

## THE RECENT AMALGAMATION OF AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS

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*After the splitting-up period in the first half of this century a period of amalgamation is going on in Denmark. Joint operation is shown for two territories, Borre parish in Møn and the small island of Nyord by comparing maps from 1940 and 1978.*

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### *The recent amalgamation of agricultural holdings*

In the course of history an increase of the number of agricultural holdings has repeatedly occurred, each time caused by different conditions (Kampp 1971). Since the most important Land Reforms during the two last decades of the 18th century much legislation has been in relation to agriculture but very often important regulations have been very much retarded, so that new trends have been hampered by former legal provisions.

During the first half of this century some 30.000 state-subsidized small-holdings have been set up, the number increasing particularly during the twenties. The main purpose of the act of 1899 was to provide dwellings for labourers at the large farms, while the purpose of the 1919-laws was to create small family holdings. But they were seldom large enough for this purpose, and the demand for larger areas grew faster than what was laid down in the successive laws.

The state subsidized small-holdings did not only mean better social conditions of life but they were consistent with the economic development based on intensive farming.

They had a relatively large animal husbandry and accordingly a great production per acre. 1900-1950 there was an average annual increase of 140 agricultural holdings.

From then on, however, the development has been forced into the opposite direction by technical and economic conditions. As a natural consequence of the agricultural trend in Europe the parcelling out was followed by an accelerating opposite movement. Concurrently with the increasing mechanization of agriculture and the consequent reduction of need for man-power a

fusion of agricultural holdings has been taking place. Many whole-time farms have become part-time farms and the number of tenant farms is growing.

The year 1962 became the real turning point as amalgamation of small-holdings then was legalized. In 1967 the restrictions were further lessened so that it became possible for a farmer to buy or lease several holdings till the limit of 75 ha. An act of 1971 again modified the rules for joint operation, and the act of 1973 allows two or more holdings belonging to the same owner to be run together if the land of the owner is within a distance of 15 km by road from the buildings of one of the holdings. A holding that is leased may during a period of 15 years be farmed together with another holding owned or leased by a farmer on condition that the distance between the two holdings is as mentioned above. Two or several leaseholds may for up till 15 years be farmed together with another farm owned or leased by the farmer if the total area is not more than 200 hectares, and on condition that the land of the holdings in question is within 15 km of the buildings of one of the holdings. If the land covers more than five holdings the limit is 100 hectares.

As late as in 1970 the possibility of establishing new holdings according to the acts of 1919 was abolished, only the right of setting up horticultural holdings was preserved. During the years up till 1973 when Denmark joined the EED some 20 horticultural establishments per year were set up. But after the membership it has only been possible to subsidize purchase of land for one or two establishments a year due to the EEC rules.

During the sixties the farm land decreased with more than 16.000 hectares or ½% a year. From the beginning of the seventies the yearly decrease, however, has been more than halved. That the trend has been weakening during the seventies may hang together with the fact that areas for urban purposes had been reserved to a sufficient degree during the sixties. Migration from farming districts to the towns now seems nearly ended. Add to this the better future prospects for agriculture which many farmers expected after the membership of EEC.

The total number of agricultural holdings has been going down since the beginning of the sixties with an average decline of 5.600 per year up till 1971. A stagnation set in immediately before Denmark joined the

