

4 – JUTLAND AND RETURN TO COPENHAGEN

Wednesday, 14 July

I woke at about seven this morning to bright sunshine. I lay on, half asleep, then sat up to write some of my diary. I got up later and by 8.30 was at the breakfast table with Mrs Mikkelsen for the last time. As I had eaten so much yesterday evening, I did not have much of an appetite this morning. Mrs Mikkelsen telephoned her daughter just before nine o'clock and learned from her that there would be a direct bus to Legoland at ten. Following Mrs Mikkelsen's suggestion, I quickly made myself some sandwiches for lunch, paid her 375 kroner, then made ready to leave. When it was time for me to go, I bid her goodbye. I had enjoyed staying with her very much; I felt that she was lonely and had welcomed my company.



I now caught the 9.20 bus to the train station, arriving in plenty of time for the bus to Legoland, in Billund. My only reason for making a special journey to this popular attraction was to see the famous Titania's Palace (now housed there), which had been made for the daughter of Sir Neville Wilkinson in the early 1920s. Wilkinson had lived in Mount Merrion House, in the south of Dublin. When my father was a boy, an aunt had brought him to see this marvel in about 1922, when it was on display at Clery's shop in O'Connell Street. Sir Neville, who had been there, had lifted my father up in order to show him some of the details of the scaled-down mansion. He drew my father's attention to the miniature furniture and showed him some of the tiny pictures, which he had taken down from the walls.

Many years later, when my father was studying carpentry in Bolton Street technical college, a carpenter named Mr Hicks brought in a miniature bookcase that he had made for Titania's Palace. My father was intrigued by how exquisitely made the tiny piece of furniture was; the scale was one inch to one foot. The numerous

glass panes in the little bookcase had cost £4, and the total cost of making this addition to the famous doll's house had come to a staggering £20.

Outside the train station, a white minibus pulled up at one of the stops just before ten o'clock, and the driver announced that he was bound for Legoland. I climbed aboard with two young ladies who had a couple of young children with them, and a scruffy fellow dressed in black leather clothing who drank from a bottle of Coca-Cola and listened to music on his personal stereo. I paid the driver 100 kroner for the journey, which I realized would be long.

From the train station we headed for a motorway and drove through a seemingly endless industrial zone; I soon became bored and fell asleep in the hot, airless atmosphere of the minibus. I woke to find ourselves crossing the stretch of water between Funen and Jutland on a long, impressive bridge. It was quite dramatic. Soon we were on the long peninsula that was Jutland, heading north-westwards. Once again we drove on main roads with other fast-moving traffic. My impression was that this part of Denmark was very full of tourists. Certainly the scenery did not endear itself to me: it was very bland and all the houses and buildings were modern. Funen, I realized, had far more charm.

We went hurtling onwards to Billund, where Legoland is located, and finally arrived there by about 11.30 a.m. I was quite shocked at what I now encountered: a long line of traffic that was almost at a standstill. I knew that this was a popular place, but never expected it to be like this! I now noticed a large airport to our right. The minibus finally managed to make its way to the airport and stopped outside it.

When I went inside the building, I discovered that the place was almost deserted. I spoke to the lady at the information desk, who gave me a timetable for the buses to Århus, which I glanced at. I then tried to telephone the youth hostel in Silkeborg, but got a recorded message. The lady told me that it was to say that they were closed until 4 p.m.

I left my rucksack in a locker, spruced myself up, and went off with the intention of seeing a little of Legoland in half an hour and then catching the 12.45 bus to Århus. I walked a short distance to the main entrance, where my heart sank. The number of people queueing to get in was unbelievable! I joined one of the many queues and half listened to a brass band performing nearby. The place was chaotic.



