



Bondeliv

i DEN FYNSKE LANDSBY



Følg i
Karen og Jørgens
fodspor rundt i
Den Fynske Landsby.



1800-tallets historiske ramme

Barndom

I løbet af 1800-tallet opstod mange små husmandssteder med lidt eller ingen jord. Husmændene kunne ikke leve af at drive jorden og måtte derfor supplere med at arbejde for andre – primært godsejere og selvejerbønder.

Børn blev ammet til 2 års alderen. I 1-5 års alderen fik de de første småpligter, og ved konfirmationsalderen kunne de arbejdsmæssigt udfylde en plads. I husmands- og landarbejderfamilier kom børn ud at tjene fra de var 6-7 år, og det var ikke ualmindeligt, at de de første år delte seng med tjenestepigen eller -karlen.

Den tvungne skolepligt, indført i 1814, blev ikke respekteret, hvis der var brug for børnenes arbejdskraft. Konfirmationen blev i første halvdel af århundredet ikke fejret som nogen stor fest, men markerede indgangen til voksenlivet.

Ungdom

Alle unge var en del af fællesskabet, både hvad angik arbejde og fest. Efter konfirmationen var man medlem af de unges lav, som arrangerede fester, bl.a. de såkaldte legestuer, der blev holdt på landsbyens gårde. De blev afholdt ca. hver fjortende dag, og her blev danset, leget, drukket og spist, ofte til langt ud på natten. Formålet var at kæde de unge sammen under kontrollerede forhold. Landsbyens ”gadebasse” (formanden for ungdomslavet) fordelte ”gadelammene” (pigerne) til karlene. De par skulle holde sammen et år, indtil en ny fordeling fandt sted. Det sikrede, at ingen blev til overs eller måtte være ”bænkevarmer” ved årets fester.

Der var intet skel mellem arbejde og fritid. På vinteraftener var husstanden samlet til aftensæde. Kvinderne kartede, spandt og syede, og mændene lavede husflid som f.eks. halmarbejder og evt. et manglebræt til den udkårne. Også mange fortællinger og sagn blev videregivet her.



Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard - livsforløb



Barndom 1805 -1819

Turuphuset 16

Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard blev født i 1805. Hans forældre var husmænd, og jordtilliggenheden på 5,5 tdr. land var ikke tilstrækkeligt til at ernære familien. Derfor var faderen også skomager, og moderen hjalp til på landsbyens gårde. Helt fra spæd fulgte Jørgen med sin mor på arbejde. Han lå i sin kurv og var viklet, dvs. bundet stramt ind i stof, så det var umuligt at røre sig. Da han blev større, hjalp de ældre søskende med at passe ham, og efterhånden blev han stor nok til at gøre nytte: vogte geder og gæs, samle kvas, dun og fjer og lignende lette arbejdsopgaver.

Katterød Hospital 8

Ind imellem pligterne var han ofte på besøg hos bedsteførelde i fattighuset.

Melbyhuset 10

Som 7-årig havde Jørgen nået alderen, hvor han skulle ud at tjene. Han fik plads på en lille gård, Melby Bolstedet, ikke langt fra hjemmet. Hans opgave var at gå husbond til hån-de. Han blev behandlet godt, men naboens voksne karle drillede ham, fordi han sov i

samme seng som pigene. Det blev ikke til megen skolegang, for husbond mente, at det var vigtigere, at han udførte det arbejde, han var sat til. I 1819 blev han konfirmeret, og skulle nu videre i sin uddannelse.

Ungdom 1819 - 1830

Hulegården 11

Jørgen skulle oplæres til karl, så han senere selv kunne overtage et hus eller – hvis han var heldig og dygtig – måske en gård i fæste. Første tjenestested blev Hulegården, hvor han blev installeret i gårdens karlekammer.

Jørgen var nu optaget i de unges lav, og han var glad for de forskellige gilder, der hørte ungdommen til. Især var det spændende, når festen blev holdt i Hulegårdens storstue, men han ville gerne selv have haft indflydelse på, hvem der var hans gadelam. Ellers optog arbejdet hovedparten af hans tid. Sommeren var hård, men også spændende, fordi meget af arbejdet foregik sammen med andre, og maden var god og rigelig i denne tid. Vinteren med tærskning af kornet var derimod ikke Jørgens livret, men til gengæld var af-tensædet hyggeligt.





Voksenliv 1830 - 1863

Væverhuset 5

Jørgen havde fået en kæreste, Kirsten Andersdatter, der var tjenestepige på nabogården. Hun og Jørgen havde været kæresten i flere år, da deres forhold uheldigvis fik følger. Kirsten blev gravid og måtte forlade tjenesten førstkommende skiftedag. De lejede et par værelser i Væverhuset, hvor deres blev søn født. Jørgen ernærede sig ved daglejerarbejde og reparation af seletøj, og Kirsten hjalp til med vævningen. På denne måde klarede de sig igennem – trods alt. I 1836 blev de gift, og sønnen Hans var nu ikke længere et "uægte barn".

