The Life and Times of David Borgen
David Borgen
1793 – 1868

(Copy of a picture painted about 1820 – from a collection held in the Copenhagen Raadhus)
The Life and Times of David Borgen

A Citizen of Copenhagen

Dedicated to the memory of Kirsten Sivertsen nee Borgen
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Some years ago I researched my wife’s family history and during this process I first came to know of David Borgen, one of her great great grandfathers. His name stood out as a person meriting greater attention than was possible at that time and so I resolved to return to his life history as soon as circumstances allowed. The first thing that stood out for me was the range of his activities for he certainly made use of all his talents and he must have been endowed with great energy. The second thing is that his activities were in areas that were likely to have been recorded and so be available to a researcher working in the 21st century. The third thing was that he was involved in a variety of public activities at a time that Denmark was undergoing massive changes, and so a study of his life would contribute to a better understanding of the country today. These are the reasons for my interest, and here is the result!

I should start by saying I am not a professional historian, nor have I had many opportunities to visit the Danish archives, my work in the latter has of necessity been limited and hence rather rushed. I therefore ask the forbearance of the reader in my interpretations of Danish history, especially constitutional history. I have in this work also had in mind my family which would, owing to their upbringing in the United Kingdom, not have a command of Danish history that would be available to native Danes. I have therefore included an outline of events in Danish history that might be considered commonplace knowledge by those with a Danish education.

David Borgen was very much involved with the merchant community in Copenhagen, and with people who were engaged with the important political events that took place in mid-19th century Denmark. I have therefore taken the opportunity to say something about the individuals and organisations that impinged on David’s life. Copenhagen in this period was a relatively small community and one gets the impression that it was a world where everybody in the mercantile middle classes knew each other. In this context it might be noted that this class is really rather understudied. History in the past has recorded the lives and achievers of the leaders of society and those in the professional classes. In more recent times there has been great interest in the poorer elements of society in particular the social lives of the working class. With respect to historical studies people like David Borgen have therefore tended to fall between two stools. This is a pity in that his class was the one that translated the initiatives of the good and great in to practical action in society, in other words, practiced the art and craft of middle management. As will appear although such people were often relatively affluent they were also very vulnerable, business has always involved risk taking and in the period covered here financial failure had especially dire consequences. I hope the story I try to tell here will therefore be of interest to Danish as well as English speaking readers.

I could not have carried out this work without the help of my wife. In the course of this study I gained some proficiency in decoding gothic hand script but time after time as a native Danish speaker she was able to set the meaning of the decodes in to meaningful context. I should also mention another family member who was of great help, namely Henrik Dupont, Curator of maps in the Royal Danish Library, not only did he provide useful material he was
also a guide to me when searching the resources of this great institution. I would like to acknowledge the help of the staff of the Danish State Archive, the Rigsarkiv, and also the staff of the Copenhagen City Archive, the Stadarkivet, København, especially Lars Peter Jørgensen, I also would like to thank Joyce Cameron Svensson of the Borgerrepræsentationens Sekretariat in the Copenhagen Rådhus who in addition to advice also supplied me with the copy of the portrait of David Borgen which appears as the frontpiece of this work. Finely I wish to acknowledge the encouragement I received from my mother-in-law, Kirsten Sivertsen nee Borgen, to study Danish history, I have therefore dedicated this work to her memory.

Kenneth Page,
Aberdeen
December 2012
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ABREVIATIONS USED IN FOOTNOTES ETC.

BR – Borgerrepræsentant (City Councillor).

Bruun - Kjøbenhavn del III Kjøbenhavn, Kbhvn., Thiele, 1901 Carl Bruun


Davidsen – Fra det gamle Kongens København, København, Gylendal, 1010, J.Davidsen.


DKCensus - Danish Census, Dansk Data Arkiv, Islandsgade 10,5000 Odense C.

Hundrup – Stamstavle over Slægten Borgen. F.E.Hundrup. 3rd Ed Copenhagen 1877.

KBPortraits - Portrætregistranten I Det Kongelig Bibliotek, Copenhagen.


KJR - Københavnske Jævnførelsesregister 1689-2008

KVV - Kraks vejvisere, Københavns Vejvisere - gadefortegnelse. 1770 til 1900.


Rdr – Rigsdaler – currency used in Denmark up to 1873 when it was replaced by the Kroner.

Rigsarkiv – The Danish State Arkive.


Stadsarkiv- The City (Copenhagen) archive.

**GLOSSARY**

The following list provides the equivalents between Danish and English names for titles, and institutions used in this work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Danish</th>
<th>English</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borgerrepræsentanter</td>
<td>City Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgervæbning</td>
<td>City Guard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borgmester</td>
<td>Council Leader, Mayor or Provost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etatsråd</td>
<td>An honourary title, originally a State Councillor. Confers a 3rd Order of Precedence on the recipient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fattigvæsenet</td>
<td>Poor relief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folketing</td>
<td>Lower Chamber, Houses of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fornede Unterstøttelserselskab</td>
<td>The United Benevolent Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graver</td>
<td>Sexton</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grosseresocietet I København</td>
<td>Literally “The Merchants Society in Copenhagen”, today it is the Copenhagen Chamber of Commerce.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industriforeningen</td>
<td>Copenhagen’s “Industrial Society”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justitsraad</td>
<td>An honourary title originally denoted a member of the high court. Can confer either 3rd or 4th order of precedence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kæmner</td>
<td>City Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkværge</td>
<td>Church Treasurer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klokker</td>
<td>Church Manager, Verger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konferensråd</td>
<td>An honourary title, originally a State Councillor. Confers on the recipient a 2nd Order of Precedence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landsting</td>
<td>Upper Chamber, Houses of Parliament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obligation</td>
<td>Financial Bond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overpræsident</td>
<td>Head Magistrat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raadhuss</td>
<td>Guildhall or Town House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raadmand</td>
<td>Alderman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridder af Dannebrog</td>
<td>Knight of the order of the Dannebrog, British equivalent would be Order of the British Empire (O.B.E).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ridder af Vasaordenand</td>
<td>Swedish equivalent to Ridder af Dannebrog</td>
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<td>Stads Bedemænd</td>
<td>City Funeral Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stænderforsamling</td>
<td>Estates General</td>
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CHAPTER: 1. INTRODUCTION: DENMARK DURING DAVID BORGEN’S LIFE-TIME.

In mid-19th century Denmark it became fashionable to publish family genealogies. One such example was “Stamtavle over Slægten Borgen” compiled by F.E. Hundrup with additions by Oscar Borgen, published in Copenhagen in 1877. In it the genealogy of the Borgen family is traced from 1659 from one Peter Hansen Borgen to his many descendants living in the 1870’s. This story centres on one of these descendants, a remarkable man who lived from 1793 to 1868. His name is David Borgen and the English translation of the main part of his entry in Hundrup runs as follows:

“David Borgen, born 21 November 1793, died 1st February 1868, Merchant and Sugar Refiner in Copenhagen 1822, Treasurer of the Trinity Church 1830, 1835 elected member of the 32 Man Council of Copenhagen and Director of Efterslægten, 1837 Member of the Board of Directors of the Frederiks Hospital and Director of Bombebølsen, 1839 Captain in the Civil Guard Artillery Division, 1840 alternate member of the Estates General, 1841 Administrator of the “United Benevolent Society”, 1842 elected member of the Copenhagen City Council, 1 April 1843 Acting Treasurer of the City of Copenhagen, 18 September 1846 Knight of the Dannebrog, 1855 Lieutenant Colonel, Married 26 September 1818 Wilhelmine Paludan.”

These then are the bare bones of David Borgen’s life and the account that follows will attempt to clothe them with flesh. Before attempting this task however it will be necessary to say something about the city and the country he was born in. It was a period of great change in Denmark. When David was born the King of Denmark was an absolute monarch who reigned over not only Denmark but also Norway and the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, however, by the time of David’s death the King had become a constitutional monarch whose realm no longer included Norway or the two duchies. Again in 1793 the city of Copenhagen consisted of a population of about 101000 confined within the mediaeval city walls whilst by 1868 this population had almost doubled in size and the city was fast expanding into the areas beyond the walls (See Plate 1.1).

Denmark in the late eighteenth century had enjoyed a long period of peace. The Northern Wars with Sweden had been ended at the Treaty of Copenhagen in 1660 and under the period of absolute monarchy the country prospered with trading settlements extending to Tranquebar in India, Danish Guinea in Africa (now part of modern day Ghana) and the Caribbean islands of St Thomas, St Croix and St John (the modern day Virgin Islands). Regarding the latter these were the source of raw sugar supplied to Denmark. This was produced on plantations employing slave labour. Many of the

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wealthy noblemen of the period such as Count Ernst Heinrich von Schimmelmann owned these plantations, and as the trade in slaves and sugar was highly lucrative it led to his family becoming one of the richest in the kingdom. The slaves were obtained from Danish Guinea. Ironically it was Count Schimmelmann who as Minister of Finance played a major role in the ending of the slave trade by Denmark, this being achieved in 1803. Slavery itself was not abolished in the Danish West Indies until 1849. Denmark was the first European country to abolish the slave trade but in many ways the Danish state had not moved with the times and compared to countries such as France and Britain its economic and political structures were backward. A major development in the 18th century occurred between 1770 and 1772 when the country was in effect governed by the Kings surgeon Johan Frederich Struensee. As a man strongly influenced by the ideas of the French Enlightenment Struensee had attempted to modernise the way Denmark was governed but in doing so he antagonised the governing classes and following his fall his reforms were reversed. Some years therefore were to pass before the changes he had striven for actually took place. Despite this the economy of the country prospered throughout the period immediately following 1772 this being powered by a rising middle class of merchants and bankers. David’s father, Marcus Borgen, together with his friends and colleagues belonged to this class, and in the second chapter their influence on David’s career will be explored.

The period of relative tranquillity was brought to an end by the French revolution and the subsequent Napoleonic Wars. Initially the stance of neutrality adopted by the Danish state brought economic gains but these were rapidly reversed as the effects of the British blockade of the European mainland took hold. Britain feared that the Danish fleet, at that time quite substantial, would come under the control of Napoleon. In 1801 the British fleet under the command of Admiral Nelson attacked and destroyed much of the Danish fleet as it lay off Copenhagen. Not much damage to the town was incurred on this occasion, but the story was very different when in 1807 a British expeditionary force commanded by General Lord Cathcart bombarded the city from the 2nd to the 5th September resulting in the mass destruction of property (see Plate 1.2) and the deaths of over 2000 of the city’s inhabitants. The net effect of these attacks was to drive Denmark in to the French camp, a result that had disastrous consequences for the country. In 1813 the cost of the war resulted in the state becoming bankrupt. Many businesses went bankrupt during this period and the failure of the national currency led organisations like the Merchant’s Society of Copenhagen to issue banknotes backed by the sureties held by its members. It was at this stage the Danish economy became largely dependent first on Altona, then a possession of the Danish King, and then on Hamburg, Altona was in fact virtually a suburb of Hamburg. In economic terms Copenhagen was thus at this time almost reduced to the status of a provincial town. The Treaty of Kiel ended the war for Denmark but the political cost was the loss of Norway to the Swedish crown. The authority of the King was damaged by the consequences of the war and from this time alternatives to rule by absolute monarchy started to be considered by the governing classes.

The Merchant’s Society of Copenhagen (Grosserersocietet i København) deserves special mention here as many of the businessmen mentioned in the following chapters were members of its management committee and the institution as such played an extremely important role in the recovery of Denmark’s finances in the years following 1813. The institution which later in the 19th century became the Copenhagen Chamber of Commerce was made up of all those merchants working as wholesalers in Copenhagen. David Borgen as a wholesaler of sugar therefore must have been a member of this body although I have no direct record of him being so. It is certain however
that he never became a member of the management committee. This committee consisted of 13 members all elected on an annual basis. They were extremely influential as they advised the King and the members of his Chancellery (after 1849 the ministers of the elected government) on trade matters. They also played an important role in the management of the Copenhagen Stock Exchange and participated in the fixing of the official exchange rate for the Danish currency. It is not surprising to find that many of these members also had posts in the management of the National Bank.

In the period following the war the Danish economy slowly started to recover. Culturally the country entered a new era with people such as the philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, the writer Hans Andersen and the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen gaining major international status for their work. The political ideas behind the French revolution now began to take hold and as already mentioned the government of the absolute monarchy became increasingly criticised. There was a growth in Danish nationalism that was embodied in what eventually became the National Liberal party. King Frederik VI was ruler of Denmark from 1808 to 1839. In recognition of the increasing demands for democracy he decided in 1831 to establish four Provincial Assemblies (Stænderforsamling) one each for, the Danish Islands, Jutland, Schleswig and Holstein. David Borgen’s long standing friend, Joachim Schouw (see Plate 3.5), played an important role in these developments. The Provincial Assemblies as elected bodies went some way towards introducing democratic principles into Danish government but as their role was purely advisory to the executive that is the King and the Danish Chancellery, this did not really meet the wishes of those who wanted a fully democratic government. They did however pave the way for democratic government as they provided opportunities for the development of political skills amongst their members, and perhaps more importantly, stimulated the growth of political parties in the modern sense of these words. King Christian VIII succeeded to the throne in 1839 following the death of Frederik VI and at this time it was expected he would be open to reform, however this turned out not to be the case and in consequence tensions grew throughout his short reign which ended with his death in 1848. The new king, Frederik VII inherited a critical situation but fortunately for the country he quickly agreed to the introduction of a constitutional monarchy and following the formation of an elected National Constitutional Assembly in 1848, the creation of a bicameral system of elected government (the Folketing and the Landsting). Again Joachim Schouw played an important role in this development, one that ameliorated the tensions within the Danish state itself but raised problems in the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. The First Schleswig (or Three Years) War ensued.