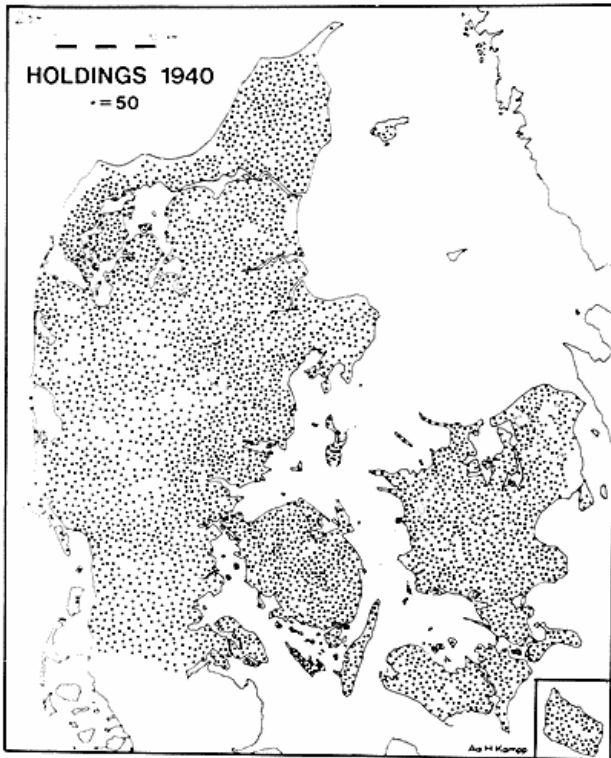


Fig. 1. Landbrugsejendomme 1940. • = 50.  
Fig. 1. Holdings 1940.

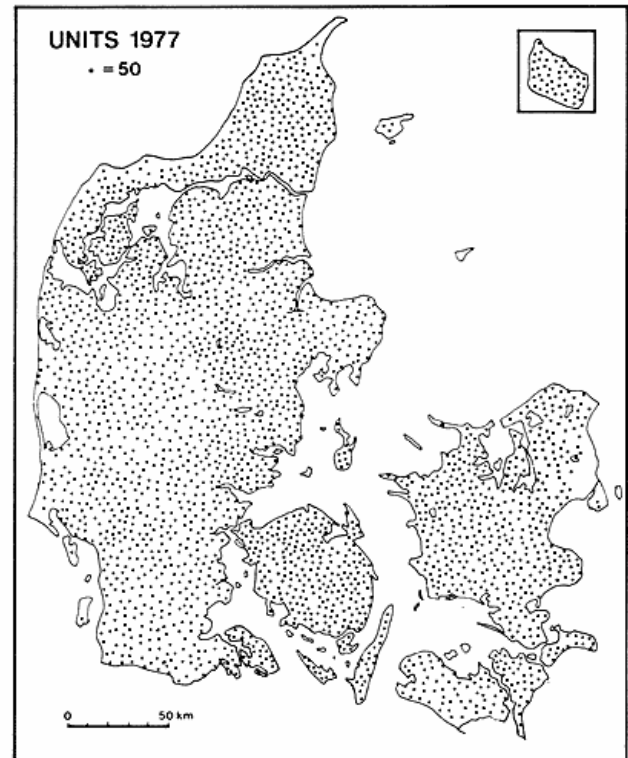


Fig. 2. Driftsenheder 1977. • = 50.  
Fig. 2. Business units 1977.

EEC. In the years after the membership the decline started again this time at a slower rate, the average yearly number being halved.

Important factors determining the rate of the structural development are particularly legal provisions and the economic conditions of agriculture. Also the employment situation outside agriculture has a great influence.

The decrease has been strongest for holdings below 10 hectares, while there has been a main increase of the groups with more than 30 hectares, relatively greatest in the groups with more than 50 hectares. The average size grew from 15.2 hectares in 1946 to 22.9 hectares in 1977.

To elucidate the development maps have been drawn showing the number of holdings in 1940 (fig. 1) and 1977 (fig. 2). The number culminated in 1946 with 209.000, in 1977 there were only 127.800. The census unit has been the business unit consisting of the area which the occupier considers belonging to the same unit. A unit may thus include one or several independently valuated holdings and/or one or several part(s) of independently valuated holdings. Rented areas are included in the unit, while areas farmed out to another person are not counted as belonging to the unit. The census includes all units with more than 0.5 hectares agricultural land plus for 1977

holdings with less than 0.5 hectares tilled area if the agricultural production is estimated to be at least as large as the production of 0.5 hectares of barley. Alterations because of this modification of the census material is hardly in evidence in the map. But the number of registered holdings is about 170.000.

During the period of the enclosure movement Danish farms were rounded off better than in other European countries, involving advantages as to labour, transportation, and crop rotation. But as described there is now an opposite trend, a holding is bought here and another one leased there, even if the legislation tries to limit the distance between the lots.