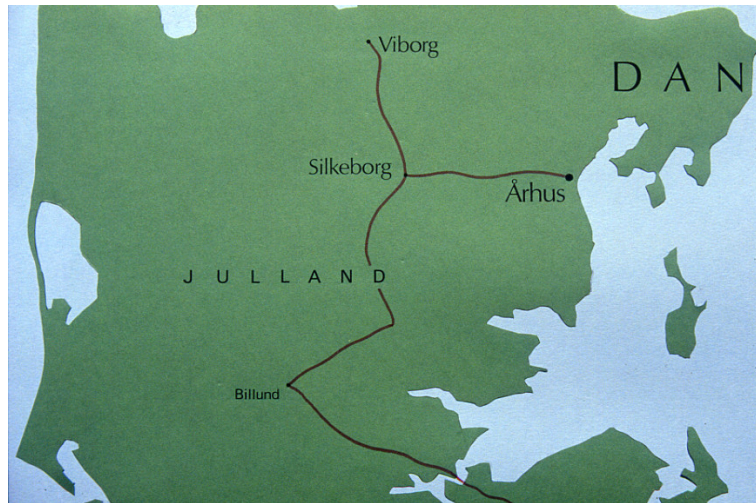
Titania's Palace



Titania's Palace and Legoland, Billund

I finally arrived at the ticket office and reluctantly pulled a 100 kroner note out of my pocket: the admission fee was 95 kroner (£10). Once inside, I asked the way to Titania's Palace. Fortunately it was nearby and there were few people inside the special building that had been constructed to house it. I was quite astonished by the size of the doll's house: it was huge! I marvelled at the intricate detail and contents of each little room; it was really breathtaking. No wonder my father had been so enchanted by it as a child. I looked at it carefully and attempted to take some photographs, not knowing if they would come out because of the glass and my flash unit. I bought a couple of postcards, spoke to the lady that I had bought them from, then went back outside. I quickly took a few photos of some of the fascinating miniature villages and palaces made of Lego (including the Amalienborg Palace in Copenhagen), and also of the little train that travelled around, then fled from the place. I had no desire to get squashed by so many people!

I now returned to the airport, collected my rucksack and checked the timetable again, only to discover that the 12.45 bus to Århus only left on Saturdays, and that I had just missed a bus. However, I discovered that a bus would leave for Give, Tørring and Horsens at 1.20 p.m. I bought myself a carton of apple juice and ate my lunch sitting outside in the sunshine.



When the bus appeared, I asked the driver if there was a bus from Give to Silkeborg. The driver said no, but there would be a bus from Tørring; we would arrive there at 2.15 and a bus for Silkeborg would leave at 2.18. I bought a ticket for 34 kroner and off we set. At first I was the only passenger. We drove along empty roads, passing more bland scenery. We stopped at a village, where a lady got on to the bus and the driver got off. A younger man with a transistor radio took his place.

We duly arrived at the tiny village of Tørring, which we reached at 2.15 p.m. exactly. I hopped off, crossed the road, had a look at the unusual church nearby, and walked to the nearby bus stop. At precisely 2.18 a very comfortable and luxurious bus appeared and stopped for me. I was fascinated by the exactitude of the timing! I now paid 40 kroner for the trip to Silkeborg and settled down for a pleasant journey. The scenery proved to be a little more interesting this time.



The youth hostel in Silkeborg

We arrived in Silkeborg at about 3.15 and came to a stop at the small train station. I asked for a map of the town in the ticket office and noted down the times of buses to Viborg. As the youth hostel was very near, I decided to stay here this evening. I set off on foot, reached the hostel just before four o'clock, and joined a small queue. It was a big and nice hostel, and was situated beside a river, where one

could see boats sailing up and down. The unsmiling man at the reception desk broke into a broad smile when he discovered that I was from Ireland, and mentioned that he did not have many Irish people staying here. When I told him that I wouldn't shoot him or plant a bomb in the hostel, everyone nearby laughed. It seemed that the people here were good humoured, despite their rather expressionless faces.

After I had checked in, I left my luggage in the large dormitory, and set off in search of the Silkeborg Museum. After a little confusion, I found the elegant building in the town centre, which seemed to be full of rather bland architecture. It was nearly 4.30 p.m. when I went inside and bought a ticket. The lady behind the desk read my thoughts and directed me to the next building, where she said the Tollund Man was to be seen. I followed her directions and found it in a darkened room.