The conflicting aims of Danish and German nationalists were a major cause behind the First Schleswig War. The Duchy of Holstein with its attendant province of Lauenburg had a German speaking population and historically had belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. Schleswig had never belonged to the Empire and its population was a mixture of Danes, Germans and North Friesians. Danish nationalists exemplified by the National Liberals in consequence believed that Schleswig, but not Holstein, should be a part of Denmark. German nationalists on the opposite hand believed that Schleswig and Holstein should remain united. There was also another bone of contention between the two parties. When King Christian VIII died, and seeing that his only legitimate son, the future Frederik VII, was apparently unable to beget heirs, the duchies could have gone under the rule of another royal house thus seperating the duchies from Denmark. To avoid this possibility a royal law was introduced that would allow a female relative of Christian VIII to mount the Danish throne. The implementation of this law however was illegal. The introduction of the new constitution coupled with this law thus provoked the citizens of Holstein to rebel and this rebellion in turn
developed into an outright war involving the armies of Prussia and Austria as well as those of Holstein pitted against Denmark. Two brothers of David Borgen’s wife Wilhelmine, Commodore Captain Frederick Paludan and Colonel (later Major General) Julius Paludan played important roles in this war (see Plate 2.5). The outcome of the war however was effectively a stalemate. The ‘London Protocol’ which ended the war was signed in 1852 by representatives of Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia and Prussia as well as Denmark. This protocol allowed the Duchies to remain under the Danish crown but on the condition that they continued to be constitutionally separate from the Danish state. Unfortunately as the events of 1863/4 proved this did not solve the problem meanwhile it left Denmark and the Duchies ruled by different constitutions.

In the late 1850s another economic crisis hit Denmark. As will be described later the failure of an American Insurance Company in the autumn of 1857 sparked off an international credit crisis which caused the credit offered by Hamburg based financial institutions to fail. A wave of bankruptcies including that of David Borgen followed in Denmark. The damage to the national finances resulting from this crisis was however quickly repaired and as a result Denmark became financially more self-reliant and Copenhagen became once again the financial center of Denmark.

King Frederik VII died without an heir in 1863 and at a critical juncture when a new constitution, the so called November constitution, was about to be introduced. This constitution would have brought democratic government to the two duchies. The new King, Christian IX had little choice regarding the acceptance of this constitution although he well recognised that it would bring conflict with the German Confederation. This time the Danish army was faced by a larger and much better equipped army than had been the case in 1848. The combined Prussian and Austrian forces had been modernised and were now under the political leadership of Bismark. The Danish forces could not withstand an attack by one of the best land fighting forces in the Europe of this period and thus they suffered a humiliating defeat. Under the Peace of Prague signed in 1866 the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein were ceded to Germany (see Plate1.3). As a result of the peace settlement, the land area of the Danish monarchy decreased by 40% and the total population reduced from 2.6 million to 1.6 million.

Turning to the City of Copenhagen its history goes back to the 11th century, By the mid 17th century it had become Denmark’s principal city and major port. During this period Copenhagen came under serious attack by the Swedes. Its citizens withstood the siege of 1658-59 and this action ensured Denmark would continue as a sovereign independent state. The City’s Civil Guard participated in the defence of the town

(David Borgen served in this Guard from about 1822 to 1855). As a reward for the defence of the city the King granted its citizens the right of self-governance. This local government had an executive body whose members were collectively known as the Magistrates. The composition of the Magistrates varied over the years but for the period 1800 to 1840 it consisted of an Overpræsident, 3 Borgmesters and 6 Raadmænd. In addition to the Magistrates an advisory body made up of 32 citizens (the 32 Man Council), was also brought into being. The Magistrates were appointed by the King whilst the Magistrates themselves appointed the members of the 32 Man Council. To qualify for council membership it was necessary to be one of the well-established businessmen trading in the town. David Borgen in 1822 had become a wholesaler and refiner of sugar in the city. He was thus qualified to join the 32 Man Council and the Magistrates duly appointed him a member in 1835. This arrangement of local government with few changes lasted until 1840.
The city suffered a number of fires, a universal hazard of the cities of that period; about one third of the city was destroyed by fire in 1728 for example. 1795 saw another devastating fire. Despite the fires, and outbreaks of the plague, the city prospered during much of the 18th century. As described above this period of prosperity was brought to an abrupt halt as a consequence of the Napoleonic wars.

During the opening years of the 19th century the city thus suffered great poverty but as the century developed its economy started slowly to improve. This led to a marked increase in the population of the city and this in turn put an increasing demand on the city's infrastructure such as the provision of adequate sewage disposal. The city at this time was hemmed in with the ancient fortifications that surrounded the town. As the British siege of 1807 had demonstrated these fortifications were outdated and no longer provided protection to the city. There thus was increased pressure for the city to be allowed to grow outside these defences. There was much debate in the city government about this and David Borgen was to play a major role in the issues raised by the debate. The expansion of the city was started in 1852 and this led to the development of today's districts of Nørrebro, Vesterbro and Frederiksberg. The ancient fortifications were removed in 1872. Remnants of the old moat that surrounded the town survive today in the Tivoli gardens and the Botanical Gardens.

Regarding local government King Christian VIII on 1st January 1840 gave the city a new municipal constitution and the 32 Man Council was superseded by a 36 strong city council to be elected by the qualified inhabitants' of each of the city's wards. This was one of the few 'liberal' actions that took place in his reign and it introduced an element of democracy in to local government although the electorate was restricted to the wealthy tradesmen and property owners in the town. In addition the Chancellary and the Magistrates still retained their power especially over the city's finances. David Borgen who had been a member of the 32 Man Council retained his position as a councillor on the new city council and he remained a member until 1858. In 1843 David was appointed acting City Treasurer by the Magistrates. Despite going bankrupt in 1858 David retained this post until 1862. With the change from absolute to constitutional monarchy in 1849 the National Government took over the power to appoint the Magistrates (apart from the Overpræsident) from the King. The city of Copenhagen obtained a new constitution at this time and this will be discussed further in chapter 6.

Plate 1.4 presents two pictures that summarise the changes taking place in Copenhagen during the period of David's life. The upper picture shows the West Gate in 1834. Tolls were charged both on passengers and on the passage of goods through this and the other gates to the town. The gates were closed at nighttime. The picture shows a view over what today is the Raadhus Plads but then known as Helmtorv (A stone plinth marks the place today in the Raadhus Plads where the West Gate once stood). The city bounds were thus being maintained in virtually the same fashion as in the 16th century, but already in 1834 there were demands that the city gates and tolls be removed. These demands were strengthened by the arrival of the railway in 1847, Copenhagen's first railway station is shown in the lower picture of Plate 1.4. The tolls were finally removed on the 14th December 1857, the gates of Copenhagen meanwhile had been dismantled the year before.
Having emphasised the changes in the city since the early 19th century it should be appreciated that much within its older part would still be recognisable to David today. Places such as Nytorv have changed very little (See Plates 1.5 and 6.2) from his day. Indeed although his house in Adelgade has long been demolished once the connecting street, Gothersgade, is reached he would be able today to walk to the old Raadhus in Nytorv through streets he would still find very familiar. It is now time to examine David Borgen’s life in greater detail.
Plate 1.1

Copenhagen 1795

copied from “Borger I voldenes Kiøbenhavn” by Jan Møller.

Copenhagen 1888

copied from Wikimedia internet site.
Copenhagen during the bombardment by British forces in 1807.

Vor Fru Church in ruins after the bombardment

Both pictures copied from the “Vægen” collection held in the Copenhagen City Museum.
The Jutland Peninsular showing in red the boundaries in 1866 after Schleswig and Holstein had been ceded to Germany following the war of 1864 and in blue the boundary after 1920.

Copied from http://www.milhist.dk/1864/1864/1864_uk.htm
The west gate into Copenhagen in 1834 – tolls were charged for any produce coming into the city and the gates were closed each night.

The main railway station in Copenhagen in 1847.

Both pictures copied from the “Vægen” collection held in the Copenhagen City Museum.
The Pillar marking the site of the West Gate in the Raadhus Square of modern Copenhagen.

Authors photograph.

The Law Courts and former Raadhus situated in Nytorv. A modern photograph of buildings that date from David Borgen’s time.

Copied from www.danculture.dk.
CHAPTER 2: DAVID BORGEN'S ANCESTRY AND EARLY LIFE

David’s parents were Marcus Peter Borgen (see Plate 2.1) and Inger Thulstrup. The family lived in Christianshavn this being on the eastern side of the inner harbour to Copenhagen. Their residence was sited in the Brogades Sugar Refinery on Matrikel 17₂ Langebrogade³(see Plate 2.2). The road Langebrogade has long since disappeared, as has the old Knippelsbro bridge which it joined and which linked Christianshavn to the mainland (see Plate 2.4). The Langebrogade ran parallel with present day Torvegade⁴ then called Lille Torvegade (see Plate 2.2). Today the Danish Foreign Ministry building sits partially on the place where the refinery was situated whilst the modern Torvegade actually runs over the southern site of the old refinery! The building David lived in is shown in Plate 2.2. The refinery itself spanned the space between Torvegade and Langebrogade. It was owned by Jens Harboe a trader who lived at Matrikel 8 in Christianshavn.

David Borgen’s father was a bookkeeper (bogholder), in modern terms an accountant, and although Marcus lived all his working life in Copenhagen he came from a provincial family with connections both in Fyn and in Northern Jutland. Both Marcus’s father and his grandfather were clergymen in the Danish State Church. His grandfather, Claus Petersen Borgen, was parish priest of Dalum and Sanderum on Fyn, both of these parishes are now within the town boundaries of Odense. Claus Petersen Borgen and his wife had 15 children of which David Clausen Borgen, Marcus’s father, was their eighth child. David Clausen grew up in Odense and for his schooling attended the Odense Gymnasium⁵. In 1756 he moved to northern Jutland when he was appointed Parish Priest of the joint parish of Vejerslev, Aïdt and Thovsø in the diocese of Viborg. He remained for the rest of his life in northern Jutland moving in 1775 to the parish of Lyngå in the diocese of Århus. In 1784 he became the Dean (Provst) of the districts of Sabre and Vester Lisberg, but remained in Lyngå. This village is now within a suburb of Århus. David Clausen married twice his first wife having died in 1758. There were 11 children from his second marriage of which Marcus Peter, born on the 22nd October 1766, was the 4th son. Most of David Clausen Borgen’s many children continued to live in Northern Jutland in their later lives and this may help to explain why his grandson, David Borgen, although living in Copenhagen, had so many trading contacts in this area.

Although two of Marcus’s brothers kept to the family tradition and became clergymen Marcus himself moved to Copenhagen where he was apprenticed to a well-established bookkeeper and businessman, Jeppe Prætorius⁶. As Jeppe had an important influence on the Borgen family and played an important role in the business affairs of the Copenhagen a diversion will now be made to describe his life in greater detail.

₂ A Matrikel defines a piece of land and it was used to denote addresses prior to the introduction of street numbers in Copenhagen.
³ Identified from the 1805 entry on http://kobenhavnshistorie.dk/bog/matrikel/
⁴ See map on http://www.stadsarkiv.dk/matrikelkort/index.php
⁵ Hundrup
⁶ DK Census of 1787 – note transcription is in error as it shows ‘Marius’, a careful examination of the original handwritten census entry form shows this should be ‘Marcus’.
According to the Danish Bibliographic Lexicon (DBL)  Jeppe Prætorius was the son of a Dyer Henrik P. and his wife Elizabeth Dorothea Jepsdatter (born Schmidt). He was born on the 4th July 1745 in Skjærbæk by Tønder within the Duchy of Schleswig. In 1786 he became a bookkeeper for the Danish Guinea Company. The 1787 Copenhagen census shows Marcus Peter Borgen living in his house described as a ‘boy’, however almost certainly an apprentice bookkeeper working under the direction of Jeppe, the house being situated on Matrikel 71 Amaliegade.

In about 1788 Jeppe with two business associates set up the trading firm of Pingel, Meyer, Prætorius & Co with its main office and warehouse situated on Toldbodgade 24 – 28 (the site is now occupied by the Copenhagen Admiral Hotel). William Pingel was a merchant and son-in-law of Frederik de Coninck (1740-1811). De Coninck was of Dutch extraction, and an important ship owner and trader in the East Indies. Josef Meyer was an agent for the Østersøist (Baltic) Compagnie.

The firm of Pingel, Meyer, Prætorius & Co took over from the Danish East Sea and Guinea Company the exclusive right to trade slaves from the Danish fort of Christiansborg situated on the African Gold Coast (today in Accra, Ghana). Slaves were transported to the Danish West Indies (the islands of St Thomas, St Johns and St Croix) where they were sold in exchange for raw sugar which was then shipped to Denmark for refining and onward sale. As stated in chapter 1 in the 18th century this was a highly lucrative business. Jeppe in 1791 purchased Strandgade 26 in the Christianshavn district of Copenhagen. A sugar refinery, originally built by a director of the Danish Asiatic Company, Gysbert Behagen, occupied the rear of Strandgade 26 and this continued to function under Jeppe. In 1792 Christian Vilhelm Duntzfelt took control of ‘Pingel, Meyer and Prætorius’ and henceforward the firm traded under the name ‘Duntzfelt and Meyer Co’. Duntzfelt was another of de Coninck’s sons-in-law. Duntzfelt and Meyer Co ceased trading in slaves in 1802 following the decision of the Danish Government to abolish the trade. It is estimated that the two firms transported over 17,000 slaves to the West Indies.