Vigerslevhuset 15

Præsteembedets fæstehus var blevet ledigt, og Jørgen og Kirsten var heldige at kunne overtage det. Huset var uden jordtilliggende og

havde kun en have. Jørgen kunne nu udnytte, at han havde lært skomagerhåndværket fra barnsben. Han nedsatte sig som skomager, men arbejdede også som daglejer. Også Kirsten tog arbejde for folk, hvor det var muligt. Sønnen Hans kom ud at tjene, da han blev stor nok, og i stedet fik de en plejedatter, Gjertrud Marie Rasmusdatter. En døvstum skomagersvend, Jørgen Jensen, fik sit logi i husets kvistværelse.



Alderdom 1863 - 1871

Vigerslevhuset 15

I 1863 fik Jørgen mulighed for at købe huset. Det var en stor dag for ham, da han underskrev skødet. Desværre nåede hans 2. hustru Maren Andersdatter, ikke at opleve denne dag. Hun døde i 1862, 54 år gammel. Jørgen giftede sig året efter (for 3. gang) med Louise Nicoline Rasmussen. Men Jørgens helbred skrantede, og i foråret 1864 var han nødt til at modtage forbigående fattighjælp. Derfor blev det besluttet, at Jørgens søn og svigerdatter og deres barn flyttede ind, mens Jørgen og Louise flyttede ind i aftægtsstuerne. Her fik de nogle gode år, før Jørgen i 1871 døde, 66 år gammel. Den ene af aftægtsstuerne blev straks omdannet til ligstue, hvor Jørgen H. Ellegaard lå, indtil han skulle begravnes.

Voksenliv

I 1800-tallet var antallet af "uægte børn" på landet ca. 10%. Befolkningvæksten gjorde det vanskeligt at overtage et hus eller en gård, og man kunne ikke gifte sig, før man havde "foden under eget bord". Den høje ægteskabsalder medførte mange "uægte børn"

Som fæster af et jordløst hus måtte man hente en indtægt fra et landhåndværk eller fra daglejerarbejde – og oftest begge dele. Velstandsstigningen i 1830-40'erne medførte jordforbedringsarbejder som mergling og grøftegravning på mange gårde og godser. Det gav gode beskæftigelsesmuligheder for daglejere, men var hårdt arbejde.

Som et supplement til lønnen kunne man påtage sig ansvaret for et plejebarn. Plejebørn var ofte forældreløse, børn af fattiglemmer eller uønskede og forladte børn. Børnene blev af sognerådet udbudt i pleje via en offentlig auktion, hvor de blev bortliciteret til den lavestbydende for et år af gangen. Denne "handel" blev forbudt i 1891, da det – ikke overraskende – viste sig, at den primære interesse gjaldt barnets arbejdskraft.

Alderdom

Husmænd kunne ofte se frem til en alderdom som indsiddere eller fattighuslemmer, og kun de færreste forblev i eget hjem.

Mange døde, før de blev 70 år. Døden var en hyppig og kendt gæst og blev ikke gemt bort som i dag. At få en standsmæssig begravelse var vigtigt, og den blev ofte forberedt på et tidligt tidspunkt. Ligtøjet var som regel fremstillet, før det første barn blev født. Alle familiemedlemmer og gæster skulle se og røre ved liget for at undgå, at den døde gik igen, og først herefter blev kisten lukket. I forbindelse med begravelsen blev der holdt et begravelsesgilde, som ofte udartede sig, da en god begavelse helst skulle ende i fest og lystighed.

INTRODUKTIONSUDSTILLINGER

Tematisk fremstilling af bondelivet - Vandmøllen fra Davinde (1)

Bondelivets forskellige livsfaser - Hospitalet fra Katterød (8)

● Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard (1805-1871)

Fattig husmandssøn

Husmandssted fra Turup (16)

Hospital fra Katterød (8)

Boelsted fra Melby (10)

Tolænget gård fra Ærø (11)

Væverhus fra Vesterlunde (5)

Træskomagerhus fra Vigerslev (15)

● Karen Johansdatter (1841-1884)