'Tollund Man' in the Silkeborg Museum

This surely was the most amazing thing that I had experienced in Denmark so far: finding myself gazing at the almost perfect face of a man who had been buried in a peat bog in about 220 B.C. It was quite incredible. I looked at the shrunken figure, transfixed, then dragged myself away to read the description displayed on the wall. I next went to see the Elling woman in a larger room next door; by comparison, this body was in a very poor condition except for the hair. I then studied some of the ancient artefacts and the reconstructions of clothes, hairstyles, houses and so forth, which were displayed in glass cases. I found it a very interesting little museum. It was certainly worth coming here just to see the famous Tollund Man.

Afterwards I returned to the first building and glanced quickly at the remaining rooms before the museum closed at five o'clock; before I left, I bought a booklet about the Tollund Man.

I then wandered around some of the streets in Silkeborg, which made little impression on me. The pedestrianized streets were lined with smart shops – nothing more. I made my way out to one of the lakes nearby and skirted it by walking along a busy road. From here I was able to get to a peninsula by crossing over a little wooden bridge, but found little of interest to see except trees and the remains of fires.

After I had relaxed a little, I returned to the city centre, where I went in search of a reasonably-priced meal. By now the streets and restaurants were almost deserted – quite a common phenomenon in this country. I eventually chose a place and asked for the pasta with smoked salmon and salad. This turned out to be quite tasty and inexpensive. Afterwards I walked to the train station and bought a banana, which I ate there.

Back at the hostel, I took a welcome shower and sat outside, writing my diary. It was pleasant to be outdoors and beside a river; there was a steady stream of pleasure boats, tourist cruisers, canoes and rowing boats. Children played on the grass and adults sipped glasses of wine. As it was warm and sunny, I was able to relax outdoors for quite a long time. At about 10.30 p.m. I took a short walk in order to stretch my legs; by this time the sun was just showing signs of setting.

I eventually went to bed in the large dormitory off the very smart dining room. I was not the last one in at 11 o'clock; others came later. I realized that we were in for trouble when an older man went to bed and immediately began to snore. There was no doubting that I was back in a hostel once again!

Thursday, 15 July

Thanks to the man's incessant snoring, I slept little, though the man did ease off for a while. As it was such a beautiful morning and as it was so hot and airless in the dormitory, I got up and treated myself to another shower. I had breakfast before eight o'clock and tucked into good helpings of muesli, yogurt, bread, cold meat, cheese, jam, and tea. I then made some sandwiches for lunch. Before leaving, I booked for another night as the hostel was reasonably priced and I would be saved the bother of finding accommodation in Århus this evening. I asked about available cruises up the river, and the man at the reception desk told me about the Hjejlen paddle steamer. This was the oldest boat in the country; its daily journey went along the Gudenå river and then through three lakes, the Brassø, the Borressø and the Julsø, finally reaching Denmark's highest mountain. Although the steamer left at 10 o'clock, the man advised me to be at the harbour by 9.30. As it sounded like a good idea and as it was just the day for such a trip, I decided to go on it.

I then left and, as I had time to spare, I walked to the tourist information centre, where I asked about the best way to travel from Århus back to Copenhagen. The girl was able to give me some information.



The Hjejlen steamer

From here I walked quickly to the nearby harbour, where I discovered that a long queue had already formed. I was a little anxious about getting a seat for myself, but there was no need to worry. Everyone was squeezed on to the little steamer, which belched forth dark, sooty smoke. I sat on the edge of a step at the stern, beside an oriental lady and her half-oriental daughter.



The Gudenå river, Silkeborg

We set off at ten o'clock and slowly made our way down the river, which was lined with trees, smart houses and boats of every conceivable type. Everything looked terrific in the bright sunshine. Everyone aboard was in a holiday mood and there was lots of waving and laughing. These local people, so unsmiling for most of the time, were obviously able to let their hair down now and then – especially when the sun was shining.