Returning to Jeppe Prætorius in 1792 he bought as his own house Overgorden neden Vandet 35 a property in Christianshavn. This property was substantial and reflected his growing wealth. As stated in the DBL “He was an enterprising and clear-headed businessman who enjoyed good fortune and as a consequence he developed into one of the most outstanding businessmen in the

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7DBL
8 ibid.
9 William Pingel, and Agent Josef Meyer see “Fra Den Danske Handel” by Julius Vilhelm Schovelin.
10 Wikkipedia entry for the Copenhagen Admiral Hotel.
11 DK Census 1787 and DBL XIII.
12 KVV 1790 to1815.
13 www.slavehandlenskbh.dk
14 ibid
15 DBL XIII
17 www.slavehandlenskbh.dk
Copenhagen of his period. His enterprises involved a large and extensive overseas trade." His affairs were not without problems however. In common with many other Copenhagen businessmen he suffered major losses as a consequence of the bombardment of Copenhagen by British forces in 1807. Jeppe was appointed as a Councillor of State (Etatsraad) in 1812.

Jeppe played an important role in the Copenhagen Merchants Society. The commercial community at that time was small, less than 100 merchants were based in Copenhagen and most of these were members of this society. All the merchants mentioned so far were members of the Merchants Society. Jens Harboe, the owner of the Sugar Refinery that employed Marcus as bookkeeper following Marcus’s apprenticeship with Jeppe Prætorius was also a member. As mentioned in the previous chapter the management committee of the Merchants Society amongst other things had the important duty of advising the King and his ministers regarding the economic policies being adopted by the government. A good example of this was seen in the period at the end of the Napoleonic wars when the state of Denmark went bankrupt. A Committee ‘for the underwriting and manufacture of banknotes’ (Committee Sedlernes Fabrikation og Underskrift) was set up under the auspices of the Merchants Society and Jeppe Prætorius was a member. As mentioned in the previous chapter the management committee of the Merchants Society amongst other things had the important duty of advising the King and his ministers regarding the economic policies being adopted by the government. A good example of this was seen in the period at the end of the Napoleonic wars when the state of Denmark went bankrupt. A Committee ‘for the underwriting and manufacture of banknotes’ (Committee Sedlernes Fabrikation og Underskrift) was set up under the auspices of the Merchants Society and Jeppe Prætorius was a member. It is possible that David was involved in the production of these ‘Committee Notes’ for the name Borgen is included in the twelve men tasked with signing these notes prior to their issue. These men were required to sign 700 notes each day. There were few with the name Borgen in Copenhagen at that time and as will be described Marcus was well connected with those involved in the Merchants Society. Marcus would probably have been too senior for such a task, but David, aged about 20 would have been ideal for the job. Returning to Jeppe Prætorius, as a person he was well liked by his contemporaries in Copenhagen, his subsequent reputation has however been tarnished by his association with the slave trade.

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18 Note on Danish Titles:
Some of the people encountered in the following chapters held special titles. In Denmark between the 17th century and the 19th centuries there were a number of titles awarded by the King originally to his advisers and councillors. By 1800 however, these titles had become honourary and used to award persons considered deserving of merit. The practice had died out by 1910. These honours gave their recipients an official place in the order of precedence used at state functions. There were 5 of these ‘ranks’. Of these the highest to be encountered in this work was “Konferensråd”. This title conferred on the recipient the status of second rank. Examples in this work include the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen and the Copenhagen magistrate Just Henrik Mundt. Originally the King had awarded this title to his specially trusted advisors. The title “Etatsråd” denoted a person of third rank. It originally meant “Councillor” and it tended to be awarded to persons such as civil servants, politicians or outstanding businessmen, examples here will include Moritz Melchior as well as Jeppe Prætorius. “Justitsråd” was a title given to members of the high court from 1661 but again in time it simply became an honour giving its holders either third or fourth rank in the orders of precedence, Jørgen Thulstrup provides an example of this award.

19 Kjobenhavn Carl Bruun www.eremit.dk

21 Komitésedlerne 1814. DOP 55-57 Web page published by the Royal Danish Mint.
Inger Thulstrup was the first wife of Marcus and she had married him on the 14th March 1793, in St Nicolai Kirke, Copenhagen (See Plate 2.1). The marriage was witnessed by Johan Peter Kierulf (Cantor of Vor Frelers Kirke). David was Marcus and Inger’s first born child. David’s baptism was conducted in Vor Frelers Kirke, this being the local parish church in Christianshavn. The entry in the church book (see Plate 2.3) shows that David had six godparents. There were two godmothers, Madame Herforth, who was probably Augusta Cathrine, wife of Mathias Herforth, Bogholder for the St Croix Sugar Refinery, and Jomfru Prætorius, she was probably Elisabeth, eldest daughter of Jeppe Prætorius. The godfathers were Balthaser Schiøtt (Justitsraad and Borgermester), Matias Lunding (Justitsraad and Bankkommissær), Niels Brock (Businessman) and Jørgen Kierulf (Professor of History in Copenhagen University and Theatre Director). This rather impressive array of names suggests that Marcus and his wife were well connected with the mercantile and professional community of Copenhagen. They also help to explain Davids subsequent career which involved service in local government as well as his business activities. Schiøtt and Lunding were both city Magistrates and Brock was a member of the 32 man council.

Balthser Schiøtt entered the Magistrates as a Raadmand in 1770 and later became a Borgermester and a Justitsraad. He played an important role in the commission that dealt with the reconstruction of Copenhagen following the British bombardment of 1807.

Matius Lunding served as a Raadmand in the latter part of the 18th century. He was a Bank Commissioner and a Justitsraad. His father had also served the city as a Magistrate having entered the city council in 1771 when the King was under the influence of Johan Frederich Struensee. The King had dismissed the Magistrates and the 32 Man Council and installed an entirely new set of men in their place, this lasted for 19 months and then they in turn were dismissed and the old Magistrates and council restored! Matius’s father survived the restoration however and went on to serve as a Borgermester21. David’s godfather, Matius junior, did not have to face such an adventurous career during his period of office as a Magistrate.

Niels Brock was an important city businessman who concentrated on trade with Norway, Russia, Poland and the Baltic countries24. He did however make investments in the Danish Guinea Company25. He avoided committee work but, however, played an important role in the Copenhagen Merchants Society as well as serving for many years on the 32 Man Council. He became very wealthy during his career and on his death he left a considerable part of his fortune to the Merchants Society to support business education. His memory is preserved today in Copenhagen by the name of the Niels Brock Business College.

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22 The evidence for Madame Herforth’s identity comes from KVV 1805 p180 and the 1801 DKCensus, for Jomfru Prætorius from the 1787 DKCensus (Elisabeth is the eldest daughter and aged 19 in 1793, Balthase Schiott from KVV 1790 and the 1787 DKCensus, Matias Lunding and Niels Brock from the 1787 DKCensus and the DBL, and Professor Kierulf from the 1801 DKCensus and DBL. All the census data quoted here is for the Københavnen district.
23 N.Jong Den Kongelige Hove dog Residentz, quoted from website of Selskabet for Kjøbenhavns Historie.
24 Website of the Niels Brock Business College.
Marcus could have made advantageous social contacts whilst working for Jeppe Prætorius and, as already mentioned, later for Jens Harboe, owner of the Brogades Sugar Refinery. Jens Harboe was a member of the 32 Man Council and for a time was its chairman. It is also possible Inger could have had good family connections. Unfortunately there are no definite leads to her ancestry but circumstantial evidence suggests that she could have been related to Jørgen Thulstrup, Justitsraad, Raadmand and Grosserer an influential businessman of the period. There is evidence that Jørgen Thulstrup at least knew Matias Lunding and Niels Brock and as he served as a Magistrate at the same time as Balthaser Schiøtt he must have known him also. Jørgen Thulstrups daughter, Dorothea, and four of his sons were all baptised in St Nikolaj Kirke, the church Marcus and Inger were married in. If Inger was indeed related to Jørgen Thulstrup this would help in explaining the choice of three of David’s godfathers.

In the years following his birth David was joined by his sisters Anne Margrethe (b-1795), Laurenza (b-1798), Marcine (b-1800) and Ida (b-1803). The witnesses of the baptisms of these girls included both Jomfru Prætorius and also Madame Harboe. Madame Harboe was probably Frederikke Margrethe wife of Jens Harboe the owner of the sugar refinery. These later records show that Marcus and his family enjoyed continuing social relationships with both the Prætorius and Harboe families for many years after the birth of David.

David Borgen thus spent his early life living in accommodation belonging to the Brogades Sugar Refinery at Langebrogade. For schooling it is possible that he attended the Borgerdydskole in Christianshavn, this establishment was only a few hundred yards from the sugar refinery in Langebrogade and at least two of David’s cousins, Bonaparte and Vilhelme August Borgen were connected to the East Borgerdydskole, a sister organisation to the Borgerdydskole in Christianshavn (Bonaparte was a student and Vilhelm a teacher at the school). The death of Inger, Davids mother, in 1806 must have been a trauma for David as he would have been only 13 years old at the time. His father married again in 1807 and six children were produced in this marriage, one of whom, Carl August born in 1815 was to play an important role in David’s later life. Following schooling it is possible David worked in his father’s office, this would explain both his subsequent association with the sugar industry, and his considerable expertise in accountancy, something that he could have learnt from his father. The registration of David’s marriage to Wilhelmine Paludan on the 26th September 1818 however simply describes him as a ‘contorist’, that is an office worker. This

27 There are only a few Thulstrup names in the censuses and vejvisors of the period and Jørgen is the only one with a profession that fits the mercantile and local government background of the witnesses to David’s baptism. The marriage of Marcus and Inger took place in St Nicolai Kirke, a church associated with Jørgen Thulstrup (as seen in the baptism entry for his son Abraham in 1770). Dorothea Thulstrup, (wife of Pastor Høyer of Holman’s Kirk) was definitely a daughter of Jørgen Thulstrup but like Inger she does not appear on any census list or other document until the biography of Høyer.
28 N.Jong Den Kongelige Hove dog Residentz, quoted from website of Selskabet for Københavns Historie
30 Sons of Andraus Borgen, Marcus’s next eldest brother – see Hundrup.
31 wedding entry in the Trinitatis church book.
Wilhelmine like David came from a clergy family. Her father, Peder Paludan was the parish priest of Asminderød, a town in the north of Sjælland, and the parish included the chapel of Fredensborg Castle so Peder was also a Royal Chaplain. Both Peder’s father and grandfather had also been priests in the Danish church. Wilhelmines mother was Margrethe Benedicte Thillerup (see Plate (2.5) and Margrethe’s father was the parish priest of Frederiksberg. The Paludan’s had good social connections and were related to the Paludan-Müllers, a family famous in Denmark for its literary and ecclesiastical achievements. Peder and Margrethe had seven sons and two daughters, Wilhelmine being the youngest of the siblings. According to her brother Julius Ferdinand, Wilhelmine (she was known to the family as ‘Mine’) was intelligent and active in her spiritual life as well as in the practical affairs of housekeeping and these may have been the qualities that attracted David to her.

Unfortunately Wilhelmine’s father died when she was only three years old leaving her mother in straightened circumstances and with a young family to look after. Margrethe was however a very strong minded woman with lots of initiative and in 1801 she was able to persuade Princess Marie the wife of the Crown Prince (later Frederik VI) to financially support the education of Wilhelmine’s three youngest brothers (see Plate 2.5). These were the twins Christian Carl and Frederik August, both of whom were destined to become senior Captains in the Danish navy, and, in age her closest sibling, Julius Ferdinand. He later become a Major General in the Danish Army. All these three brothers were to retain a close link with Wilhelmine and David as the years progressed and so will appear again in later chapters. It should be noted that Margrethe with her two daughters and Julius went through a major ordeal as a result of the British bombardment of Copenhagen in 1807 (all of her other sons were fighting with the Danish armed forces at this time). The flat that they occupied suffered a direct hit and was set on fire and so they had to flee as best as they could, through the streets of the burning town. They finally reached sanctuary in a house that was out of the range of the bombardment and which belonged to a family friend.

David and Wilhelmine were married in the Trinitatis church, one of the large city centre churches in Copenhagen. Its tower is known as the ‘Rundetaarn’, a well-known tourist landmark in the city. Wilhelmine was connected to this church. One of her uncles, Johan Lønberg Paludan was at this time a chaplain at the Trinitatis church and in 1811 she was confirmed by him.

The birth of David and Wilhelmine’s first child, Waldemar Peter, took place on the 19th October 1819 and he was christened on the 21st November in Helligaands Church, this was their local parish church at the time as they were living at Amagertorv. Their first daughter, Mathilde, was also born at Amagertorv in 1821. A major change took place in the life of the family however, when in 1822,

32 Taken from her obituary written by Julius Paludan. Ms in family archives.
David Borgen purchased a sugar refinery situated in Adelgade. This event will mark the beginning of the next chapter.

Plate 2.1  Marcus Peter Borgen

Marcus Borgen (1766 – 1832)
From the family photograph collection

Marcus Borgen and Inger Thulstrup’s Wedding Entry in the Church Book of the St Nicolie Kirke Copenhagen, 14th March 1793

Jeppe Prætorius (1745 – 1823)
From the collection of the Royal Library
Lille Torvægade – Christianshavn. The Brogades Sugar Refinery appears on the right hand side of the street as the building with two dormer windows in its roof space.

Picture from the collection of the Royal Library.

Lille Torvægade and Langebrodæ from Geddes Copenhagen map of 1761. The arrow indicates the Brogades Sugar Refinery.

Copied from Dahl, Bjørn Westerbeek “Geddes Elevenede Kort over København 1761”
David Borgen’s Birth Entry in Vor Frelsers Kirke, Christianshavn, Copenhagen 12th December 1793 (Born 21st November 1793).