Velhavende møllerdatter

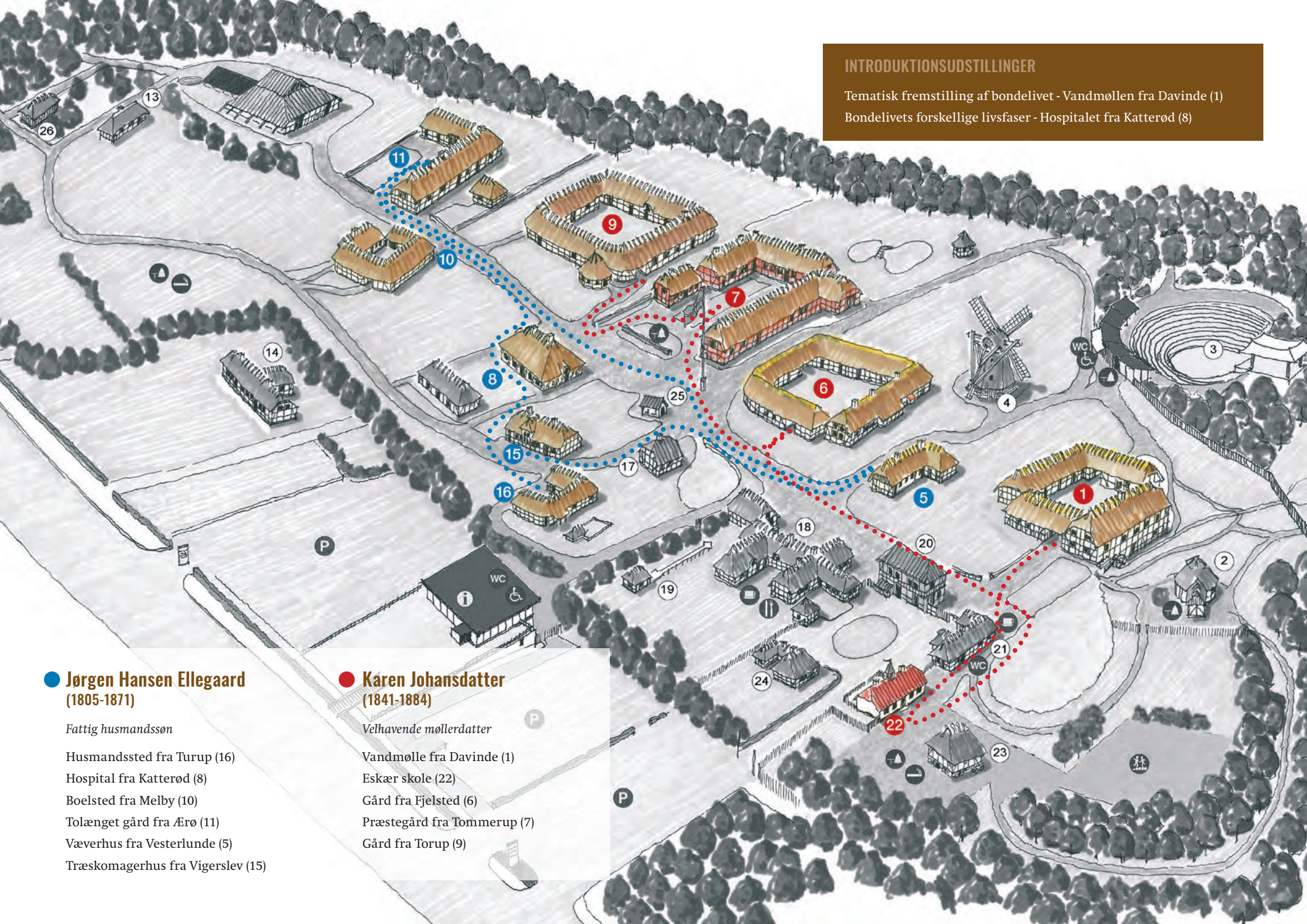
Vandmølle fra Davinde (1)

Eskær skole (22)

Gård fra Fjelsted (6)

Præstegård fra Tommerup (7)

Gård fra Torup (9)



1800-tallets historiske ramme

Barndom

Sammen med præsten hørte mølleren til blandt landsbyens mest fremtrædende folk både økonomisk og socialt.

I 1800-tallets start skulle børn døbes senest otte dage efter fødslen, og moderen var forment adgang til kirken de første seks uger, fordi hun blev betragtet som uren. I 1840'erne faldt dåben og moderens genoptagelse i menigheden ofte sammen, så børnene blev altså døbt, når de var ca. seks uger gamle.

I landsbyskolerne var kun én lærer. Børnene var inddelt med flere klassetrin i hver gruppe. At en del af tjenestebørnene sov i timerne, var ikke et særsyn. Deres dag startede allerede ved 3-4 tiden om morgenen, og de havde arbejdet flere timer, inden de gik i skole. Fra erindringslitteraturen ved vi, at læreren ofte bar over med disse børn og lod dem få en tiltrængt lur.

Ungdom

Velhavende gårdmandsfamilier sendte først deres børn ud at tjene efter konfirmationen, og helst til mere velstående hjem. Her var de var sikre på at deres børn ville få en god uddannelse. Pigerne skulle lære de traditionelle kvindearbejdsområder og de normer og skikke, der var gældende. På Fyn var det f.eks. en udbredt skik, at kvinderne stod op under måltiderne, mens mændene sad bænket langs vinduet med husbond for bordenden. Den skik var mest udbredt der, hvor jorden var mest frugtbar. Her var de sociale skel størst og arbejdsdelingen mellem mænd og kvinder mest udtalt.