After a while the river began to widen and we entered the first lake, Brassø, which was pleasant without being remarkable; it was ringed with trees and some low hills. What really brightened up the scene were the various boats that came and went. Occasionally the captain of our steamer would blow the hoarse whistle, which took most of the people by surprise and made them jump. The children quickly learned how to imitate the whistle.



Lake Julsø and Himmelbjerg

The second lake, Borresø, was much the same as the first one, and the third, Julsø, was similar, though from it we were able to feast our eyes on the 'highest mountain': Himmelbjerg, which had a tower perched on its summit. I laughed when I saw the mountain, which in fact was nothing more than a hillock!

When we docked, I followed the crowd up some steps to a restaurant and shop, where touristy knick-knacks were being sold. From here I began the easy climb up the hill. The view from the path was quite spectacular: a vista of the undulating landscape of trees and, of course, the lakes. The path was well signposted and there were many holidaymakers around. I soon reached the ugly brick tower and the summit and went to the railing to look down at the view of the lakes. As it was quite impressive, I took some photos. This, then, was the famous 'lake district' between Silkeborg and Skandeborg.

I looked around a little, went down to a spot where children were playing on swings and adults were relaxing among cars and caravans, and decided that I had seen enough. I returned to the jetty and jumped on the steamer, which was about to leave on its return journey. The man in the youth hostel had told me that an hour here would not be enough, but it was enough for me! Although the journey back was pleasant, it clouded over a little. I ate my picnic lunch on the boat.

I jumped off at the youth hostel and went to my room to collect a few things. I then walked into the town centre, where I changed the last of my traveller's cheques, then made some enquiries about the journey back to Copenhagen.

I then caught the 2.45 bus to Viborg, which I thought I should see before I left, having come so far. As I was tired, I fell asleep during the journey and so saw very little of the scenery. The bus arrived at Viborg about one hour later. The place looked very much like Silkeborg at first, but when I acquired a map and made my way to the town centre, it soon became apparent that it was quite different, for it possessed a fine old quarter. My impression was very favourable and, of course, the bright sunshine made the small town look terrific; even the pedestrianized commercial streets were agreeable. The fine old buildings began to appear as I approached the Domkirke, which unfortunately was closed. A lady emerged from one of the lovely old houses nearby and confirmed that the cathedral closed at four o'clock – not at five, as stated in my guidebook. I could hear somebody practising the organ inside. The lady told me that she lived in the house where the artist who had decorated the cathedral interior had once lived. She confirmed that the interior was very beautiful.



Old town centre, Viborg

I then went to an unusual building nearby, which I discovered was the Skovgaard Museum. It housed paintings by Skovgaard, the very artist who had decorated the interior of the Domkirke. I went in to have a look and found them to be very fine. There were also paintings by other members of the same family, which were all quite good. The building itself was interesting; it dated from 1723 and contained more paintings in its unusual loft. A narrow spiral staircase led from the loft down to one of the rooms below, where it was something of an eyesore. I left the place just before it closed at five and went wandering about the lovely narrow alleyways and attractive old buildings. As few people were about, I almost had the place to myself.



Park and lake, Viborg

I then discovered that there was a lake not far away, so I slowly made my way to it. I entered a lovely park full of trees and flowers, sat down by the water's edge and rested. By now I had become quite enchanted by the town and was loath to leave.

After a while I returned to the town centre and found a cheap fast-food restaurant, where I ordered an excellent salad with chicken and a delicious hot roll. Afterwards I treated myself to the largest ice cream that I had ever eaten, which left me with green ice cream and its garish pink topping all over my beard. I tidied myself up and reluctantly made my way back to the bus station and caught the last bus back to Silkeborg at 7.50 p.m. The scenery looked very pleasant in the late evening sunshine. It had been a most enjoyable day.

Back at Silkeborg station, I bought a carton of juice and an apple for tomorrow's lunch, then returned to the hostel. I now had a shower, washed my hair, prepared things for the following day's journey back to Copenhagen, and wrote some of my diary. The man in charge of the hostel passed by and I thanked him for recommending the boat trip to me. I asked him about the best way to travel to Copenhagen and he told me that he would find out for me in the morning.