It reads: David 21 Nov: Marcus Peter Borgen Bogholder og Inger Thulstrup Fad: Mad Herford, Jomfru Prætorius, Hr Justitzx:Schiøtt?, Hr Raadmand Lunding, Hr Brock Gross: Hr Kierulff Profess.[Note: Fad = Fadder, Godparent]

Plate 2.3

Matius Lunding
(1760 – 1806)
From Collection in the Royal Library

Niels Brock
(1731 – 1802)
From Collection in the Royal Library

Jørgen Kierulff
(1767 – 1810)
From Collection in the Royal Library
Amagertorv in the mid 19th century
From the Væggen Picture Collection

View towards Copenhagen from Christianshavn.
Taken from Bruun, Carl - Kjøbenhavn
Members from the Paludan Family.

Plate 2.5

Margrethe Benedicte Paludan
Frederik August Paludan
Julius Ferdinand Paludan
Christian Carl Paludan
CHAPTER 3: DAVID BORGEN’S MIDDLE LIFE

In 1822 David and Wilhelmine moved their family from Amagertorv to Matrikel 210 in Adelgade (Later this property was given the street number 14). Adelgade was a street first built in the mid-17th century. By the early 19th century it had acquired something of a dubious reputation in that an open air market had become established in it that dealt with old cloths and second hand lumber and which had become known locally as the ‘thieves market’ that is an outlet for stolen goods.\footnote{Bruun www.eremit.dk} The end of the street closest to Gøthersgade was more salubrious however as can be seen in Plate 3.1. To date no complete picture or photograph of No 14 Adelgade has been located but there is a tantalising glimpse of it on the right hand side of plate 3.1. Plate 3.2 provides a sketch of its frontage based on documentary evidence. The whole of Matrikels 210 and 331 were demolished early in the 20th century to make way for the Gøthersgade Electricity Works, and this power station has in turn been demolished by the recent construction of a communal heating station. The appearance of much of present day Adelgade is therefore very different to that in David Borgen’s time.

Behind the building shown in Plates 3.1 and 3.2 lay a complex set of buildings associated with the refinery, the plan of these structures can be seen in plate 5.2. This latter plate also shows the relationship between Adelgade and an adjoining street, Helsingørsgade, that will feature later in this work. In this chapter however, attention will be restricted to the domestic parts of the buildings occupied by David and his family, and those parts of the buildings involved in the sugar refinery will be left to chapter 5.

The family and their domestic servants occupied both the building fronting directly onto Adelgade and an adjoining side building situated to the rear of this front building. Their accommodation was substantial. The front building’s frontage on Adelgade was just under ten metres in length whilst its depth was just over ten metres. Some idea about the rooms in these buildings may be obtained from descriptions given in the documents associated with the mortgages that David raised on the property in 1827 and 1854\footnote{Mortgage documents dated 1827 and 1854 in Stadsarkivet.}. In style the building fronting on to Adelgade, was typical of late 18th century Copenhagen being four stories high and topped with a ridged roof penetrated by three dormer windows. Two further dormer windows were sited on the side of the roof facing the yard. The adjoining side building abutted on to the rear wall of the front building was aligned with a yard that ran down the side of the property closest to Helsingørsgade (see Plate 5.2). This side building was also four stories high and it was topped by a lean to roof with two dormer windows set into it. A passage way to the yard passed through one side of the front building, its entrance from Adelgade can be seen in Plate 3.1. The main entrance to the domestic quarters came off this passage way. A wooden floored foyer lay within the entrance and a door from this foyer gave access to a staircase lined with balustrades and which in turn gave access to all the floors in the front and side buildings. Both buildings contained cellars and a privy was situated in the cellar under the front building.

In a fashion typical of houses in Copenhagen at this time the domestic area chiefly occupied the top three floors of these two buildings the ground floor being left for offices and such like. All the rooms
in the domestic area contained stoves for heating. Two rooms were sited on the first floor of the front building, one facing the street and the other facing the yard. These rooms must have formed part of the public reception area of the house. They were substantial in size as each ran the entire length of the frontage of the house, and they each had a width of about five metres. The walls of each room were covered in cloth and their ceilings were covered in plasterwork edged by cornices. There was access from these rooms to a kitchen situated in the side building. Compared to modern kitchens its equipment was basic but it contained a fireplace with a kitchen range, a roasting oven, a serving board, a stone basin and a metal water pump. Running off this kitchen was a pantry and another small room. It could be noted that at this time most of the inhabitants of Copenhagen had to draw their water from public wells so the kitchen hand pump would have been something of a luxury item. On a darker note Adelgade suffered many deaths during the outbreak of cholera in the summer of 1853 and the source of this was attributed to the groundwater underlying this part of the city.

The second floor of the front building contained two rooms of similar dimensions to those just described for the first floor. The room closest to the street possibly functioned as a sitting room; it had cloth-covered walls above a wooden dado. The rear room functioned as a dining room and its walls were oil painted and decorated with gilded panels.

The layout of the third floor continued the pattern described for the first and second floors. It contained two rooms aligned with the street and each room was decorated with oil painted walls and a plastered ceiling. These rooms may have provided the master bedrooms for the family. The side building at this level contained a single room with a plastered ceiling and cloth covered walls overlying a dado. Lofts in both the front and the side building possibly functioned as bedrooms for the children and the servants.

There are no pictures or descriptions of the furnishings in the rooms just outlined, however the fashion of the period was empire (Danish taste was strongly influenced by France) and some idea of what the rooms might have looked like can be gained from a picture drawn of the Sivertsen side of the family in 1830. They too lived in central Copenhagen and were financially of a similar class to the Borgens. This picture is reproduced in Plate (3.3).

The Borgen family expanded rapidly following the move to Adelgade, Waldemar Peter and Mathilde were joined by Louise born in 1823, whilst Therese arrived in 1825, Edvard in 1827, Carl Emmanuel in 1829 and Mathilde Benedicte in 1830. The twins Christine Frederikke and Marie Julie were born in 1833 and were followed by Emma in 1835, Georg Ryan in 1836, Otto in 1837 and finally David Wilhelm in 1839. All of the children born in Adelgade were christened in the Trinitatis church. Sadly Mathilde died in 1827, Marie Julie in 1833 and Mathilde Benidicte in 1846, all the remaining children lived to maturity.

36 Villads
37 In 1932 Kirsten Borgen, one of David’s great granddaughters, married Paul Gerhard von Tangen Sivertsen.
The Danish census returns show that in 1834 the family had three domestic servants and by 1840 this total had risen to 5 but reducing in 1845 to four and in 1850 to three whilst just two remained in 1855 (Interestingly the 1850 census indicates that three workers in the sugar refinery, two of these from Sweden, were also living in the front house). The 1834 census shows Moritz Peter With, a student, lodging with the family whilst the 1845 census indicates Moritz’s brother Viggo also staying in the house. Both of these boys were sons of Wilhelmine’s sister Louise. Louise had married Jesper Peter With and had eight children with him but sadly she died in 1821. Jesper and Louise lived in Copenhagen but after Louise’s death Jesper moved to Jutland where he worked as an estate manager and became a well-known politician of liberal inclinations (this was at a time prior to the formation of political parties as we know them today in Denmark). He was a member of the Jutland Provincial Assembly and after 1849 a member of the first democratically elected Danish parliament. He must have known Joachim Schouw, the long standing President of the Jutland Provincial Assembly and also an important liberal. We will encounter Joachim later as he was a good friend of the Borgen family. Regarding the With brothers, Moritz later became an estate manager and a procurator whilst Viggo prospered as a merchant (Grosserer).

Unfortunately there are no documents that describe the domestic life of the Borgen family. Jan Møller in his book “Borger i voldenes København” provides a description of a typical middle class family living in Copenhagen during the early 19th century and this might give some idea as to daily life in the household. The family would have risen early and at about 7 am taken a light breakfast such as coffee and a piece of toast. The day’s work would have then started but with a break at 10am for an open sandwich (Smørrebrød) with meat, cheese or sausage. The main meal of the day would been taken at about 1 pm and would have consisted of some filling dish such as porridge or soup followed by a more appealing course such as ox fillet, pork cutlet, or fish. Vegetables appeared only occasionally and deserts were confined to high days and holidays. At 6 pm tea would be served with slices of bread. Finally at 9 pm came the last meal of the day usually made up of open sandwiches. After the evening meal it was the custom for the head of the house to read aloud some suitable work for the benefit of the other family members, meanwhile the ladies of the house would occupy themselves with knitting and sewing.

On Sundays the family would have attended church. As mentioned in an earlier chapter following the move to Adelgade David and his family joined the Trinitatis Kirke (Plate 3.4). It should be remembered that Wilhelmine already had associations with this church through her uncle Johan. This church had been founded by King Christian IV in 1656. It was the University Church of Copenhagen and from 1658 its affairs were overseen by the Consistorium (Senate) of the University. Its tower the ‘Rundetaarn’ (Plate 3.4) is unusual for a church as it was built as an astronomical observatory, this explains its broad round shape. The loft over the aisle of the church housed the University’s library up to 1861. In 1830 David thanks to his accounting skills became the ‘Kirkeværge’ for the church that is, its treasurer, a post that he retained up to 1858. (The members of the Borgen family continued to be associated with this church until about 1920).

Members of both David’s and Wilhelmine’s families must have been frequent visitors to Adelgade. Marcus, Davids father (see Plate 2.1), lived all his life in Christianshavn and he did not die until 1832.

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38 DBLWith, Jesper Peter, 1791-1854.
Likewise Wilhelmine’s mother Margrethe (see Plate 2.4) lived in Gothersgade 137 until 1833, this address was not too far away from Adelgade.

There were other relations and friends who must have been entertained in David’s and Wilhelmine’s home. David had a number of cousins living in Copenhagen, and three of these were the children of Marcus Borgen’s next eldest brother Andreas Borgen. Andreas was a distiller by trade and in 1792 he married Bodil Maria Hansen. Their sons included Bonaparte Borgen born in 1798, Vilhelm August Borgen born in 1801 and Carl Andreas Borgen, born in 1802. It is very likely that Bonaparte and Vilhelm would have been regular visitors to Adelgade. As Bonaparte’s biography in the Wikipedia and the DBL shows he became a schoolteacher and was involved with the highly respected Metropolitan School in Copenhagen, becoming its rector in 1844. In 1845 he was appointed as a titular professor in the University of Copenhagen. Bonaparte married Marcine Christine Borgen who was David’s half-sister. Bonaparte’s younger brother Vilhelm August Borgen also followed a career in school teaching. He was interested in politics and in 1859 became the Minister for Culture in the national government. He was an educational reformer and as mentioned in Chapter 6 was responsible for some significant changes in the Danish school system. Carl Andreas Borgen, studied pharmaceutical science at Copenhagen University and after this he became the technical manager of David’s sugar refinery in Adelgade. He married Anne Marie Zimmermann in 1832 and they had one child, Carl Theodor. They lived in the ‘first back building’ of the sugar refinery (see Plate 5.2). His sister-in-law Wilhelmine Zimmerman took over the running of his house following the death of Maria and later they married (1840) but had no children. In 1859 Carl became the ‘Klokker’ of the Trinitatis Kirke, that is, the Lay Administrator for the Church. It was a salaried post and it would therefore have helped Carl following the demise of the sugar refinery.

Two of David’s half-brothers lived in Copenhagen. They were amongst the creditors listed when his refinery closed and both had other connections with the sugar trade; these were Carl August Borgen (1815 – 1870) and Ole Christian Borgen (1808 – 1876). Carl August was briefly a sugar refiner (1855-1860) but as described in chapter 7 he eventually made a career in insurance. Ole Christian owned the Copenhagen firm Christian Borgen & Son. It was situated on Strandgade in Christianshavn and it supplied sugar and syrup both wholesale and retail. The firm was founded by Ole Christian between 1845 and 1850 and traded until sometime between 1885 and 1890.

As mentioned in Chapter 2 three of Wilhelmine’s brothers (see Plate 2.5) retained a close link with the family. Julius Ferdinand Paludan (1794 – 1879) was a long-standing friend and eventually wrote the obituaries of both David and Wilhelmine. He followed a career in the army. Entered as a ‘Frikorporal’ in 1808 he was trained at the Danish Military Institute. He was commissioned in 1810 in the ‘Kings own’ Regiment. In 1842 he had advanced to the rank of Major in the 4th battalion of the line, and in 1848 he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and appointed the Commanding Officer of the 4th battalion of the line. He served with distinction in the first Slesvig war. In May 1848 he took part in the campaign near Dybbøl in Southern Jutland, and later he was involved with the fighting around Nybøl. In 1849 he took part in the battle of Fredericia and for this service he was awarded

40 DBL vol 2 p523-4.
41 DK Census København.1834.
42 KVV 1850 to 1860
43 KVV various years
the silver cross and promoted Colonel. In the autumn of 1849 he became the Inspector of Infantry for Sjælland and in 1851 the Chief of the General Command in North Jutland. In 1855 he was promoted to the rank of Major General and appointed Commander of the 1st Infantry Brigade. After this appointment and before retiring in 1858 he worked in the Danish War Ministry. The DBL\textsuperscript{44} states that he was an outstanding administrator as well as being an excellent soldier and a good commander. In 1828 he married Johanne Petrine Bang and following her death in 1832 he married Gotfredine Faber (Sister of Bishop Nicolai Faber). Julius and his first wife had two sons and four daughters. In 1856 he was made a Commander of the Order of the Dannebrog.

Correspondence shows Wilhelmine’s twin brothers Christian and Frederik August also retained contact with the family. Papers in David’s files held in the Rigsarkiv show that both exchanged correspondence with the family and that Frederik August was an investor in David’s sugar refinery.