Anlæggelsen af prydhave falder tidsmæssigt sammen med modernisering og nyopførelse af stuehusene, dvs. fra om-



Karen Johansdatter - livsforløb



Barndom 1841-1856

Davinde Vandmølle 1

Karen Johansdatter blev født på Davinde Vandmølle. Faderen var landsbyens møller, og forældrene var velhavende. Karen skulle døbes samtidig med, at hendes mor blev fremstillet for menigheden.

Som lille var det mest hendes mor, der tog sig af hende. Da Karen fik en lillesøster, hjalp hun ofte med at passe hende, men alligevel gik megen af Karens tid med leg. Moderen

anså det dog for vigtigt, at hun også hjalp til med de huslige pligter.

Eskær skole 22

Da Karen blev 7 år, kom hun i skole. Hun kunne godt lide skolen og læreren, selv om han kunne blive vred og uddele ørefigner. Det gik mest ud over tjenestebørnene fra de fattige familier, fordi de ofte faldt i søvn i timerne. Frikvarterene med fælleslegene var et dejligt afbræk fra timerne.

Ungdom 1856-1865

Fjeldstedgården 6

Efter sin konfirmation kom Karen ud at tjene på en af landsbyens største gårde, Fjeldstedgården. Her blev hun ansat som lillepige og skulle oplæres i de arbejdsopgaver, en kvinde skulle kunne udføre, når hun engang skulle stå for sin egen husholdning.



På gården boede ejeren Ane Poulsdatter, hendes voksne børn, en tjenestekarl og Karen. Her fik Karen lært mange af de ting, der hørte til en stor landhusholdning, bl.a. fremstilling af smør og ost. Da gårdens ejer interesserede sig meget for prydhaver, fik Karen tillige lært en del om deres pasning. Samtidig syede hun en del udstyr i den tid, hun var på gården.

Tommerup Præstegård 7

Da Karen blev ældre, kom hun i tjeneste på Præstegården, hvor hun lærte finere husførelse. Hun var ansat som stuepige og skulle bl.a. sørge for, at linned og duge var i fineste stand. Derfor tilbragte hun megen tid med tøjrulning, alt imens hun stod og drømte om kæresten Svend, der netop havde foræret hende en flot solhat som markedsgave.

Karens far og præsten var imidlertid enige om, at Karen skulle på højskole, så hun kunne lære mælkeri efter de mest moderne principper. Højskoleopholdet blev et vendepunkt i Karens liv. Foruden oplæringen i praktisk mælkeri blev hun også åndeligt beriget – og så mødte hun Rasmus, som hun senere blev gift med.

Voksenliv 1865-1884

Torupgården 9

Karen og Rasmus blev gift, da Rasmus overtog faderens gård. Ligesom sin far var Rasmus en driftig landmand, og han gjorde driften mere rentabel ved at købe nye redskaber til gården. Han fik også opført en hestegang, der kunne trække en tærskemaskine. Rasmus sad i sognerådet, og sammen med et par af de andre medlemmer var han i gang med at planlægge oprettelsen af et andelsmejeri.

Som madmor fik Karen god brug for de færdigheder, hun som ung var blevet oplært i. Gården havde ry for at levere landsbyens bedste smør, og nu var det Karens tur til at lære fra sig. Hun fik dog også tid til at tage sig af børnene. Familiens ve og vel lå Karen meget på sinde, og hun bestræbte sig på at efterleve de ord om den gode hustru og moder, hun havde hørt på højskolen. At både Karen og hendes mand var ”højskolefolk” var der ingen tvivl om – heller ikke i landsbyen. Blomsterne i vinduerne, gardinerne og en reol fuld af bøger talte deres tydelige sprog. Karen døde i barselsseng under fødslen af det tredje barn. Hun blev 43 år.



kring 1860'erne. Pasning af haverne var udelukkende et kvindeanliggende.

Med til en god uddannelse for en velhavende gårdmandsdatter hørte også ophold på en gård af en sådan størrelse og anseelse, at hun kunne lære noget om finere madlavning og pæne, kultiverede omgangsformer. En præstegård var ideel. Med tiden blev også husholdningsskoler et af de tilbud, der skulle sørge for den unge gårdmandsdatters oplæring.

Kvinder fik første gang adgang til højskoler i 1863, da Dalum Højskole tilbød et 3 måneders sommerkursus for kvinder. Efterhånden kom flere til, og et højskoleophold blev for mange gårdmandsdøtre en naturlig del af deres uddannelsesforløb. På højskolen blev kvindens rolle som hustru og moder understreget. Hun skulle være oplyst og velorienteret, så hun kunne være sin mand en støtte og jævnbyrdig partner. Samtidig skulle hun være en god moder, der forstod at motivere sine børn og skubbe dem i den rigtige retning.

