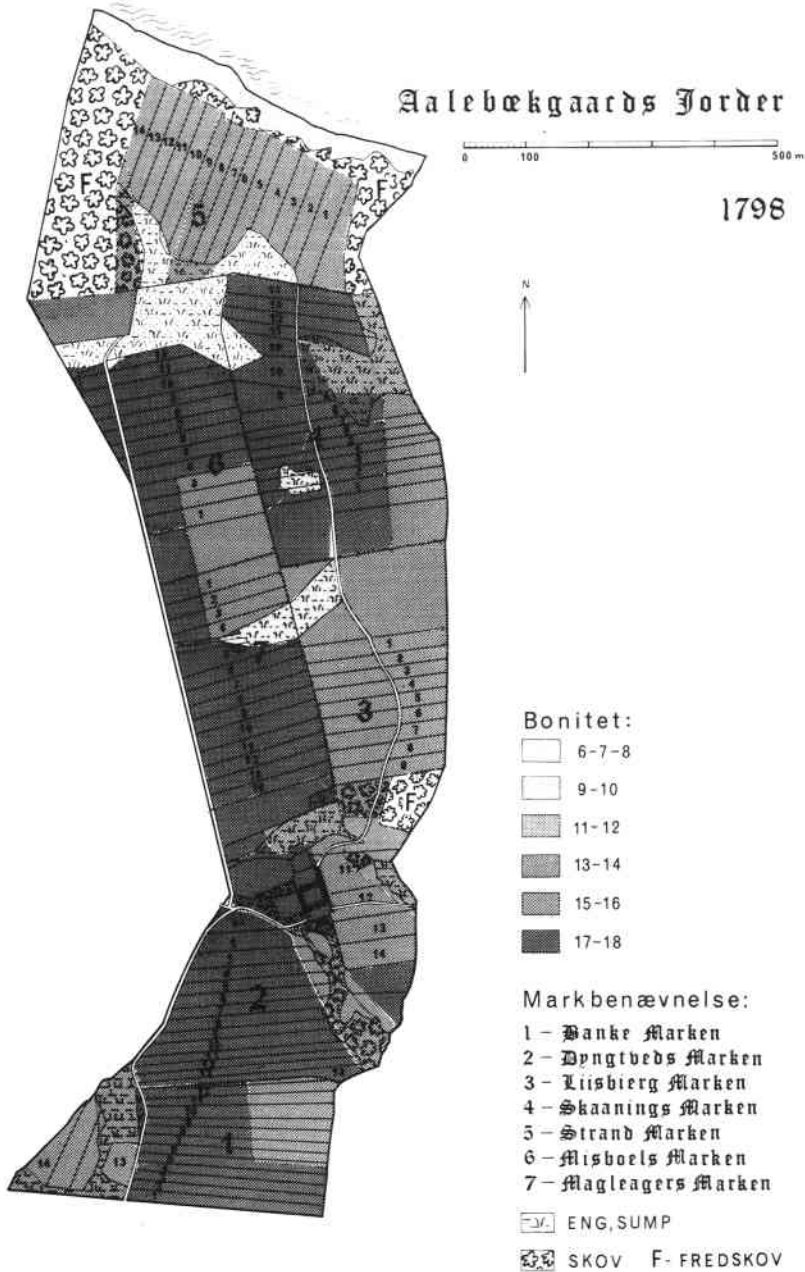


Fig. 15. Ålebækgårds jorder 1798 med marknavne, bonitetsangivelse og løbenumre på gårdenes marker fra før sammenlægningen til herregård.

Fig. 15. Ålebækgård. 1-7: Old field names. 1-14: Serial numbers of the farms in Ålebæk, from where they were cultivated up to 1769 (according to cadastral map 1798, Original I. Soil quality).



Fig. 16. Lisebjerg, tidligere Ålebækgård, udstykket 1922. Desuden er angivet situationen i 1969 1, 2, 3, ..., 14 Selvstændigt Landbrug 1969

+ Samdrift m. ejend. m. tilsv. nr. 1969

S Samdrift m. ejend. udenfor sognet 1969 (Fig. 1–3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12 og 14–16 er rentegnet af BI Hanskov).

Fig. 16 Lisebjerg the former Ålebækgård, in 1922 and 1969. Legend: — : Farm boundaries 1922. 1, 2, 3, ..., 14: Independent properties 1969. +: Jointly operated. S: Jointly operated with a farm outside Lisebjerg.

Resumé:

Ændringer i jordfordelingen i Danmark:

Landsby – herregård – udstykning – samdrift.

Det er sket flere gange i historiens løb, at brugenes antal er mindsket, og flere gange er antallet øget, begge dele hver gang med forskellig baggrund.

3 lokaliteter er fulgt gennem 4 og en gennem 5 forskellige faser af deling og sammenlægning:

I middelalderen var *Spanager* en landsby, hvori der lå en adelig sædegård, Spanagergård, der blev oprettet af 5 bøndergårde, og blev hovedgård ved kongelig bevilling af 1680. 1688 angives den at have 72,2 tdr. htk. med 283,9 tdr. ld. under plov (*Trap II*, 3, 1960). Fig. 6 viser dens marker med bonitetsangivelse i 1808 efter det ældste eksisterende matrikelkort, original I.