Moving away from kith and kin Professor Joachim Frederic Schouw (1789 – 1852) was probably the most eminent of David and Wilhelmine’s acquaintances (See Plate 3.5). He was a botanist who made a number of important contributions to knowledge, especially in the field of phytogeography, and yet he was also an important politician who played an important role regarding the Danish constitution introduced in 1849. Clearly he was an outstanding parallel worker but operating on a larger stage than that of David. From correspondence between Joachim and David preserved in the Royal Library it would appear that the two were friendly from 1829 onwards but this relationship could be much earlier in date. It is not clear how the friendship came about but Wilhelmine’s brother Julius Paludan appears also to have been a friend of Joachim and the contact could therefore have come about via the Paludan family.

Joachim was born in Copenhagen in 1789, the son of Paul Schouw a wine dealer and Sara Liebenberg. His family intended him to enter into the wine trade but his father died in 1800 leaving Sara a widow with seven children to look after. In 1804 Joachim started work as a solicitors clerk in order to help the family finances. In due time he became a fully qualified lawyer and for some years was able to sustain the family from the proceeds of his practice. From his early teens Joachim had been interested in botany and he managed to study this subject whilst qualifying for law at Copenhagen University.

In the summer of 1812 he travelled to Norway with the Norwegian botanist Christen Smith. On this journey he was strongly impressed with the conspicuous zonal division of the mountain vegetation and the distribution of plant species in relation to altitude. This experience stimulated his interest in the geographic distribution of plants a subject that is known as phytogeography. After his return from Norway in 1813 Joachim obtained a civil-service post. Whilst working at this post he pursued his interest in botany by studying all the available literature on plant geography, especially the works of Alexander von Humboldt and Göran Wahlenberg (Today Alexander von Humboldt is recognised as the founder of the subject of phytogeography). In 1816 Joachim’s botanical studies allowed him to submit a thesis to the University of Copenhagen. The outcome was an award of a Ph.D. degree, a

\textsuperscript{44} DBL p535.
grant and a three-year leave to make a botanical trip to Italy. After visiting the Alps, the Apenines, and Sicily his met Pyramus de Candolle in Geneva and Adrien de Jussieu and von Humboldt in Paris. Joachim returned to Copenhagen in 1820, where King Frederik VI appointed him an extraordinary Professor of Botany at Copenhagen University. Apart from botany Joachim was extremely interested in climatology and during 1823–1824 he had meteorological observations made in several Danish towns, the results of which he published in _Tidsskrift for Naturvidenskaberne_. It was at this time he started collaboration with Ole Ludt Bang one of the medical professors in the University of Copenhagen. Their joint interest centred on the connection between atmospheric conditions and disease, this being the era before the role of germs in disease had been realised.

Joachim was greatly interested in popularising science and in improving the teaching of natural history. From 1831 he was editor of _Dansk Ugeskrift_, in which many of his popular-science lectures were printed. Joachim’s scientific interests in a sense came together with his interests in politics in that he expressed concern that man’s activities influenced the environment, often with destructive consequences. He was one of the first to appreciate the role of politics and economics in creating environmental problems and as such he was helping to establish studies that today form the subject of political ecology. In 1841 Joachim was appointed curator of the botanical gardens of Copenhagen, and four years later he became a full professor.

In 1827 Joachim married Susanne Marie Dalgas, the daughter of Jean Dalgas a priest of the French Reformed Church in Fredericia. Susanne had a brother Christian who lived in Livorno (Leghorn) in Italy. Joachim and Susanne stayed with Christian and his family at the start of Joachim’s study tour of Italian flora that took place from 1829 to 1830. David’s correspondence with Joachim dates from this period. Joachim and Susanne had at least two children, Georgia born in 1828 and Frederik born in 1834. Georgia married the well-known Danish painter Peter Christian Skovgaard who subsequently illustrated some of Joachim’s publications. Susanne’s sister Christine married Baron Henrik Stampe. She was a friend of the sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen as was Joachim. Sadly Susanne died in 1844.

As indicated above much of Joachim’s field work as a botanist was carried out in Italy. From 1829 onwards David looked after Joachim’s financial affairs in Denmark whilst Joachim was away from the country. Thus for example in a letter written at Naples in 1829, Joachim instructs David to pass on a consignment of Italian wine to two medical academics, Professor Bang (Ole Bang see above) and to Etatsraad Saxtorph (probably Johan Silvester Saxtorph)\(^{45}\). Part of this letter is shown in Plate 3.6 and incidently it shows David himself would also be receiving a consignment of the Italian wines Lachryma Christi and Falerno, presumably as a thank you for services rendered! As another example of this correspondence the following is a translation of a letter sent by David to Joachim in 1830:

_Copenhagen 12 Jan 1830._

\(^{45}\) Letter J.F.Schouw to D.Borgen dated 27.11.1829 in the collection of the Royal Library, Copenhagen. Cat No NKS15299.
Dear Friend,

I am writing to you owing to the fact that I have not yet received your salary. I have spoken to Thiessen about this and he has promised to look urgently into this matter. As I am concerned that you might default on your debts I have arranged with O. in Hamburg to forward 900 rigsdalers to you at your address ‘Dalgas’, in Lavorno. I hope this reaches you. Your present finances are as follows:

Income

Pay .................................................................100 Rdr
From Etatsraad Werlouf and Sekretær Deickmann ......40 Rdr
University Office ..................................................300 Rdr
Publications ..........................................................200 Rdr

Outgoings

I have paid out a variety of small items such as 30 Rdr to your brother, 16 Rdr to your daughter, your fire insurance premiums and more. These are listed in the accounts that I have sent by the hand of Captain Bieckling to your address ‘Dalgas’ in Lavorno. I took this opportunity on the advice of P. Siemans and I hope you receive these accounts.

I have received correspondence from your brother by the hand of Captain H.P.Thorsøe. This gives an account of your grandmothers disposition. I have received good news regarding our previous letter to Mr H. Smith of London. He is preparing to publish a foreign literary journal and he invites us to contribute. This communication could include Captain C. Christensen’s meteorological observations.

Thank you for your cards of the 21st October and 9th November. I enjoyed reading them and I must say you have made a good move by exchanging our damp and cold summer here in Denmark with the mild climate of Italy! We are now experiencing a harsh winter, snow started in October and we have already had 5 degrees of frost. Ship sailings have been stopped well before normal on account of the weather and this has been harmful for trade. We are suffering wild and uncomfortable winds and this has been especially hard on the elderly.

My family and I are in good health. Julius (Paludan) has a daughter and he is well pleased with the new addition to his family. There has been a lot of trouble in the Diocese of Ribe but I expect you already know about this. I hope you and your family are enjoying your new home in Italy and that you are all well.

My whole family and I send you our greetings and best wishes:
In the 1830’s Joachim became engaged in national politics. As described in an earlier chapter in 1831 in order to meet public demand King Frederik VI agreed to establish four assemblies each termed a ‘provincialstænderforsamling’ (provincial assembly), one each for Schlesvig and Holstein, one for Jutland, and one for the ‘Isles’, importantly the latter included Copenhagen. The assemblies had no powers to make laws and were strictly to act as advisory bodies to the executive, which remained as the King and his Council of Ministers. The Assembly of the Isles met in Roskilde and was made up of 7 members from the ‘learned class’, 3 members for Iceland and the Faeroes, 12 for Copenhagen, 11 for market towns, 17 for the landowners and 20 for the farmers. The first two groups were appointed by the King and the rest elected by male citizens who had specified qualifications such as ownership of land or assets above a certain value, it has been estimated that these qualifications were met by about 2.8% of the population. Joachim was asked by the King to be his representative on this council and following this Joachim was appointed as the first President of the Assembly of the Isles (see Plate 3.7). This assembly first met in 1835 (in Roskilde) and its last meeting was held in 1848. David himself was elected as a deputy for the Assembly of the Isles (Stænder-Suppleant) in 1840 and served in this post until 1846. Joachim also became a member of Jutland’s Provincial Assembly and became its president. From this point on Joachim became very much involved with the constitutional development of Denmark.

Joachim was closely associated with a group that eventually formed the National Liberal Party, especially Henrik Nicolai Clausen (1793 – 1877) and Lauritz Nicolai Hvidt (1777 – 1856). Henrik Clausen was a clergyman who held a professorial chair in Theology at the University of Copenhagen. Near the end of 1848 he was appointed a member of the second cabinet of Adam Moltke (sometimes referred to as the ‘March Cabinet’ as it ran from the 22nd March 1848 to the 15th November 1858). This was one of the governments in the transition period from rule by absolute monarchy to that of a popularly elected parliament. He was a member of the National Constitutional Assembly from 1848 to 1849, of the Folketing from 1849 to 1853 and of the Landsting from 1853 to 1863. Lauritz Hvidt (see Plate 3.5) qualified in law but worked as a businessman and politician. He served on the Danish Stock Exchange commission and later the Danish National Bank of which he was a director from 1835 to 1856. He was the chairman of the Management Committee of the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society. He was minister without portfolio in the first cabinet of Adam Moltke and was elected to the upper house of the first Danish parliament (Landstinget) in 1849 (in the event he did not accept this latter post). With regards to local government in Copenhagen he was chairman of the Copenhagen City Council from 1841 to 1853. David would have known Hvidt as David served as a city councillor from 1835 to 1857 and in that capacity shared committee work with him (see chapter 6).
At the national level Joachim played a central role in the events that ended the period of absolute monarchy and hence was one of the architects of the new constitution (the Grundlov). Joachim was therefore involved in the creation of the National Liberal party of Denmark although he did not accept all the policies this party stood for. As a liberal he was in accord with this party but he did not agree with its nationalist agenda. The party wished to incorporate the Duchy of Schleswig fully into the Danish state. Joachim instead believed that the Danish speaking part of Schleswig should be split from the German speaking part with the Germans being allowed to join the German Federation and the Danish part, the province of South Jutland, being joined to the Danish state. History has proved Joachim correct in this view. During the 1830’s Joachim’s involvement in politics was useful to David, who as a sugar refiner was increasingly at odds with the taxation policy of the ruling government. Thus in a letter of 1836 David writes to Joachim thanking him for his advice on legislation in hand that would affect the sugar industry.46

During Joachim’s last years his health deteriorated, and he died on the 28th April 1852. The Schouw family in general may have been friends of the family. Joachim’s brother Christian Michael Schouw was an investor in David’s business and again he appears in the correspondence included in David’s file in the Rigsarkiv. Christian was a police lawyer and it could have been his example that stimulated David’s son Carl Emmanuel to follow a similar career.

An Irish businessman George Ryan (see Plate 7.3) had an investment in the refinery and the fact that one of David’s sons was given the name George Ryan Borgen suggests that he too was probably a friend of the family. Many of the people mentioned in this chapter will be encountered again in later parts of this work. Before going on to describe David’s sugar refinery however, it will be useful to look at his career in the Copenhagen Civil Guard (Borgervæbning). He joined this regiment shortly after his marriage and remained an active member until the mid-1850’s.

46 Letter J.F.Schouw to D.Borgen dated 21.02.1836 in collection of the Royal Library, Copenhagen  Cat No NKS1529
No 16 Adelgade in 1901. No 14 which was earlier owned by David Borgen appears to the right of No 16.

Photograph from the collection held in the Royal Library.
The front aspect of 14 Adelgade (Matrikel 210). The sketch is based on that part of the building that appears in plate 3.1, the written description in the mortgage documents of 1854, the Bergreen Carre Plan of Copenhagen 1886, and the survey of the property in 1854 made by Schlegal
The Sivertsen family in 1830. The furnishings in David Borgen’s house might have been very similar to those shown in this picture.

Picture from the family collection.
Rundetaarn with the Trinitatis church behind in 1825.
Taken from a drawing by H.G.F.Holm and reproduced in ‘Kierkegaard by Peter Thielst

The view from the top of the Rundetaarn looking towards Copenhagen Cathedral and Frederiksberg Castle in 1836.
Copied from the ‘Vægen’ collection in the Copenhagen City Museum
Joachim Schouw
1789 – 1852
Copy from Thorvaldsensmuseum

Lauritz Nicolai Hvidt
1777 – 1856
Portrait from the collection of the Royal Library.
Extract from a letter dated 27th November 1829 from Joachim Schouw to David Borgen informing him that he will receive bottles of Lacryma Christi and Falerno wine. Etatsraad Saxtorf and Professor Ole Bang were to also receive bottles of these wines and bottles of Gregnano wine as well!

Extract from a letter held in the Royal Library
The First Meeting of the Provincial Assembly of the Isles. It met in 1835 under the Presidency of Joachim Schouw.

Picture taken from Flemming Dahl - København’s Bystyre gennem 300 aar.
CHAPTER 4: DAVID BORGEN’S TIME IN THE COPENHAGEN CIVIL GUARD (BORGERVÆBNING).

Sometime between the years of 1820 and 1825⁴⁷ David Borgen joined the Copenhagen Civil Guard (Borgervæbning) an organisation that he was to remain in as an active member until 1855.

The Copenhagen Civil Guard has its origins as far back as the 16ᵗʰ century, however the organisation that would have been more familiar with David emerged in 1663⁴⁸ following the siege of Copenhagen by the Swedes in 1658. In its original form the Copenhagen Civil Guard was purely an infantry division. It was made up of volunteer citizens drawn from the various trades within the city and its tasks included standing guard duty in the city on the occasions the regular army was away, and helping the authorities maintain order, and in assisting the authorities in cases of fire or, in winter, removing ice from public areas. It is interesting to note that the Copenhagen Civil Guard preceded the formation of a fire brigade or a police force in the city. It retained a supporting role to both of these latter organisations once they had come in to existence⁴⁹.

David joined the Artillery division of the Copenhagen Civil Guard, this being known as the Borgelige Artilleri. Some uniforms worn by the members of this unit at the time of David’s membership are shown in Plate 4.1. The Civil Guard had contributed to the defence of Copenhagen against the British in 1807 and had suffered major casualties, David would have been 16 years old at the time and it could have been the memory of this event that motivated him to join the guard.