Voksenliv

Andelsbevægelse, højskoleophold og foreningsliv – både det politiske og gymnastik- og skytteforeninger – var med til at bevidstgøre bonden om sit værd som samfundsborger, og den driftige gårdmand levede et aktivt og udadrettet liv.

Gårdmandskvinden var til gengæld i stigende grad blevet placeret inde i stuehuset med omsorg for mand, børn og husholdning som hovedansvarsområder.

Både graviditet og barsel udgjorde en vis dødelighedsrisiko. I 1800 tallet døde én ud af hundrede i barselssengen. Det var især den såkaldte barselsfeber, dvs. infektionsangreb, der udgjorde en trussel.

Sådan læses pjecen

Med denne folder kan du følge livsforløbene for to tidstypiske fynske landboer – **Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard** og **Karen Johansdatter**. Livsforløbene, der kan følges fra hus fortæller om de livsvilkår, der var gældende for danske bønder for 150 til 200 år siden.

Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard var husmandsfødt og levede fra 1805 til 1871, mens Karen Johansdatter, der blev født i 1841 og døde i 1884, var barn af velhavende forældre. De to livsforløb skildrer dermed vilkårene for både mænd og kvinder samt for rig og fattig – og viser ydermere den udvikling, der skete i løbet af 1800-tallet.

Foruden de to livsforløb, der i folderen understøttes af historiske baggrundstekster, består *Bondeliv* også af to informationsudstillinger i **Davinde Vandmølle** og **Katterød Hospital**.

Oplysningerne om Jørgen Hansen Ellegård og Karen Johansdatter er hentet fra historiske kilder, og det vides med sikkerhed, at de begge har haft tilknytning til enkelte af de inddragede bygninger. Livsforløbene er dog rekonstrueret af museets historikere.

God fornøjelse på vandring i Jørgen og Karens fodspor.

DEN FYNske LANDSBY

Sejerskovvej 20 · 5260 Odense S

Telefon +45 6551 4601

museum@odense.dk · museum.odense.dk

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Peasant Life

in THE FUNEN VILLAGE



Follow in
Karen's and Jørgen's
footsteps through
the Funen Village



Childhood

Many smallholdings with little or no land attached were established during the 19th century. The smallholders could not live just by working the land. They had to supplement their income by working for others.

Children were breast-fed until they were 2 years old. Between the age of 1 and 5 they were given their first minor chores and on being confirmed a child became a full-time member of the workforce. Children of smallholders and rural labourers were sent out to work at the age of 6 or 7, and at first it was not unusual for them to have to share a bed with a serving girl or farm labourer.

Compulsory school attendance, introduced in 1814, was not respected if a child's labour was needed on the farm. A child's confirmation was not celebrated in any special way in the first half of the 19th century, but simply marked their transition to adulthood.

Youth

Everyone was part of the community, both at work and at play. After confirmation came membership of the youth guild, which organised parties for young people, including so-called "play-rooms". These took place every fortnight and the young people danced, played, drank and ate, often until the early hours. The festivities were aimed at forging links between young people under controlled circumstances. The leader of the village's youth guild matched up the girls with the boys. Each pair then had to stick together for a year until new matches were decided. This made sure no-one was left out and there were no "wallflowers" at the parties.

There was no boundary between work and play. In the winter evenings the household gathered together for various activities by candlelight. The women carded, spun and sewed and the men engaged in various handicrafts, such as straw weaving or possibly making a mangling board for their future bride. Stories and traditions were told, retold and passed on at these evening gatherings.



Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard - life story



Childhood 1805 -1819

Smallholding 16

Jørgen was born in 1805. His parents were smallholders, but their 7½ acres of land was insufficient to support the family. So his father also worked as a cobbler and his mother helped out on village farms. While he was still a baby, Jørgen went with his mother to work. He was swaddled, wound so tightly in cloth that he could not move, and lay in his basket. When he was older, the bigger children helped to look after him, and as time went on he became old enough to be useful himself – watching the geese and goats, gathering brushwood, down and feathers, feeding the hens and other such simple tasks.

Hospital 8

Between his various chores, Jørgen often visited his old grandparents. Like many other smallholders they had ended up at the poor-house.

Small Farm 10

At the age of 7, Jørgen had to leave home and go into service. He went to work at a small farm, Melbyhuset, not far from his home. His job was to help his master. He was well treated but the neighbours' farmhands teased him because he had to share a bed with the maid

due to shortage of space. Although compulsory school attendance was introduced in 1814, there was precious little schooling for Jørgen. Jørgen's master felt that his help was needed on the farm and that carrying out his duties was more important than going to school. Jørgen was confirmed in 1819 and he was then ready for adulthood and the next step in his education.