Since the turn of the century a gradual mechanization of the Danish agricultural production has taken place, the yield has been increased very much though not approximately as much as the use of energy. The auxiliary energy added to the agro-eco-system has been multiplied whereby the coefficient of utilization has been reduced, and the energy subsidies in Danish agricultural production is approaching the level which threatens to exceed the energy contents of the crop, so that there is no longer a net energy production in the agro-eco-system.

Two territories have been examined in detail to illu-

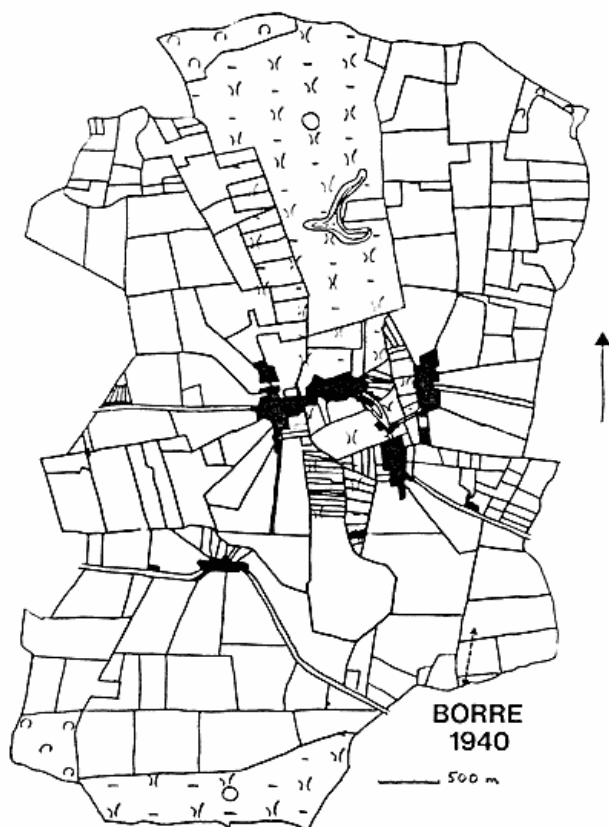


Fig. 3. Landbrugsejendomme i Borre sogn 1940.  
Fig. 3. Holdings in Borre parish 1940.

strate the alternations: 1) the total parish of Borre in Møn, and 2) the island of Nyord, both regions for the period about 1800, for 1940 and 1978.

From the municipal office of Møn a land register list of agricultural land in Borre parish 1978 was obtained, and on a cadastral map an owner map was drawn. Assisted by five persons with intimate local knowledge, one from each village, this map was altered to a map showing operation units irrespective of registration and owners or tenants of each single lot (fig 4.). Assisted by the same persons the map showing the conditions in 1940 (fig. 3) was drawn.

The meadows were so important when »the meadow maintained the field« that everyone by the enclosure time got his own meadow plot. These are not in any of the maps shown connected with the main lot of the holding, but their number and demarcation is stated on the maps, and by comparing these it is possible to see to which degree amalgamation has touched the meadows, because the cattle was no longer a basis for agriculture and the stock-breeders therefore bought or leased the meadow plots from the holdings without cattle.

About 1800 Borre parish had 124 holdings; in 1940 the number of larger and smaller holdings was 168, while the total number of units in 1978 was 92.