The Artillery division was first formed in 1789 and initially it was administered separate to the Civil Guard. Following the siege of Copenhagen by the British army in 1807 however both units were reorganised into a single Corps that consisted of two divisions, infantry and artillery, and commanded by a single officer, the Stadshauptmand or City Colonel. The artillery division was divided in to three battalions each with four companies. Each battalion was commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel and each company by either a Captain or a Major. There were some supporting services and a military band. In 1837 for example the artillery division consisted of 2403 men, including 3 Battalion Commanders, 1Inspector, 2 Chief Adjutants, 12 Captains, 12 Premier Lieutenants, 48 Second Lieutenants, 6 Sergeants, 240 Bombardiers, 1796 Artillery Constables and 38 musicians.⁵⁰ Although the records from 1825 to 1839 give David the rank of Lieutenant he would have started as a Second Lieutenant and been promoted Premier Lieutenant having passed the appropriate exams, these included both theoretical and practical elements⁵¹.

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⁴⁷ The exact date is unknown. Records in the Rigsarkiv show he was not a member in 1819 and no rank is given in the 1820 KVV however the 1825 entry in KVV shows him to be a Lieutenant in the Artillery division of the Borgervæbning.
⁴⁸ Davidsen p213.
⁴⁹ Bruun pages 899 and 900.
⁵⁰ KDB
The Stadshauptmand at the time of David’s entry into the artillery division was Bernhard Thortsen (1756 – 1837), in civil life he was a dealer in silk and cloth merchandice. Thortsen was superseded as Stadshauptmand in 1836 by Jørgen Conradt (1771 – 1851) a master coppersmith (see Plate 4.2). In the course of his civilian work Jørgen had travelled to England before setting up a metalworking company in Copenhagen. Later he helped in the founding of an institute for metal workers. He had joined the Civil Guard as a Corporal and became a Sergeant before being commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1803, and from there he rose steadily through the ranks. These two men were typical of those of the Civil Guard who reached commissioned rank. They were normally master tradesmen often owning and running their own businesses.

The Civil Guard was financed by the local authority which in turn raised the money required by taxing the city ratepayers. The tax was known as the ‘Borgervæbningsskat’ and in 1840 for example it amounted to 12430 Rdl out of a total budget of 508,911 Rdl. This finance coped with the everyday needs of a purely voluntary manned corps but as will be described in emergencies such as that occurring in the events leading up to the first Schleswig war supplementary finances had to be obtained in order to allow the Civil Guard to meet its obligations. Even in normal times however funding could present problems as David found in the following story taken from Villad Christensen’s book about Copenhagen. This occurred shortly after David’s appointment as City Treasurer (Kæmner) and he obviously thought he was raising a simple issue that could quickly be resolved. In fact he soon discovered he had opened a can of worms! The story goes as follows:

A piece of land south of Baaadmandsstrade was purchased by the Royal China Factory, which built a branch factory there and part of the ground north of Baaadmandsstrade went in 1779 to the Søkvæsthus. Since 1808 the Civic Guard had used this land as a drill hall and parade ground. The drill hall was an old building dating from 1704 and consequently it constantly needed repairs. In 1843 the Kæmner drew attention to the fact that lot of substantial implements for clearing ice were housed in the loft of this building and which by their weight were threatening to destroy it so he asked if they could be moved to another place or sold. They were designed for clearing the ice in the city moat, but had not been used since the English war (1807).

This communication led to these old implements being examined carefully. The heaviest pieces were two ice breakers and an ice plough for two horses. Further they found 238 ice saws, 798 ice axes, 106 boat hooks, 126 ice fenders, 12 ice rakes, 54 wooden clubs and 6 ice sledges. All these things were piled up in the loft which had yielded several inches under the weight and would hardly be able to take the strain for much longer. The Stadshauptman was against anything being sold with the one exception of the heavy ice plough which because of its size and weight could not be used. Attempts were now made to get the military authorities to store the remaining equipment, but neither those controlling Copenhagen fortress or the Arsenal wanted them and so in 1844 the local authorities were forced to erect a special building on the communal parade ground in order to retain the remaining implements. This arrangement did not last long either. Problems arose when in 1851 a

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52 Davidsen p218
53 Villads Ch3 pp244/5.
54 Villads Ch 3 pp 81 – 84.
building association headed by a Pastor Wisby started to build a row of houses for workers on that part of Søkvæsthusets ground next to the parade ground and these were designed to have windows that overlooked the parade ground. The Kæmner protested against this plan, in his view “it would be a considerable nuisance for the citizens to exercise where so many people could watch them; and without having asked the local authorities a fence had already been erected on the parade ground and one had to assume a road also would be built across it by the new houses”. When Pastor Wisby was asked about this he had to admit that his association should not have raised the fence without permission but asked that it might remain there. He would also like a street in continuation of Prinsensgade, but he had left it too late to ask the local authorities for their permission. His application was refused and it did not help that the Ministry of Finance, which itself was interested in a street plan on this part of Christianhavn, had supported his application and recommended his application for a thoroughfare across the ground. The pastor had got the local authorities against him by his impetuosity and consequently he had to give up the building work already started and to look for another place to build the houses for his workers.

This turned out to be a pyrrhic victory. The local authorities had won their case regarding Pastor Wisby and the Ministry of Finance but these debates gave the Government a good reason to investigate who actually owned this parade ground. The result was that it was established the ground belonged to the State and the local authorities were forced to accept this. The local authorities then tried to maintain that the State was obliged to give the Civic Guards another parade ground if it took away the one used hitherto. The local authorities subsequently had to withdraw this claim as the Government demanded that the case should be tried at the Court of Law and so in 1854 the local authorities had to admit that the State had the absolute right to deal with the parade ground as it saw fit without any consideration towards the city.

The government acted quickly following this and told the Civic Guards to vacate the ground before the end of 1856, it announced at the same time that the whole area would be divided into 37 residential development plots and sold.

The Commanding Officer was very unhappy the way things had turned out. He had no other place to take his people so he continued to use the old parade ground in 1857 for training. The Government sent one sharp reminder after another asking him to leave. On the 6th July the Minister of Finance demanded that the Guard should stop their exercises completely on Christianshavn, but even at the beginning of August the guards were still there. The Minister of Finance then approached the Minister of Justice asking if they could be removed. That helped, and on the 6th August the City Guards announced all parade training had stopped. At the same time a list was made up and sent of what remained and belonged to the City Guards. These included a butt, elm trees, one sycamore, 8 horse chestnut trees 24 fruit trees and some bushes. The surrounding fence had been paid for by the local authorities as well as the building erected in 1844 to house the ice implements.

 Pastor Carl Holger Wisby was an energetic man who devoted much of his life to improving the conditions of the poor in Copenhagen. DBL contains an outline of his life.
These implements were now without a home for the second time and once again the local authorities tried to get permission to sell them at auction. But this was refused them once again and the Minister of Justice used the opportunity to impress that not only should the implements always be ready for use but the local authorities had now as before the duty of clearing the ice whenever it was demanded. With regards to housing this old iron the Government this time had to find the solution, as they had demanded that the place be vacated. Their solution was that everything should be delivered to one of the equipment stores belonging to the regular army. The Butt on the Parade Ground was allowed to stay for one more year and the rest of the inventory was sold by auction for 285 Rdl.

This was a small incident but it shows clearly the antiquated way affairs were still being conducted in Copenhagen in the middle of the 19th century. By this time David Borgen’s career in the Civil Guard had progressed and in 1839 he was promoted to the rank of Captain. It is very likely that he assumed command of one of the Artillery Companies at this time. He was promoted Major sometime after 1848 but before 1850 and probably continued as a Company Commander. 56

It is worth now turning to the events of 1848. The situation regarding Schleswig and Holstein was deteriorating fast during this year and progressively the units of the regular army normally stationed in Copenhagen were withdrawn from the city in order to take up positions in preparation for the coming war. The Copenhagen City Guard was therefore required to take over those functions that had been the task of the regular army. As already mentioned this imposed a major strain on the finances of the Guard and extra funds were urgently required. On the 31st March 1848 the Head Magistrate (Overpræsident) Michael Lange together with the Chairman of the City Council, H.P. Hansen, launched an appeal for funds to supplement the Civil Guards budget. As a result the sum of 17462 Rdl was raised for equipment and payment of guard duty to support impecunious members of the Civil Guard. Some fifteen members of the City Council contributed to this sum, the largest contribution coming from Major Sass who gave some 6000 Rdl to the fund 57. Mathias Wilhelm Sass was very wealthy, he had founded his own import export business and by 1848 it had become one of the largest businesses of its type in Copenhagen. Aside from being a city councillor he was a Major in the Civil Guard and an influential member of the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society. His son Lorentz was at this time an adjutant in the Borgelige Artilleri. Andreas Hansen Bjerre a brewer and a Captain in the Kings Livcorps was another large contributor as was Christian August Broberg a wealthy businessman who, as described elsewhere in this work, owned a large shipping company specialising in importing coffee (Broberg also invested in David Borgen’s sugar refinery so he will be encountered in chapter 7). Smaller contributors included Jacob Christian Jacobsen, the founder of the Carlsberg Brewery, he was a Lieutenant in the Civil Guard in 1848, and David Borgen himself. A wide range of trades was represented in the list of contributors examples being F.C. Hjorth a master nail maker, Christian Scherfig a baker, and Alexander Øst a Grocer and also a Director of Copenhagen’s Fire Insurance Company. Although not all of these City Councillors had served in the City Guard many had and the list of contributors does give a fair idea of the type of people who provided the officers for this Corps. The portraits of some of the contributors are shown in Plate 4. 3.

56 KVV entries from 1840 to 1850 and Hundrup.
57 Villads. Ch 3 p479 and records in the Rigsarkivet, København.
Given the fact that the Civil Guard was a voluntary organisation made up wholly of trades-people and businessmen it is not surprising that discipline was relaxed compared to regular military organisations and occasionally this gave rise to problems for those in authority in the Corps\textsuperscript{58}. There was a limited scope for punishment so rule tended to be by incentives and co-operation rather than by the imposition of sterner disciplinary measures. The Civil Guard during the 1820s, 30s and 40s frequently attracted the attention of cartoonists. The grand uniforms worn by your local grocer or baker gave a sense of inconsistency that made good copy. The annual review of the Civil Guard was considered a great social occasion shared by the Guard and public alike (see Plate 4.4). The situation changed as war approached however, and the Civil Guard began to be taken much more seriously. The Minister for War Anton Tscherning also wished for the City Guard to be brought more in to line with the practices of the regular army. As a result Stadshauptmand Conradsen was in 1848 replaced by a regular army officer, Ernst Paul Bruhn.

Ernst Paul Bruhn joined the regular army in 1802 and saw service in the Crown Prince Frederiks Regiment from that year until 1839 when as a Major he joined the General Staff of the Danish Army. He remained on the staff when promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in 1842 and at the same time he took over the command of a volunteer regiment, the Livjægerkorps. In 1845 he was promoted to the rank of Colonel. He continued to serve on the General Staff up to 1848. At this point he was due to retire from the regular army but he requested that he be allowed to continue. Tscherning at this point offered him the command of the Civil Guard and promotion to the rank of Major General. Bruhn accepted this offer and subsequently remained in this post until 1866.

On taking up his post Bruhn issued a circular to the Civil Guard\textsuperscript{59} reminding them of what they could and could not claim expenses for, translated it reads:

\textbf{CIRCULAR}

\textit{To the Infantry and Artillery Companies of the Copenhagen Civil Guard.}

Enclosed are printed forms for completion showing the availabilities of personnel for the month of May. Attention is drawn to the following:

1. Expenses incurred by each Company for service during the past period will be payable upon presentation of signed receipts to the Regimental Quartermaster Captain Dienhoff by the end of the month.

2. Payments will be made provided receipts comply exactly with current orders and are accompanied with full proof of employment.

3. Expenses are not paid for picket guard duty.

4. Expenses are not paid for help given to the drummers.

\textsuperscript{58} J.Davidsen. Fra det gamle Kongens København. Ch 7.pp219,220.

\textsuperscript{59} Copy preserved in the Copenhagen City Archive.
5. Companies are allowed to pay expenses after each tour in a manner of their choice.

6. Payments to ranks higher than ordinary soldiers must be made in accord with current regulations.

7. The smallest number of expenses one company has submitted is for 7 men and the largest is 44 men. 10 companies have submitted claims for under 20 men and 7 companies have put in claims for 20 to 30 men whilst only 4 companies have claimed for more than 30 men.

Copenhagen’s Civil Guard, 1st June 1848.

Bruhn.

From the records in the Copenhagen City Archive General Bruhn then had to spend some time in handling the extra funding raised from the City Councillors described earlier. David Borgen would have continued, probably as a company commander, throughout this period Hundrup states that in 1855 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. As his name does not appear in the 1855 list of officers in the Artillery Division it may well be David was retired from the active list of the Civil Guard in this year (he would have been 62) and given a retirement rank, certainly all documentation from this year onwards refers to him being a Lieutenant Colonel in the Civil Guard.

Tscherning after much effort managed to obtain reforms in the organisation of the Civil Guard during the 1850s and the Corps remained in being until 1870.

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60 Rigsarkiv. Anciennitetslister 1855.
Some uniforms worn by members of the ‘Borgelige Artilleri’ - The artillery division of the Copenhagen City Guard.

Copied from the website: http://dendigitalebyport.byhistorie.dk.

Plate 4.1

A Junior Officer

An Artillery Constable
Bernhard Thortsen
Stadshauptman before 1836.
Portrait from collection in the Royal Library

Jørgen Conradt Stadshauptman
1836 – 1848
Portrait from collection in the Royal Library
Some of the City Councillors who contributed to the Civil Guard Funds during the 1848 Crisis

Portraits taken from the Royal Library Portrait Collection
The Artillery Division of The Copenhagen Civil Guard on the occasion of their annual review on Amager Fælled in 1840.