Youth 1819 - 1830

Two-winged farm 11

Jørgen's education involved being trained as a farm labourer so he could become a master and copyholder himself. The first farm he served on was Hulegården.

He joined the young persons' guild and enjoyed the various parties organised for the young people of the village. It was especially exciting when the party was held in Hulegården's parlour. But he would have liked to have decided for himself which girl was to be his partner for the year.

Most of Jørgen's time was though taken up with work. Summer was hard, but also exciting, because much of the work involved being in the company of others. Winter, on the other hand, when the corn had to be threshed, could be long and tedious.





Adult life 1830 - 1863

Weaver's House 5

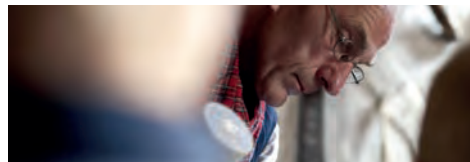
Jørgen found himself a sweetheart, Kirsten Andersdatter, who was a maid on a neighbouring farm. She and Jørgen had been couple for many years when their relationship had unfortunate consequences. Kirsten became pregnant and she had to leave her job

They moved into two rooms in the Weaver's House and here their son was born. Jørgen made a living as a day labourer and by repairing saddlery. Kirsten helped out with the weaving. In 1836 Jørgen and Kirsten were married – and their son Hans was now no longer “illegitimate”.

Clog Maker's House 15

The vicarage's copyholding, Vigerslevhus, became vacant, and Jørgen and Kirsten were fortunate enough to be able to take it on.

The only land with the house was the garden. Jørgen took various day-labouring jobs and could now make use of the cobbling and clog-making skills he had learned from his father. Kirsten found work as and where she could. Their son, Hans, left to go into service. The garret was rented out to a deaf-mute journeyman cobbler, Jørgen Jensen.



Old Age 1863 - 1871

Clog Maker's House 15

In 1863, Jørgen had the opportunity to buy the house, but neither Kirsten, nor Jørgen's second wife, Maren Andersdatter, lived to see the purchase completed. Maren died in 1862, 54 years old. Jørgen then married Louise Nicoline Rasmussen the following year. But Jørgen's health was beginning to deteriorate and in 1864 he received temporary poor relief. It was decided, therefore, that Jørgen's son and daughter-in-law, and their children, should move into the house and, as was the custom, convert a wing of the house into “pensioners' quarters” for Jørgen and his wife. Here they lived for some years, but in 1871 Jørgen died, 66 years old. A funeral parlour was established in one of the rooms, and here Jørgen lay until he was buried.

Adult life

In the 19th century, about 10% of children in the countryside were “illegitimate”. The growth in the population made it difficult to take over a house or a farm and people were not allowed to marry before they had their “feet under their own table”. People married late and this led to the birth of many “illegitimate” children.

A landless copyholder had to have an income from handicrafts or work as a day labourer, often both. Increased national prosperity in the 1830s and 1840s prompted soil-improvement measures such as marling and ditch-digging on many farms and estates. This work provided good opportunities for day labourers.

To supplement their wages, people could take on a foster child. These were often orphans, the children of paupers or those who were unwanted or abandoned. They were fostered out by the parish council by public auction, being allocated to the lowest bidder for a year at a time. This “trade” was outlawed in 1891, because it turned out – not surprisingly – that the main interest was in the children's labour, rather than their well-being.

Old age

Smallholders could often look forward to ending their lives as lodgers or in the poorhouse, and very few remained in their own homes.

Many died before the age of 70. Death was a frequent and familiar guest and was not hidden away as it is today. It was important for people to have a funeral in keeping with their standing, and preparations were often made well in advance. The grave clothes were usually sewn before the birth of the first child. All family members and guests had to see and touch the body, so the deceased did not return to haunt them, and only then was the coffin closed. A burial feast was held in connection with the funeral, and this often got a little out of hand, as a good funeral should preferably end in a party, fun and merriment.

INTRODUCTORY DISPLAYS

Living conditions and social relations - Watermill from Davinde (1)

The phases of peasant life - Hospital from Katterød (8)

● Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard (1805-1871)

