

A Roundtrip in Suburbia

Part 2

23 January 2010

In part 1 of this dias show we met places less than 0.5 km from where we live.

This time we move a little further away - about 2-3 km from our house. In part 1 I mentioned that we live in an area under nature protection. The reason is that we live close to a state forest, which has been a holy place since stone age. The Roman hiotorian Tacitus mentions that the Teutons had a holy forest on an island north of Germania. This is the forest. Due to the snow we can not see to-day the many places where offerings were made.



Here we are at a passage grave from the megalithic (large stone) period of the stone age (about 2800 BC). Same period as Stone Henge and known from most of Europe. The grave is a long tunnel built of stones weighing several tons and then covered with earth.. This passage grave was originally the longest existing (more than 180 m). Railway construction at one end has shortened it.



Here I stand on the top of the grave. The railway runs between the grave and the houses in the background.



We are now at a modern conferencecenter. The name is a distorted derivate of the latin *cotae caldae*, meaning the warm huts. This name goes back to the time (between 1089-1535) when the church owned this area. Here the monks could keep warm during the winter and maybe there also was a steam bath. You can also see how Copenhagen is called in Danish. The name means "trading harbour".



Here we are at the front of the conference center Kollekolle. It belongs to the Danish Federation of Agriculture.



We are back in the forest at a hill used for sledging.



All kind of toboggans and sleds are used



On a small lake at the foot of the hill we see an old Scandinavian type of sled - a *sparkstoetting* - literally a "kick and supporting device". While one person sits on the chair, the other one stays on the runners with one or both feet. In order to move the sled forward he kicks backward with one foot. He supports himself by holding on handles at the back of the chair.



The little lake or pond where people skate or sledge during the winter was originally a peat bog, where peat in old times was cut to be used as fuel. Later on (in the 17th century) it became a carp pond just as Nydam, the lake bordering our garden. We will hear later on about these carp ponds.



Picnic in the snow



Here we are at the ruin of a small manor, called *Aldershvile*, meaning "old peoples rest". It was built in 1782 by an Italian architect for Johan Holmskjold, who was physician and botanist, then became director of the Danish postal service and director of the Royal Copenhagen porcelain factory. He was an imposter and died in prison before he could take the manor in position. The next inhabitant was the Swedish count Ribbing, who fled Sweden because he took part in the murder of King Gustav III during a masquerade ball (used as plot in Verdi's opera *Un Ballo in Maschera*). He was very fond of fishing and rented the fish pond Nydam, where we live, from the owner Countess Sophie Schulin. She was a widow and Count Ribbing made love to her. She did not want to marry him, because he was a murderer. He then left Denmark and went to Paris..



The last owner was the "countess of Bagsvaerd", who started her career as courtesan and became owner of the manor, when she married an old English count, who died shortly after the marriage,. In one of her wild parties the manor burnt in 1909. She became pawnbroker and died under very poor circumstances.



The ruin and park of Aldershvile is now owned by the municipality and used as the background for weekly open air theater and concert performances during the summer.



Aldershvile park



We are looking towards Lake Fure, the largest lake in our neighbourhood. To the right a public swimming bath for swimming in the lake. In the center between the trees there is a light rise. This is all that remains of the castle Hjortholm, built around year 1100 for the administration of the land given to the church. All church property was taken over by the crown after the reformation and the castle was allowed to decay entirely.



In 1739 the king presented a part of the land to his primeminister Count Schulin, who built this rococo manor and became owner of a large territory, including the place, where we live. His widow was Sophie Schulin, whom I have mentioned before as the owner of lake Nydam.



Also the present days prime ministers have their official residence in our neighbourhood. This manor - Marienborg - was presented to the state about 30 years ago. The prime minister usually does not live here, but uses the manor for state visits and for government conferences. The manor overlooks lake Bagsvaerd.



Near Marienborg one finds a dormitory for students at the Technical University of Denmark, which is situated nearby.



I am staying on a bridge crossing the partly frozen Mill River. All the lakes we have heard about are part of this river system. The river has got its name because of its large number of water mills, some more than 1500 years old. During the 18th century in an early stage of industrialisation many of the mills were converted for different industrial purposes - textile mills, black powder mills, metal working mills and more. Some of these enterprises still exist as modern plants, not using the power of the river anymore. The bridge with the red rails serves one of the lines of the S-train system (S for suburb) connecting Copenhagen with its surroundings.



Here at the Mill River (to the left) is one of the old millhouses. This was part of a copper mill , probably making copper plates for roofing.



On my way back home I passed an area of Lake Bagsvaerd, where the municipality has cleared the ice for snow as a skating rink.



To be continued.