Cartoon taken from the ‘Væggen’ collection in the Copenhagen City Museum.
CHAPTER 5: DAVID BORGEN’S SUGAR REFINERY

Given David’s early life it is not surprising that he decided to enter the business of refining and wholesaling sugar. In 1822 he purchased the sugar refinery sited in matrikel 210 Adelgade for the sum of 9000 Rdr. To get some idea of this sum in modern day values it should be appreciated that a workman’s annual wage in the 1820’s would have been about 200 Rdl. This property had been previously owned by Johan Diderich Meyer. The KVV for 1819 shows that Johan Diderich Meyer was a ‘sugar master’ living in matrikel 331 in Helsingørsgade. David in due course would purchase 331 Helsingørsgade and join it to 210 Adelgade, but for the time being the two properties remained separate. 331 Helsingørsgade had earlier been owned by Diderich Ludvig Meyer probably Johan Diderich’s father.

Although it has not been possible to locate David’s ‘Borgerbrev’, that is, his licence to trade as a wholesaler and refiner of sugar within the city of Copenhagen, he would have been awarded this in 1822 and thus entered the influential community of merchants known collectively as the ‘Borgerskab’. From now on he gained the title ‘Grosserer’ that is ‘Merchant’.

From the records of 1858 described later it can be assumed that in order to purchase the refinery David must have been able to raise capital from business associates, friends and family as well as the only bank available in Denmark at that time, the National Bank. Following his purchase David undertook a number of improvements to the property including the construction of a new building (probably the 1st Back Building shown on Plates 5.2 and 5.3). To help him with this work in 1827 he managed to obtain a mortgage from the City funds amounting to 30,000 Rdr.

Throughout David Borgen’s time as a sugar refiner the Danish sugar industry was based on cane sugar grown in the Danish West Indies, it was not until the 1870s that the industry turned to the use of sugar beet as the source of sugar. In modern eyes this meant a cloud hung over the industry owing to its dependence on sugar cane grown using slave labour. As stated in Chapters 1 and 2 although the trade in slaves had been abolished by the Danish State in 1803, it was not until 1849 before the institution of slavery itself was abolished in the Danish West Indies.

The first stage in producing sugar took place in the West Indies before transhipment. Mills crushed the cane and allowed the juice to be extracted. The juice was then heated in large vats but not allowed to boil. A clarifier such as lime powder was then added and the impurities that collected as scum on the surface of the liquid were removed by skimming. The juice was now transferred to a second boiler and reduced to syrup. This syrup was placed in lead-lined

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61 Hundrup p28.
62 Taken from ’Borger I voldenes København, Jan Møller ISBN 87-7324-413-9.
63 KJR.
64 KVK 1819-20 part 2 p 312.
65 KVK 1805 p293 for full name see KVK 1800. The 1819-20 KVK shows H.D.Meyer’s widow living at 331 Helsingørsgade together with J.D.Meyer.
66 Mortgage documents dated 1827 and 1854. Copenhagen City Archives.
67 See Beerfreund (1840) for a contemporary description of sugar refining in Denmark.
boxes and allowed to cool. Following crystallisation a dark brown sugar was produced and when separated from the residual fluid, dried and packed in barrels for transport to Denmark.

A refinery such as that owned by David received the sugar in this form. The sugar was then melted and re-crystallised, the remaining impurities being removed during this process. White sugar, the final product was then ready for sale, at this time it would have been supplied as ‘loaves’ of sugar. The highest grade of sugar produced was called ‘melis’ sugar and the second grade ‘candy’ sugar. Syrup was a by-product from these processes.

Originally refineries heated the sugar in open vats. In 1813 a new process was invented that instead of using open fires employed steam to heat the sugar. Further efficiencies in the use of steam were obtained as the 19th century developed. A number of countries, in particular France and Great Britain, were at the forefront of these developments. However the introduction of these new techniques required considerable capital expenditure and in consequence Denmark with its monetary problems lagged behind. Inevitably refineries employing the original open fired method of purifying the sugar faced increased pressure from foreign competition as the century wore on. This helps to explain why David was highly concerned about political pressures to promote free trade and reduce the tariffs on foreign imports of sugar, especially from Germany. In 1834 David was moved to publish a pamphlet arguing against this (see Plate 5.1). This was sparked off by a book published by Mendel Levin Nathanson. Nathanson was an eminent writer and commentator who became the editor of the Berlingske Tidende, a leading newspaper in Denmark at the time (and still so today). Nathanson (Plate 5.1) had been an instrumental figure in the emancipation of the Jews in Denmark and so he was something of a popular hero in the trading circles of the country, but on this instance David was prepared to cross swords with him.

David (see Plate 5.1) wrote:68

“Mr. Nathanson has in his translation of Murchard’s work on the theory and politics of trade added a note where he suggests that the Danish sugar refineries have a preferential position at the expense of the whole population of the nation, and even added so strong a criticism on how these factories were managed, that I feel obliged for the sake of these factory owners to enlighten the citizens that these criticisms are without foundation and that the preferential treatment that the refiners enjoy are not any greater than is necessary for their upkeep and running and that their existence give the state a considerable advantage. Their preferential treatment is in fact the prohibition of foreign refined sugar import. The reason, that the refineries are not able to deliver their products at as low prices as the foreign refined sugars, which could be bought without paying customs duty has nothing to do with how the factories are run. The main reason is very likely the high customs duty, which the government finds necessary to put on the raw sugar, which is used for refining. The rebate that is therefore given to the refineries export to foreigners is of very little consequence to the population. As a contrast you can look at the principle followed in other countries, this would make it impossible for refineries to compete with their prices even with the introduction of known and improved facilities and methods.”

David followed this by a detailed argument comparing the Danish sugar industry with those in the major European countries, especially France, Germany and Britain. He concluded this with the following:

“These considerations and you could add even more local advantages explain why the refineries in Hamburg can deliver their goods at a considerable lower price than the Danish, but in no way does this show a better running or more economical management than the way usually used in the Danish refineries. Until this minute Hamburg has not imported any of the latest important inventions and changes, which have been used in England and France, yes maybe not even those of the amazing installations that have been imported to Copenhagen. But not even Hamburg with all the great advantages it has over any other country with regards to the custom’s duty, is able to compete with the great sacrifices, which the governments in several other countries offer to the benefit of their refineries.

In England and Belgium sugar for internal use have been given a very high tax, almost as high as the value of the product; but when these refined products are being exported the governments give such a favourable rebate, that these sugars which already has been mentioned above, could be delivered to Hamburg at lower prices than those produced there. The same was the case to an even higher degree in France; but when the government had been made aware that it had sacrificed an enormous sum at the expense of the state the very high disproportionate export premium was stopped and hereby also the export of the goods and bad influence on other markets. You don’t know if the same sooner or later could happen in other countries. It looks most peculiar in Hamburg's price list that while raw brown Havana sugars stood at 6 7/8 to 7d, the Belgian and Dutch sugar stood at 7 3/8 d. This disproportion is so unnatural that it completely convinces you that it has it's basis in these countries high export premium.”

This issue probably indicates why David became involved with active politics in 1835, however, his efforts in the present context were not successful and in 1838 the Danish customs law was changed so that the Danish market became more open to foreign competition.

Thanks to the increasing difficulties in competing with foreign imports in 1852 David was forced to undertake a major programme of modernisation in the sugar refinery by purchasing three boiling pans with steam apparatus. In 1854 he was successful in obtaining a mortgage of 100,453 Rdr from the Copenhagen Magistrates to help him finance this project. The documents associated with this mortgage show that in 1851 Adelgade 210 and its contents had been insured for 49,500 Rdr whilst in 1852 Helsingørsgade 321 and its contents were insured for 18,000 Rdr. This mortgage subsequently became the major contributor to the failure of his business during the 1857 credit crisis meanwhile David was allowed to amalgamate the two properties together.
The plan shown in Plate 5.2 gives the outline of the built up areas in Matrikels 210 and 321 as they were in 1886. This is a period just short of thirty years after David going bankrupt, however, a sketch map included in David’s file held in the Rigsarkiv indicates that there had been few or no changes in the layout of the buildings during the intervening time. Thanks to the mortgage documents of 1854 it is possible to work out a number of the details concerning refinery buildings shown in this map. The terms used to describe the buildings are the same as shown in Plate 5.2.

As described in the chapter dealing with David’s middle years the domestic quarters occupied by him and his family were located in the 1<sup>st</sup> Front and 1<sup>st</sup> Side Buildings. Some of these quarters however were used by the refinery, in particular the cellars. There were other domestic quarters scattered around the refinery. These included the 1<sup>st</sup> Back Building and fronting on to Helsingørsgade, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Front Building. The Copenhagen census of 1834 indicates that David’s cousin, Carl Andreas Borgen and his wife were resident in the 1<sup>st</sup> Back and 3<sup>rd</sup> Side Buildings together with one servant. It would appear that they were living on the first floors of both buildings. Carl’s occupation is shown in the census as a ‘Sugar Master’ and thus he probably was the technical manager of the refinery. Also shown on the census as living in the back building were eleven workmen employed in the refinery. In 1850 census aside from Carls family there are 9 refinery workers shown resident. The 1855 census shows Carl, his family plus a servant resident in the back building, but no workmen are listed. Following the events of 1857/8 David and his family moved to the domestic quarters in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Front Building whilst Carl with his family moved away from Adelgade altogether.

It will be seen in Plate 5.2 that a yard ran from the 1<sup>st</sup> Front Building to the 1<sup>st</sup> Back Building along the side of the property closest to Helsingørsgade, entry in to this front yard was obtained via the entrance shown in Plate 3.1. A cross section of the 1<sup>st</sup> Back Building as it stood in 1827 is shown in Plate 5.3. At ground floor level there was a stairway adjacent to the entrance which gave access to all floors. The ground floor of this building had a wooden floor reinforced by iron girders and it contained two syrup vats. On the same level the 3rd Side Building contained a candy room with a vaulted ceiling. A stone flagged passageway connected the two buildings. Behind this side building stood the 2<sup>nd</sup> Back Building. This building was brick built and four stories high topped with a ridged roof, it also had a cellar which contained two rooms, one of which was used as a ‘candy room’. Within these rooms there was a centrifuge constructed from oak, and two cooking pans mounted on stone foundations. Attached to this building were outhouses containing iron water pumps, and latrines.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Back Building, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Front Building and a shed all belonged to Matrikel 321 Helsingørsgade. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Front Building was brick built, two stories in height, and covered by a ridge roof. The first floor of the building contained the domestic area; this included a kitchen equipped with an open fireplace, serving table, sink and plate racks. A pantry adjoined the kitchen. A dining room was situated next to the kitchen and there were two further rooms on this floor. At ground floor level there was in addition to the main entrance a second entrance leading to a stall for two horses. The stall was fitted with iron cribs and hay frames.

<sup>69</sup> The plan in Plate 1 is adapted from the Berggreen-Carre Plan of Adelgade/Helsingørsgade published in 1886, copy from the collection of the Royal Danish Library.
The 3rd Back Building was brick built and four floors in height topped by a set of multiple lean to roofs. This building was constructed in 1852 as part of the modernisation project. The ground floor of this building contained a room fitted with two steam kettles built in to its walls. This room had a flag stoned floor, plastered ceiling and walls. A second room adjacent to it had a wooden floor and lime washed walls.

The yard of matrikel 321 contained a building one floor in height and three of its walls constructed of brick the fourth being of wood. It was covered by multiple lean to roofs and it contained a coal cellar. Also in the yard lay a set of latrines, a water pump and a water container.

The modernisation of 1852 was carried out by two contractors, one headed by Hans Caspersen (see Plate 7.3) and the other by Johan Frederik Fugman. Hans Caspersen was an engineer who was a pioneer with regards to the introduction of steam engines into Denmark. Trading under the name H.Caspersen & Sønner his firm was responsible for fitting out a number of businesses employing steam including in 1847 the ‘Helsingørgades Sugar Refinery’ owned by the wealthy merchant, Ferdinand Tutein and situated close to David’s own refinery on Adelgade. Hans Caspersen as a young man had studied steam engineering in England. He was a member of the 32 Man Council from 1821 to 1840 and so would have known David from at least 1835 onwards. His firm carried out all the steam fittings in David’s refinery and these were largely situated in the 3rd Back Building. Johan Fugman was a Master Coppersmith. He was also from 1848 to 1856 a city councillor. All the copper work in the modernisation was carried out by his firm.

The inventory of the sale following the demise of the refinery in 1858 survives (see Plate 5.4). This gives further detail concerning the equipment used in the refinery during its last years. It shows there were two steam engines, one of 18 horse power and the other of 8 horse power sited on the property. Associated with these were pulleys and belts for operating machinery such as centrifuges. There were a number of centrifuges on this list each for a particular grade of sugar such as ‘top’ sugar and brown sugar. Other equipment listed included copper cooking pans fitted with heating elements (these elements were coiled tubes which carried steam) roasting ovens and distillation units, clearing pans, hot chests fitted with condensers, and molds for casting sugar loaves with associated cutting gear and balances for weighing out the sugar.

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70 DBL vol 3 p417
The annual production in David Borgen’s refinery between 1834 and 1847 is shown in the following table:\(^71\):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of Workers</th>
<th>Production of Sugar and Syrup in 1000 lb</th>
<th>Production per worker in 1000 lb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>43.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>709</td>
<td>59.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>686</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Records of who supplied David Borgens refinery with raw West Indian sugar have not survived but some possibilities relating to the mid-19th century are suggested in the file dealing with his bankruptcy held in the Rigsarkiv. A number of shipping companies are listed as creditors for his estate and any or all of these could have supplied him. Danish companies in this category include Chr. Broberg & Son, Jacob Holm & Son, Moses & Son G.Melchior, and B.N.Westermann. Foreign shipping firms include C.H.Donner of Altona and Hamburg, and Lorent am Ende & Co of Hamburg. The details concerning the owners of these firms will be described in detail in the chapter dealing with the end of the Sugar Refinery (Chapter 7).