Friday, 16 July

Predictably there was more snoring during the night and so I did not sleep so well, though I did better than the previous night. I rose at seven feeling groggy; when I looked in the mirror, I noticed that I had bags under my eyes, which did not surprise

me. Half an hour later I was eating another good breakfast and, when I had finished I quickly made some sandwiches for lunch and put them in a bag. By 8.15 I was at the reception desk, where the man in charge was making phone calls for me. He now had details of a route back to Copenhagen by bus and ferry which would cost me just 140 kroner – the cheapest price so far. He kindly offered to reserve a seat for me and I readily allowed him to do so. I thanked him for his help and wrote a good report about the hostel in the visitors' book.

I now had the option of taking the 9.04 or 10.04 train to Århus; as the weather was not good this morning, I decided to relax for the moment and write some more of my diary. I did this for a while but as the weather began to pick up, I decided to take the earlier train and see a little of Århus before I left at 12.35. I made a dash for the station and bought a ticket, then found that I had plenty of time as the train arrived late. During the journey, the train passed some lakes, including the ones that I seen on the previous day, and some pleasant scenery.

The train reached Århus about one hour later. I put my luggage in a locker, asked for a map, but as there was not one to be had in the station, I went out and found my way to the tourist information office. I was served by an English man, who immediately recognized my accent! He gave me a guide containing a map and I set off to have a quick look at the town.



Old town centre and Domkirke, Århus

I walked up the pedestrianized Søndergade and Clements Torv, both lined with shops and full of tourists, then approached the main square and the massive Domkirke. I pushed open the huge door and went inside; it was breathtaking in its size. It was certainly a fine cathedral. There were two organs: a large ornate one at the back, which was currently being worked on, and a very colourful and modern

one to one side of the altar. What fascinated me was the way this organ was fastened to two massive pillars at only four small points. It was very high up, and a narrow staircase led up to it. The whole organ, including the staircase, was made of metal, and the predominant colour was dark grey.

I then left the cathedral and went in search of the narrow streets of the old quarter. I found them easily enough; they looked pretty in the bright sunshine, but were not as impressive as other old streets that I had seen recently. Nevertheless, everything looked very attractive.

From here I then made my way to the Vor Frue Kirke. This, like so many other churches, looked uninteresting from the outside, but was quite pleasant inside, despite being rather plain. The most notable features here were the very old crypt dating from 1060, which I examined quickly, and the fine modern baroque organ, on which somebody was practising a hymn. The organ was constructed mostly of varnished wood, and looked very effective in the stark surroundings of the church.

I now walked back a little, trying some different streets and, after a little confusion, found the small Viking museum in the basement of the Unibank building. On display were the remains of the city ramparts, which had been discovered when the bank was being built. Although there was not much to see, the displays were quite interesting.

Having seen the main points of interest here, I returned to the train station, glad to have taken the trouble to come here. It is certainly a fine city. I now collected my rucksack and walked the short distance to the bus station where, after a few minutes, the luxury coach to Copenhagen pulled in. My luggage was put in the back with other people's and I managed to get a window seat at a table near the back, which I shared with a good-looking girl and, I presumed, her mother. The mother was good humoured and kept up a lively conversation. A fellow then got on with a huge dog that lay down and behaved itself very well. Once or twice it exuded a foul smell, but it soon passed. The fellow opened the sun roof and made sure that there was plenty of ventilation. Another coach appeared and soon the driver came around to collect the fares.

We set off at a little after 12.35. I soon dozed off, for I was feeling tired after two nights of poor sleep. I woke at intervals to see sunny fields flashing by and came to my senses when the sea appeared, though it seemed to be on the wrong side of the bus! I could not figure out where we were or where we were going to. I had assumed that we would head southwards for Odense, but we were obviously heading northwards. We passed a long beach, where people were sunbathing and swimming in the sea, then finally came to a stop. More people now came on board and the fellow brought his dog outside for a walk. We stayed here for quite some time, then finally continued our journey. By looking at signs on a building, I discovered that we were in a small place named Ebeltoft. I thought that we heading for Grenå, but the bus suddenly turned towards a harbour and made for a waiting ferry.