Fig. 7 viser udstykningen ved lensafløsningen 1923, indtegnet på M 3427 (*Kampp* 1959): 44 jordrentebrug på tilsammen 287,7 ha + 9 tillægspareller med 34,4 ha og 1 havebrug med 0,1 ha. Hovedbygningerne med en parcel på 33,1 ha blev solgt til Københavns kommune, der her indrettede et børnehjem. Umiddelbart før udstykningen har gården altså omfattet 322,2 ha, svarende til 585 td. ld., d.v.s. væsentlig mere end ovenfor angivet for 1688. Dels omfatter tallet fra 1923 imidlertid ikke alene jord under plov, men også enge, og dels er der, som det fremgår ved sammenligning mellem fig. 6 og 7, foretaget en udvidelse af Spanagergårds areal mod syd mellem 1808 og 1923, og endelig kan der være foretaget udvidelse mellem 1680 og 1808.

Fig. 8 viser forholdene i samme område 1969: samdrift er blevet almindeligt, 26 oprindelige brug drives nu af 13 brugere (køb eller forpagtning), hvortil kommer, at 3 andre brug er forpagtet af landbrugere udenfor området. Et 12 m bredt bælte langs hele sydsiden af Køge å er købt af Københavns Vandforsyning i forbindelse med Regnemarkværket. Når den projekterede Vestmotorvej bliver taget i brug, vil den sandsynligvis øve indflydelse på ejerforholdene i de gennemskårne parceller.

Lindersvold er oprettet af to landsbyer, Aksehoved (nævnt 1463) og Hyllingskov af Christoffer Lindenov (d. 1593), hans enke lagde i 1596 to gårde øde i Aksehoved "og lod jorden bruge". Sønnen mageskiftede sig 1606 til 2 gårde i Aksehoved by. Godset blev yderligere udvidet betydeligt ved køb og mageskifter mellem 1680 og 1704. 1688 omfattede det 33,8 tdr. htk., 120,8 ha under plov (*Trap IV*, 1, 1955).

Fig. 9 er tegnet på grundlag af matrikelskortet, original I, 1778, og viser markerne og boniteten på den tid.

Fig. 10 er en udstykningsplan fra lensafløsningen, minoreret og indtegnet på M. 3827 og 3927 (*Kampp* 1959). Planen er dels fra 1922, da der udstykkedes 38 jordrentebrug med 222,2 ha + 7 tillægspareller med 22,5 ha, dels fra 1926, hvor der oprettedes 2 jordrentebrug med 10,8 ha + 5 tillægspareller på 9,5 ha, der blev givet til de i 1922 oprettede brug. Ved udstykningen omfattede godset 55 tdr. 4 skp. htk. Bygninger og park er overtaget af julemærkekomiteen og anvendes som rekonvalescenthjem for københavnske børn.

Fig. 11 røber, at i 1970 havde 9 af brugerne købt eller forpagtet jord uden for området, og derudover er 36 parceller nu slået sammen til 15 brug.

Hovedgården *Nislevgård* er opstået i slutningen af 1500-tallet af en jordegen bondegård. 1618 havde den 36 tdr. htk., men i 1689 blev Nislev by med kongelig tilladelse lagt under hovedgårdstaksten, som derved blev på 120 tdr. htk. (*Trap V, I*, 1956).

Fig. 12 er tegnet efter matrikelskort original I fra 1809 og viser den tids marknavne og bonitet. Ved lensafløsningen overgik den til statseje 1922, og hele Nislevgård blev udstykket 1925, den gamle landsby genopstod på sin oprindelige jord, ganske vist i form af en statsjordbrugskoloni.

Fig. 13 er efter udstykningsplanen minoreret ind på M. 3415 og 3416. Der oprettedes 45 jordrentebrug på tilsammen 242,5 ha samt 11 tillægsparcer på tilsammen 33 ha. Resten af Nislevgårds jord blev solgt som byggegrunde til kommunen (Kampp 1959). Hovedbygningen anvendes som fødehjem. Ud over arealerne omkring gården fik hver jordbruger en engparcel på det marine forland et par km syd for hovedområdet (Enemærket).

Fig. 14. Af de 45 brug var 7 gartnerier, 1 frugtplantage og 37 landbrug, hvoraf i 1969 9 drives i samdrift med et eller flere andre, således at der ialt kun er 26 landbrug, 11 mindre end i 1925.

Aalebækgård oprettedes ved det mønske krongods' salg 1769 på jord fra 14 bøndergårde i Aalebæk, hvor der allerede i middelalderen havde ligget en gård (Trap IV, 1, 1955). Der er spor af en gammel vej, belagt med strandsten, ned mod den ca 1 1/2 km derfra liggende, tæt sammenbyggede landsby, Aalebæk.

Fig. 15 er tegnet efter original I fra 1798, de små tal angiver løbenumrene på de gårde i Aalebæk, hvorfra de dyrkedes før 1769.

Fig. 16 viser den udstykning til 16 statsjordbrug (efter 1899-loven), som i 1922 fandt sted, efter at hovedbygningen brændte i slutningen af december 1921. Området mod vest angives at være lagt under Aalebækgård allerede 1770, det er ejendommeligt, at det så ikke er med på kortet fra 1798. Det sydlige område ("bondeavlingen") er lagt under Aalebækgård 1880. Den nordligste parcel tilhører stadig Nordfeld gods, som ejede Aalebækgård indtil udstykningen.

Fig. 16 demonstrerer samtidig, at der nu er tre ejendomme færre end i 1922, foruden at en ejendom drives i samdrift med en ejendom øst for området.

Antallet af ejendomme har således her varieret som følger:

1 - 14 - 1 - 16 - 12 1/2.

Litteratur:

- Kampp, Aa. H. (1959) Landbrugsgeografiske studier over Danmark
Trap, J.P.: (1955) Danmark, IV, 1, Præstø amt.
Trap, J.P.: (1956, Danmark, V, 1 Odense amt.)
Trap, J.P.: (1960), Danmark II, 3, Københavns amt.