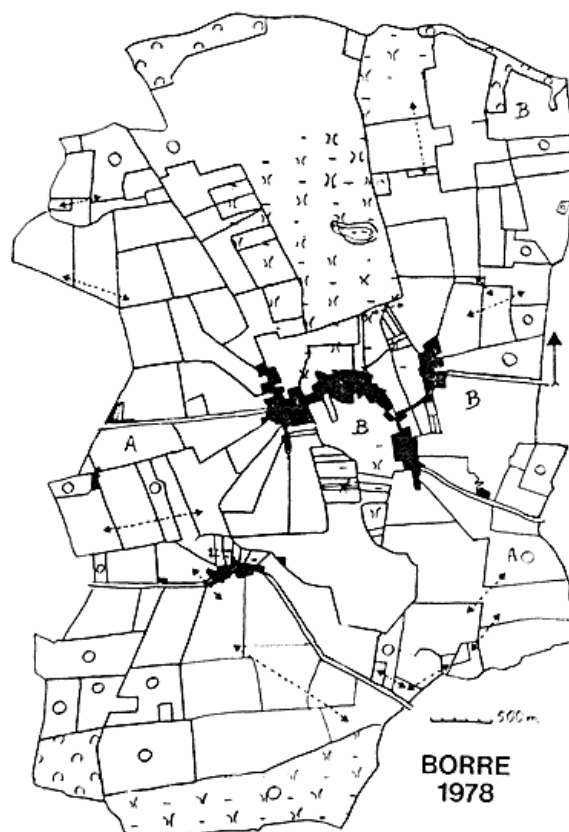


Fig. 4. Driftsenheder i Borre sogn 1978.  
Fig. 4. Business units in Borre parish 1978.

A dotted line with an arrow in each end means that the plots concerned are tilled by the same person. A-A and B-B-B has the same meaning. A circle means that the area is in joint operation with one or more areas outside the parish, the southern meadows thus belong to Klintholm manor in Magleby parish and part of the former Borre fiord to Nordfeld manor in Elmelunde parish.

In 1978 there was a total area of 1861.7 hectares tilled land in Borre parish, so that the average size of holdings was 20.2 hectares when only Borre parish is taken into consideration, against 11.1 hectares in 1940.

The black signature on the maps shows the built up areas. Besides Borre and the ribbon villages of Sønder and Nørre Vestud, Ålebæk and Nyborre, which gradually have been nearly fused, the hamlet of Råbymagle is seen in the southwestern part of the map. In addition to that only groups of buildings are indicated, while single farms or houses with garden are omitted on the maps.

In the Middle Ages a small estate was situated at the eastern edge of the map. It has been shown earlier (Kampp 1971) that 14 copyholders at Ålebæk tilled this land in 7 beams until 1769, when it was reestablished as »Ålebækgård« by the sale of the Crown land of Møn. In 1923 the farm was split up once more and the recent

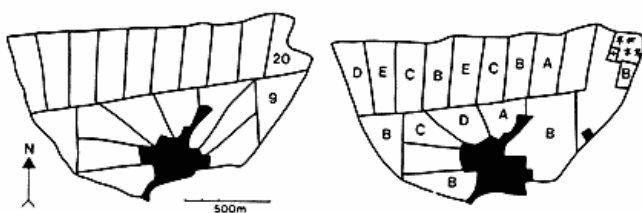


Fig. 5. Nyords gårde 1809 og 1940.

Fig. 5. Farms in Nyord 1809 and 1940.

Fig. 6. Driftsenheder på Nyord 1978. Dette kort er blevet til i samarbejde med Evald Lolle.

Fig. 6. Business units in Nyord 1978.

tendency has clearly gone in direction of amalgamation.

For Sønder Vestud, the villages seen in the middle towards west, a map based on records from the register of Chr. V has been made showing the distribution of fields in 1682 (Kampp & Frandsen 1967) when all the buildings were concentrated in the village.

From the beginning of the Christian era till about 1800 the village was the traditional form of habitation in most parts of the country. This model of living has been characterized by a strong inertia, the villages are still existing, many of them are even growing, while the scattered habitation is not much altered, even if the character of the buildings may be influenced by another use (weekend-houses etc.). The agricultural landscape on the other hand is altered through the increased size of the fields and the growing dominance of barley in the cultivation patterns.

On the island of Nyord the buildings are still lying together in the village with one single exception, as farm no. 9 about the year 1900 moved a very short distance away (fig. 6).