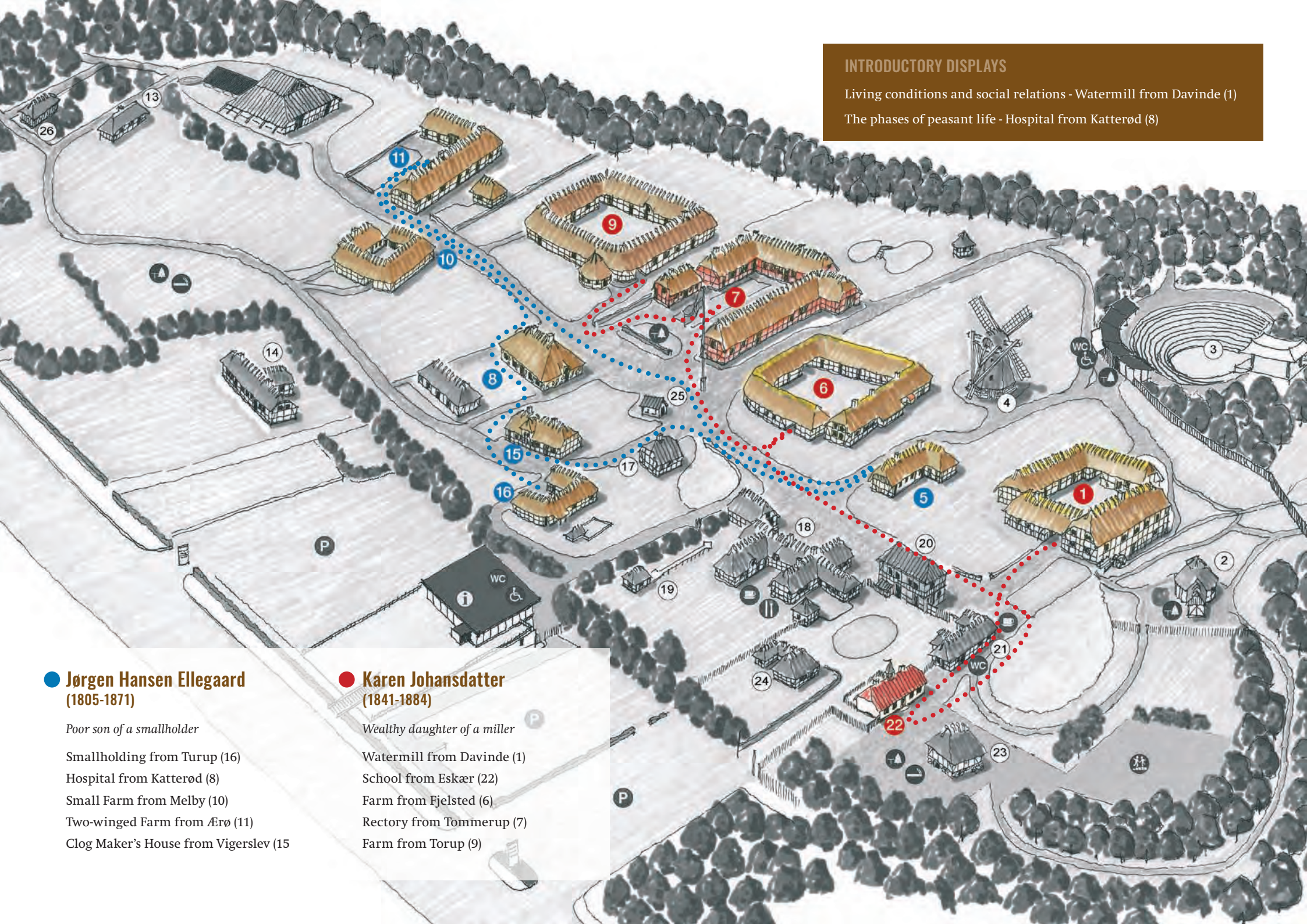
Poor son of a smallholder

- Smallholding from Turup (16)
- Hospital from Katterød (8)
- Small Farm from Melby (10)
- Two-winged Farm from Ærø (11)
- Clog Maker's House from Vigerslev (15)

● Karen Johansdatter (1841-1884)

Wealthy daughter of a miller

- Watermill from Davinde (1)
- School from Eskær (22)
- Farm from Fjelsted (6)
- Rectory from Tommerup (7)
- Farm from Torup (9)



Childhood

At the beginning of the 19th century, children had to be baptised before they were 8 days old and mothers were denied access to the church for the first 6 weeks after giving birth, as they were considered unclean. But in the 1840s, a child's baptism and its mother's readmission to the congregation often coincided, so children were christened when they were about 6 weeks of age.

A village school only had one teacher. The children were split up into several classes in each group. It was not unusual for some of the working children to fall asleep during lessons. Their day began at 3 or 4 o'clock in the morning and they had done several hours work before going to school. We know from various memoirs that teachers often made allowances for these children and let them take a much-needed nap.

Youth

Wealthy farming families did not send their children out to work until after they were confirmed, and then preferably to a well-to-do home where they were ensured a good education. Girls had to learn traditional female skills and duties, and the prevailing norms, customs and practices. On Funen, for example, it was a widespread custom for the women to stand up at meal times, while the men were seated by the window with the master of the household at the head of the table. This practice was most common in areas where the agricultural land was most fertile, the social divisions greatest and the division of labour between men and women most pronounced.

The establishment of ornamental flower gardens coincided with the modernisation and new construction of farmhouses from about 1860 onwards. Looking after these gardens was exclusively a female responsibility.