As soon as we were aboard and out of the coach, I stopped to look at a map of the route and saw that we were leaving from a small harbour near Ebeltoft and would be sailing for one hour and forty minutes. We would then arrive at a thin peninsula protruding from Zealand named Sjællands Odde, where we would land at another small harbour close to a village called Havnebyen. The man in the hostel had certainly chosen a good route. We were to arrive in Copenhagen by 5.05 p.m.



I headed for one of the decks, where I found tables and chairs. I sat down in the sunshine and, as it was two o'clock by now, I made short work of my lunch. I then took out my diary and spent the most of the journey writing. When I had finished I went strolling around the decks, looking out over the blue sea and the approaching land. It felt wonderful to be out in the fresh sea air with the sun beating down.

At last we approached the peninsula; I lingered on deck until the last moment and then went down to the coach. We drove off almost immediately and went whizzing along the road. We had a pleasant view of the sea for a while and then, as we went farther inland, it disappeared from view and we were surrounded by fields. I drifted off to sleep again and woke later when the girl in front of me and a lady sitting nearby began to smoke. Fortunately they only smoked one cigarette each.

The suburbs of Copenhagen suddenly appeared at about five o'clock and we finally came to a halt not at the central station, but at Valby. Slightly unsure as to where exactly I was, I went into the station and bought a ticket for the main station in the city centre. I then hopped aboard one of the familiar S-trains and was soon back in familiar surroundings. After purchasing some Danish stamps for a friend in a nearby post office, I returned to the station where I bought a Copenhagen Card for the following day and a couple of postcards. I then went into the cheap restaurant and had a meal for just 35 kroner. I wrote on the postcards, posted them, caught a bus and travelled to the apartment belonging to the young lady, which I had booked for the night earlier in the holiday. She greeted me, then excused herself. I knew that I was back in the capital – there was no welcoming cup of tea here!

I now relaxed, sorted some of my things, wrote my diary and had a shower. I then went out for a short walk along the waterfront, which was lined with boats. It was quite pleasant, though I realized that I was in a rough area. Back in my little room, I made a phone call home, wrote my diary and went to bed.

Saturday, 17 July

This morning I woke to the sound of rain – a complete contrast to the previous day! It was a miserable, grey morning. I got up at eight; by nine I was in the bakery around the corner eating breakfast. I then caught the number 8 bus and alighted at

the train station, where I changed some money. I then walked the short distance to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, reckoned to be the best art gallery in Copenhagen. Using my Copenhagen Card, I went in, got rid of my coat and bag, and started a tour of the gallery.

First of all I went to the collection of French Impressionist paintings; there was quite an impressive collection of works by the likes of Monet, Manet, Degas, Sisley and Pissarro among others. There were also several statues by Degas to be seen. Afterwards I looked at some post-impressionist work by artists including Gauguin, Cézanne and van Gogh. I also stopped to look at some paintings by local artists such as Jens Juels: typical and very fine representatives of the earlier school. There were also works of a later period, such as those by Hansen.

I took my time looking at these fine masterpieces and gradually worked my way down to the large and magnificent rooms on the ground floor. Here I was able to admire statues from ancient Greece, Rome and the near East, and mummies from ancient Egypt. I then sat down in a huge domed area and rested for a while.

Afterwards I had a look at a temporary exhibition of Japanese prints, entitled *Ukiyo-e*, many of which I had probably seen at an exhibition in London.



Jens Olsen's world clock, Rådhus, Copenhagen

Having done this, I left and crossed Rådhuspladsen and went into the Rådhus, where I had a look at the amazing Jens Olsen's 'world clock'. It was a large and magnificent piece of mechanism; I had never seen such a complicated movement before. The construction had begun in 1955; there were 14,000 parts and the slowest wheel took 25,753 years to make one revolution! It was anything but a conventional clock; it was an astronomical timepiece that plotted the eclipses of the sun and moon, solar time, local time, and various planetary orbits.