In 1769, by the public sale of Crown land the 20 farmers bought the island (there were no small-holders). They abandoned the collective system of agriculture in 1809, and each of them got in exchange about 5.5 hectares of land (10 tdr. ld.) (fig. 5, based on Original I map 1809). In the 1880's the relatively large meadow area east of the village was enclosed with nearly 20 hectares (35 tdr. ld.) to each farm. In 1940 no other alterations in the distribution of agricultural land had happened than that the owner of farm no. 9 had bought the land till then belonging to no. 20 (fig. 5). The island was thus totally unaffected by the splitting-up period. In addition to no. 9 two other holdings had the same area in 1978 as in 1940; but five other farmers had bought or leased one or more farms as shown by the letters A, B, C, D and E in fig. 6. In the meadow outside the northwestern corner a coniferous plantation and a churchyard have been established when a church was built in the village in 1846.

## RESUME

Efter udstykningsepoken i første halvdel af dette århundrede er en sammenlægningsperiode nu i fuld gang i Danmark. Fig. 1 og 2 skal illustrere nedgangen i antallet af driftsenheder fra 1940 (godt 200.000) til 1977 (127.000).

Fra Møn kommunekontor blev indforskrivet en matrikelliste over ejere af landbrugsjord i Borre sogn 1978, hvorefter der på et nutidigt matrikelkort blev tegnet et kort over ejerne, som derefter blev ændret til et kort over driftsmæssige enheder uden hensyn til ejerforhold og matrikulær registrering, altså ejere og/eller forpagtere af hver enkelt jordlod.

Engene var så vigtige den gang, da »engen fødte ageren«, at hver mand ved udskiftningen fik sin engpart. Disse er ikke på nogen af kortene henført til hovedlodden, men deres antal og afgrænsning er anført på kortene, og ved sammenligning mellem disse fremgår det, i hvor høj grad sammenlægning har berørt engene, fordi husdyrholdet ikke længere var en forudsætning for landbrug og kvægholdere derfor købte eller forpagtede engparten fra de kvægløse landbrug.

Omkring 1800 havde Borre sogn 124 ejendomme; i 1940 var antallet af små og store ejendomme 168, medens antallet af dyrkningsenheder i 1978 kun var på 92 ialt.

En punkteret linie med pil i enderne betyder, at de pågældende agerstykker dyrkes af samme person, A-A og B-B-B har samme betydning. Derudover er der som nævnt eng- og mosearealer, som ikke er markeret på samme måde, men kun inddelt i lodder, svarende til hver enkelt ejer (dyrker). En cirkel betyder, at arealet er i samdrift med et eller flere arealer uden for sognet,

I 1978 var der i alt 1861.7 ha dyrket jord i sognet, dvs. at gennemsnitsstørrelsen var 20.2 ha, når der udelukkende tages hensyn til arealerne i sognet, mod 11.1 ha i 1940.

Ved auktionen over det mønske krongods i 1769 købte Nyords 20 gårdmænd øen (der var ingen husmænd). De udskiftede i 1809 jorden med 10 tdr. ld. agerjord (ca. 5.5 ha) til hver. I 1880'erne blev det relativt store engareal øst for byen udskiftet med 35 tdr. ld. (knap 20 ha) til hver.

I 1940 var der ikke sket anden ændring af agerjordens fordeling, end at ejeren af gård nr. 9 havde købt jorden fra gård nr. 20 (fig. 5). Øen var således ganske uberørt af udstykningsperioden. I 1978 var der foruden nr. 9 endnu 2, hvis areal ikke var ændret siden 1940; derimod havde fem andre bønder købt eller forpagtet en eller flere gårdes arealer, således som det er antydet med bogstaverne A, B, C, D og E på fig. 6.

## LITTERATUR

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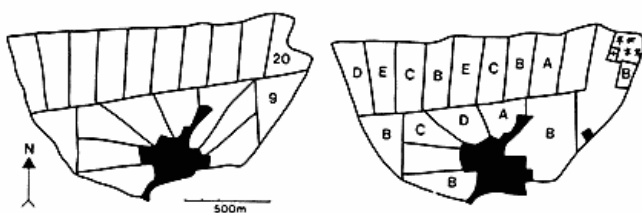


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