Karen Johansdatter - life story



but she also had time to play. Though her mother thought it was important that she did her share of the daily chores.

School 22

When Karen was 7, she started school. She liked the school and the teacher, even though he was sometimes angry and slapped the children. Mostly the servant boys and girls, because they often fell asleep during classes. Karen was confirmed when she was 14.

Childhood 1841-1856

Watermill 1

Karen Johansdatter was born at Davinde Watermill in 1841. She was the daughter of the village miller and her parents were fairly prosperous. Karen was baptised at the same time as her mother was re-admitted to the church congregation.

As a small girl, Karen was mainly looked after by her mother. When a baby sister arrived, Karen would often help to take care of her,

Youth 1856-1865

Farm from Fjelsted 6

After her confirmation Karen was sent out to work on one of the village's largest farms, Fjelstedgård. She was employed as a maid and was trained in traditional women's skills so that one day she could manage a large household herself.



The household consisted of the farm's owner, Ane Poulsdatter, who was a widow, her grown-up daughter and son, a farmhand – and now Karen. At Fjeldstedgård, Karen learned about many of the working practices on a large farm, including how to make butter and cheese. She also made many of her own clothes while she was there.

Vicarage 7

When Karen was older, she went to work at the Vicarage, where she learned fine housekeeping. She was employed as a maid and her duties included ensuring that the household linen and tablecloths were kept in perfect condition. So she spent a lot of her time mangling and ironing, while she stood and dreamed of her sweetheart Svend, who had just given her a beautiful sun hat as a fairing (gift).

Karen's father and the vicar agreed that it would be beneficial for her "education" – and for the farm's butter sales – if she went on a high school dairy course. Her time at the high school was a turning point in Karen's life. Not only was she trained in dairy practices, she also met Rasmus, who was to become her husband.



Adult life 1865-1884

Farm from Torup 9

Karen married Rasmus, when he took over his father's farm. Like his father before him, Rasmus was an enterprising farmer and he improved efficiency by buying new implements for the farm. He also had a horse gin installed, which could drive a threshing machine. Rasmus was a member of the parish council and, together with a couple of the other members, he was involved in setting up a cooperative dairy.

As mistress of the house, Karen had great need of the skills she had learned in her youth. The farm had a reputation for producing the best butter in the village and now it was Karen's turn to pass on her skills. But she also had time to care for her children. The family's well-being was very important to Karen and she tried to live in accordance with what she had been taught at the high school about being a good wife and mother. There was no doubt that Karen and her husband were "high-school people". Flowers in the windows, curtains and a bookshelf full of books were clear indications. Karen died in childbirth, giving birth to the couple's third child. She was 43 years old.



Part of a good education for a wealthy farmer's daughter was time spent on a farm of appropriate size and standing, where she could become acquainted with finer cuisine and cultivated manners. A vicarage was ideal. With time, home economics schools also became included among the means by which a young farmer's daughter could be ensured a satisfactory education.

Women were not admitted to folk high schools until 1863, when Dalum Højskole offered a 3 month summer course for women. Many other schools then followed suit, and time spent at a folk high school became a natural part of their education for many farmers' daughters. At the high school, learning about a woman's role as a wife and mother was paramount. She should be enlightened and well-informed, so she could be a stalwart and fitting partner for her husband. She should also be a good mother who understood how to motivate her children and push them in the right direction.

Adult life

The cooperative movement, folk high school courses and various organisations – such as political associations and gymnastic and shooting clubs – helped to make a farmer aware of his value as a citizen, and an active and enterprising farmer lived a busy and outward-looking life.

The farmer's wife, on the other hand, became increasingly rooted in the farmhouse, with care of her husband, her children and the household as her main areas of responsibility.

Both pregnancy and childbirth brought with them a risk of mortality. In the 19th century, one in a 100 mothers died in childbirth. The greatest threat was puerperal or childbed fever, i.e. bacterial infection.

How to use this leaflet

This leaflet tells you the life stories of two Funen rural residents of the 19th century – **Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard** and **Karen Johansdatter**. Follow their stories from house to house, and they will tell you about the living conditions for Danish peasants 150-200 years ago.

Jørgen Hansen Ellegaard was the son of a smallholder. He lived from 1805 to 1871. Karen Johansdatter, who lived from 1841 to 1884, was a child of wealthier parents. The two life stories describe the living conditions of both men and women, rich and poor – and furthermore they show the developments occurring during the 1800s.

Information on Karen and Jørgen has been taken from historical source material (census, probate records etc.). Therefore, we know for certain that they were both connected with some of the houses in The Funen Village. The life stories, though, are reconstructed by the museum's curators.

Enjoy following in Karen's and Jørgen's footsteps through The Funen Village.

The funen village

Sejerskovvej 20 • DK-5260 Odense S

Telephone +45 6551 4601

museum@odense.dk • museum.odense.dk