I stayed here a while, examining the clock, then decided that I needed some lunch. I found an American pizza place nearby where, for 39 kroner, one could get as much pizza and salad as one wanted. This suited both my pocket and my appetite. I made a pig of myself; I helped myself to two good platefuls of pizza, and a bowl and a half of salad.

When I had finished my meal, I went off in search of the Musical History Museum in the drizzling rain. At one stage I had to take shelter from a sudden downpour. It eased off; I continued my journey and finally found the museum. The lady at the ticket office was very pleasant. I went upstairs and began to look at the extensive collection of instruments, many of which were quite unusual. I was puzzled to discover that several instruments, which had all the appearances of antique square pianos, were labelled *klavichord*; not far away were clavichords, also described as *klavichord*. I told the lady in the room that at home we called the former instruments 'square pianos' in English. After a little confusion, she opened one of the lids. Much to my surprise, I discovered that the instrument really was a clavichord, as there were tangents where I expected to see hammers. I apologized and expressed astonishment, for I had never encountered instruments like these before.

I then continued my tour of the museum, looking at various keyboard instruments, including a harpsichord made by Hass. There were also a few *viole da gamba* or viols; some of them were made in Nuremburg by makers that I had not heard of before, and two of them were made by Tielke. In another room I found an elaborate harpsichord made by Ruckers; painted on the case were Chinese scenes.

Also in the museum were a number of exotic instruments, including a long Tibetan trumpet, as well as several hybrid instruments, including Stroh violins that had been used for early gramophone recordings. I found more square pianos, some of which were playable, though none of them had been fully restored.

Skipping an exhibition of harps, though I stopped briefly to examine an Irish harp, I wrote my name in the visitors' book and went off in search of the Nørreport train station, which was not far away. There I caught a train to Rungsted, on the east coast, almost immediately. As expected, it took a while to get there. Tired by now, I fell asleep and woke to discover that the train had stopped in Rungsted station. I made a dash for the door, went the wrong way, and was just turning around when the train set off again. I was furious! My aim was to visit the Karen Blixen museum; it would close at five o'clock and now it was a little after four. I got off at the next stop and managed to catch a train going in the opposite direction without any delay.

I jumped off at Rungsted, asked a young man for directions, and set off on foot at a brisk pace. As it was easy enough to find, I reached the place in about ten minutes. The girl at the ticket office told me to go upstairs to look at the exhibition, then go out to the courtyard at 4.40 p.m., when I would be let into Karen Blixen's house.



The Blixen house, Rungsted

I spent a few minutes glancing at the exhibition of books and descriptive panels on the walls, then went outside as instructed. A girl, who rather reluctantly smiled at me, let me into the house and told me what to do. I found my own way around the rooms and read the descriptions on the cards provided. The rooms themselves were unremarkable, save for the very long curtains that trailed on the floors; what made them special was the fact that the famous author had once lived in them. What surprised me were the excellent drawings and paintings done by Blixen; I had not realized that she was also a fine artist.

It was a pity that my visit had to be so rushed, but it was good to have been here at last. I left the house and caught a bus that brought me back to the train station; when it arrived, the two young ladies from the Blixen house got off and I followed them into the station. A train soon arrived and I travelled back to Copenhagen. Even though I was not feeling very hungry, I went into the familiar cheap restaurant and sat down to an evening meal of *frikateller* (a dish that I had eaten in Mrs Mikkelsen's house), served with cold potato salad and cucumber. I was glad of the opportunity to rest; by now it was raining again outside.

By the time I finished, the rain had stopped and the sun had begun to shine. I finished my meal with tea and a *wienertørte*, a type of apple pastry that I had not yet tried. It was not too sweet.

Refreshed, I walked the short distance to the Tycho Brahe Planetarium. As I had never been in a planetarium before, and as my Copenhagen Card would give me free admission, I now availed of the opportunity to see one. However, as I discovered that my card only entitled me to see a small exhibition on the ground floor and that seeing a film would be the only way to appreciate the place to the full, I decided to opt for a film about Antarctica, which would start at eight o'clock. The price of the film was normally 65 kroner; my card gave me a 10% reduction, making it 58 kroner, but as I needed an English translation, I had to pay another 10 kroner for a unit with headphones, which brought the price up to 68 kroner!

Once I had spruced myself up and taken a look at the exhibition, I joined the queue for the film and waited until the doors were opened shortly after 8 o'clock. I then entered the large circular auditorium, with its huge almost circular screen above, and chose a seat near the centre, close to the elaborate projection equipment. The show soon started with advertisements and an introduction to the planetarium, during which all manner of breathtaking special effects were used, including laser light. The sound effects were very loud. At one point, the lights behind the screen were switched on so that we could see the loudspeakers and general construction of the dome.

The film then started; it was shot in a very spectacular manner. The aerial shots filmed over the frozen landscape left me gasping for breath, especially when the camera lurched over icy cliffs. It was a most memorable experience. The only source of irritation was the English translation; the sound quality in my ear was abysmal and the general soundtrack and music was included, delayed by about one second. I kept removing the earpiece when there was no dialogue. Overall, though, the film was interesting; it dealt with the various expeditions to the South Pole, the wildlife there and, most importantly, the damage that was being done to the ozone layer. It ended on this sad note.

I then left and made my way to the famous Tivoli Gardens. Although I was not particularly interested in this attraction, I decided that I should see it while I was here. My card gave me free admission and I joined the people milling around the cafés, restaurants and various amusements. I made my way, via the central lake, to a very oriental-looking outdoor theatre, where a play was about to start. An orchestra tuned up, the elaborate curtains parted and the play began. The action was all done in mime and was quite silly. Although the crowd laughed at the simple gags, I did not find it particularly amusing.



The Tivoli Gardens, Copenhagen

After a short while I left and entered the hologram museum, which I found fascinating. Many of the pictures were incredibly lifelike and really appeared to be three dimensional. Some of them, however, were badly lit and therefore difficult to see. I completed the tour of this little museum and went back outside. As it had become darker, the illuminations had been switched on. I wandered about, looking at the ornamental lakes, the innumerable cafés, amusements and fairground swings filled with screaming girls, and slowly made my way back to where I had entered.

I was in time to catch a bus at about 11.15. Back in the apartment I spoke briefly to the young lady, Irene, and her friend, then treated myself to a welcome shower. After I had organized things for the following day, I finally went to bed, exhausted, and quickly fell asleep.

Sunday, 18 July

A dull, miserable and damp morning. I got up at about nine and tiptoed about, for nobody else seemed to be up. I went out to the bakery and had my usual simple breakfast there; the blonde girl behind the counter was in great form and I joked with her. Back in my room, I got ready and left the apartment for good. I regretted leaving such an organized country, but by now I felt that I had done and seen quite enough, and was more or less ready to return home. I caught the number 8 bus and travelled to the train station, where I left my rucksack in a locker.

I then strolled over to Strøget and began to look at the souvenir shops to see what was on offer. I had a limited amount of money left and did not want to change

any more. Having found little to my liking, I decided to eat an early lunch in a nearby restaurant. Once I had eaten and put aside the money I needed for the bus fare to the airport, I returned to the last shop that I had looked in, and bought a few simple presents for friends.

This done, I returned to the train station, collected my rucksack and walked to the number 32 bus stop, where I caught a bus to the airport shortly after two o'clock. I was now saying goodbye to Copenhagen. I realized that I had been more enchanted with the city when I had first arrived; that had been when the sun was shining and I had been looking at all the tourist attractions. Now that I had seen some of the seedier parts in poor weather, I found the city much less attractive and so I was not too sorry to leave.

The bus journey to the airport was uneventful, and I arrived at the departure area soon after 2.30. I checked in immediately, went through security and sat down to relax and write more of my diary. At last we were called to the appropriate departure gate and then the plane, where I sat beside a teenage Swedish girl who was on her way to Dublin to visit her parents. Eventually we took off at 4.20 and the journey home to Ireland began. The holiday was over.