Here, however, it may be noted that all the Danish shipping companies were based in Copenhagen. Broberg & Son as mentioned earlier traded principally in coffee. Jacob Holm & Son was the largest Danish ship owning firm in the 1840s and it definitely traded with the West Indies\(^72\). Moses & Son G.Melchior was a trading house specialising in trade with the Caribbean. Bernt Wilhelm Westermann (see Plate 7.3) was a wealthy businessman who owned the Phoenix Sugar Refinery in Christianshavn so technically he was one of David’s rivals, however Westermann was also a ship owner and the investment he had in David’s business suggests he may have been involved in supplying David with raw sugar.

C.H.Donner was a shipping firm originally based in Altona (a region administered by Denmark up to 1864) but later moved to Hamburg. Aside from shipping it had banking interests and later these took over so that C.H.Donner survives today purely as a banking firm. Lorent am Ende & Co was a Hamburg based shipping firm dealing with David and it shared the same fate as David’s business when as a consequence of the credit crisis of 1857 it went bankrupt. Whilst on the topic of shipping agents the company of J.P.Suhr & Son appears in David’s cash records. This company shipped coal, in the 1830s it is estimated that it alone was responsible for supplying 20% of Denmark’s coal needs\(^73\) and of course a

\(^71\) Obtained from notes by Arne Mikkelsen.
\(^72\) DBL vol 7 p576
\(^73\) Den Store Dansk Encyclopædi ref for Theodor Suhr
refinery such as David’s would have required coal to heat the evaporating pans as well as fuel for other purposes.

Turning to David’s customer base again some idea of who he was supplying sugar to may be gained from the ‘Creditorer’ list in the cash book preserved as part of his papers in the Rigsarkiv. This lists some 190 names and the places associated with them so it is possible to analyse the regional distribution of David’s customers. This analysis indicates at least in the 1850s David was principally dealing with customers based in Northern Jutland. Out of the 190 names on his customer list no less than 51 had addresses in Randers. If other North Jutland addresses are taken into account (Aalborg, Holstebro, Grenaa, Skive and Viborg) the amount of customers in this area rises to 125 that is 66% of the total customer base. Of other areas of Denmark the remainder of Jutland had 11 customers, Fyn 19, Sjaelland apart from Copenhagen 15 and the capital itself 7. Of the remaining 13 customers 1 was from Schleswig (Flensburg) and the rest came from the smaller Danish islands.

This concentration on North Jutland is also reflected in the financial institutions investing in David’s business. As stated earlier when David started his refinery only the National Bank was able to undertake financial services within Denmark and indeed throughout the life of the refinery this bank remained by far the largest stakeholder in David’s business. With time however other banks started to appear in Denmark and by 1857 banks in Randers, Horsens, Aalborg and Skive, these all being towns in North Jutland, had significant investments in the refinery. The only other financial institutions investing in the refinery were both from Fyn, these being Fynens Disconto Kasse and the Middelfarts Bank. In the 19th century Randers was an important commercial centre for North Jutland. It had Denmark’s only river harbour and goods were carried on barges from the sea (a distance of about 10 kilometres) via the Guden River. Randers had good connections with its surrounding hinterland both by water (the Guden and the Northern Rivers) and by land, indeed the town was described by a popular saying as the place “Where the waterway meets the 13 highways” (“Hvor søvejen møder de 13 landeveje”). It is therefore very likely, given that rail transport only became available in the late stages of David’s business, that sugar was carried by ship from Copenhagen to Randers and from there distributed to customers in northern Jutland. Of necessity the reasons for David’s customer base being strong in North Jutland must remain speculative, but as mentioned in chapter 2 when one looks at the descendants of David’s grandfather, David Clausen Borgen, one finds many relatives living in this area, especially in Viborg, so it is quite possible that these relatives led to trade contacts in this part of Denmark.

As will be described in Chapter 8 two of David’s sons worked for a time in the sugar refinery. The Danish census for 1840 records Valdemar Peter as an office worker working with his father, he would have been 21 at the time, however, by 1845 he had moved away from this employment. The marriage entry in the Trinitatis church book for Edvard, which dates 1855, describes him as the head clerk in the refinery and this description is repeated in the entry for the baptism of Edvard’s eldest son Axel, which took place at the Trinitatis church in 1856. However Edvard had moved away by 1859 as shown in the baptism entry for his second son Jens August Frederik.

Despite problems arising from taxation and foreign competition David's sugar refinery appears to have run profitably right up to the summer of 1857. Indeed in the 1840's David appears to have had

74 Extract from article on Randers in the Wikipedia.
cash to spare in that he purchased property in the newly developing suburb of Copenhagen now known as Nørrebro. At the time the property was described as Udenbys Klædebo Kvarter Jagtvej Matr No 171 and it was purchased from Hans Wilster, a Copenhagen surgeon who lived from 1792 to 1860. Unfortunately things started to go very badly for the refinery as 1857 progressed and this will be described in chapter 7.
Frontispiece of Pamphlet dealing with the Taxation of Sugar by David Borgen published in 1835.
From the copy in the Royal Library.

Mendel Levin Nathanson with his wife and daughter in 1818.
Copied from Picture in Danmarks Historie’ John Danstrup and Hal Koch.
Plate 5.2 The Sugar Refinery. The plan is adapted from the Berggreen-Carre map published in 1886.

Copy from the collection of the Royal Danish Library.
Cross Section of the 1st Back Building taken from a plan prepared for Fire Insurance purposes in 1827.

From the manuscript collection in the Copenhagen Stadsarkiv.
Inventarium fra det ophævede Sukkerraffinaderi,

En Dampkjedeel paa 18 Hestes Kraft, 14 Fod lang og 5 Fod 6' i Diameter, med Tilbehør af Opstilling, Ramme, Rister, Rør, Ventiler, Baner, Spjeld m. m.
En Dito paa c. 8 Hestes Kraft med Maskine og fuldstændigt Tilbehør af Ledningsrør.
Ventiler, Dampmaalere.
En Axel med 6 Drivhjul og Remskeder.
En Centrifugal-Maskine til Toppulver, med Kobberbeholder til Dækkelse.
En Dito med 2 „Tumbous“ til Puddersukker eller Farin.
En Dito med Dito.
500 Stkr. Jermelleformet, galvaniserede.
En Beemrømndingsovn med Construction og Apparater af nyeste Opstilling.
2 Kobber-Kogepander med dobbelt Band og Slangerør.
En Klarepanne med dobbelt Band og Slangerør.
(De tvende sidsteavnte Dele med tilhørende Condensatorer.)
En Mont jis med tilhørende Rør.
En dobbelvirkende Vandpumpe med Balance og øvrige Apparater.
162 Stkr. Skruhelte.
Circa 450 Stkr. Kandispotter med tilhørende Jernhækkener.
En støbt Jernkasse.
En stor Kobber-Sukkerbeholder.
En stor Jern Dito.
CHAPTER 6. DAVID BORGEN’S WORK IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

In 1835 David Borgen was appointed a member of the 32 Man Council. As described in the introduction Copenhagen had been ruled from the 17th century by the Magistrates supported by the 32 Man Council. By a privilege granted by the King the Magistrates were allowed to appoint the members of this council from the ‘velstående købmænd’ that is the ‘well-to-do merchants’ of the city. This shows David had by this time become a well-established businessman in the city and a man whose judgements were to be trusted. The Magistrates at this time included Andreas Christian Kierulf (see Plate 6.1) who was the Overpræsident (Head Magistrate), Daniel Bentley and Frederik Schäffer (see Plate 6.1), Borgmesters, (Mayors) and Andreas Dahl, Otto Münter, Andreas Riis-Lawson, Michael Skibsted and Just Henrik Mundt, Raadmænd (Aldermen). David was to get to know a number of these men very well as his career developed. It may be noted that in 1835 aside from David four other councilors were appointed to the 32 Man Council. These included Christopher Hedemann who like David was a Sugar Refiner by occupation and William Frederik Duntfeldt (see Plate (6.4)) who amongst other things was a member of the influential committee governing the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society. Duntzfelt had inherited the firm of Duntzfeld & Co, the firm that had bought out Pringel, Meyer & Prætorius as mentioned in an earlier chapter. Duntzfelt was a Director in several other trading companies and he later became a Raadmand. He also entered national politics and in this latter capacity played a part in the 1849 reform of the Danish Constitution.

The 32 Man Council (see Plate 6.2) had no executive powers, these resided with the Magistrates, but it was a consultative body with the right to directly approach the King, an important privilege as the King was the absolute ruler of Denmark. It should be remembered that up to 1841 the King (via his Chancellery) appointed all the Magistrates as well as all the salaried City Officials. Amongst other things the Magistrates controlled the city finances.

It is important to appreciate that although the Magistrates were the governing body of the city they were always subject to control by the Chancellery as this had (under the King) the ultimate power in Denmark. Regarding the City government all its budgets had to have the approval of the Chancellery. Any proposals for special revenue and expenditure for loans, new salaries and for the disposal of property also required approval by the Chancellery. The Chancellery operated in a collegiate fashion and its head official, the Minister of State, (Otto Joachim Moltke at this time), communicated its decisions to the King for his approval. It was very rare for the King not to give his approval to the decisions of the Chancellery. The Chancellery was therefore a very important body and it had control of the entire finances of the Kingdom. It is not surprising that both Andreus Kierulf, and his successor in the post of Overpræsident, Michael Lange (see Plate 6.1), had previously held appointments within the Chancellery. Clearly it was important for the Overpræsident to have a good understanding of the way the Chancellery worked.

Members of the 32 Man Council were frequently appointed to the governing bodies of other institutions in the city, one such institution was the school ‘Efterslægten’75. Shortly after joining the

75 Københavns Bystyre gennem 300 aar, Flemming Dahl, Copenhagen, vol 1, p48.
32 Man Council David became a Director of this school. Efterslægten was founded in 1786 as an alternative to the Latin Schools that at the time dominated education in Denmark. Its approach was practical and modern subjects following a curriculum that was free of the pedagogical constraints of the 'Latin Schools'. It promoted good citizenship and respect for authority amongst its pupils. It had a ‘whole bodied’ approach to education paying attention to the development of physical skills and wellbeing. It was also something of a pioneer in that it offered evening classes and weekend education. This open approach to education would have appealed to David and his appointment as a Director could have had something to do with David’s cousins Bonaparte and Vilhelm August both of whom were in the teaching profession. It might be relevant to mention here Vilhelm August Borgen’s contribution to school education in Copenhagen. In 1824 he became a teacher in the Westenske Institute, a private school in the city and from 1832 to 1844 he was the headmaster of this school. In 1844 he was appointed as Director of Education for the city of Copenhagen and in this role he now had to supervise a major reform of all the schools in Copenhagen irrespective of whether they were private, church or charity schools. In all 164 private schools with 6891 children and 56 church schools with 4452 children were involved. He successfully introduced a new academic structure that applied uniformly to all these schools. He continued as Director of Education up to 1859 when he became the Minister for Culture in the national government.

In 1837 David had a second appointment this time to a Directorship on the governing body of the Royal Frederik’s Hospital (see Plate 6.3). This institution was Denmark’s first hospital in the modern meaning of this word. King Frederick V founded it in 1757. The buildings still stand and are sited on Bredgade, they are currently occupied by the Danish Museum of Decorative Art. This hospital was run as an independent institution with the purpose of giving free care and cure to patients without means. About two thirds of the patients were treated free of charge. Until 1848 the hospital was managed by the Chancellery and from this date to 1910 by ministries in the constitutional government. It remained as a working hospital up to 1910 when its functions were subsumed by the Rigshospital. By a Royal Resolution issued in 1821 one member of the 32 Man Council had to be appointed as the Director of Finances of the Royal Frederik’s Hospital76 and it is possible David was given this post allowing for his skills as a book keeper.

In 1837 David also became a Director of Bombebøssen(see Plate 6.3), a charity that looked after old or disabled seamen. It was founded in 1819 and initially sited in a loft in Wildersplads, Copenhagen. In 1825 its accommodation was enlarged so that it had 32 rooms and 8 kitchens available to house and care for its inmates. It is interesting that David was concerned with the welfare of seafarers, this might be explained on the grounds that as a sugar refiner he was dependent on shipping for his raw materials. Bombebøssen remains as a charity today and is currently based in a modern building situated on Dronningensgade in the Christianshavn district of Copenhagen.

The members of the 32 Man Council met in the Raadhus (City Hall) (see Plate 6.2) situated in Nytorv. This fine neoclassical building was built over the period 1805 to 1815 and replaced its predecessor which had stood in Gammeltorv and which had been destroyed in the great fire of 1795. The building had a combined function in that it also housed the Courts of Law. Today Copenhagen’s

76 Københavns Bystyre gennum 300 aar, Flemming Dahl, Copenhagen, vol 1, p48,50
Raadhust is situated on Raadhuspladsen and the 1815 building now only houses the Courts of Law, however the rooms associated with the 32 Man Council can still be identified within the building.

David joined the 32 Man Council at an interesting juncture in that discussions regarding the future form of Copenhagen’s local government was just becoming a major issue. The role of the Council and that of the Magistrates was a source of heated debate and the issues raised would remain contentious throughout David’s working lifetime and beyond. As already described the Magistrates at the time were the executive regarding the City’s affairs. There were three Borgmesters under the Overpræsident (these included Daniel Bentley and Frederik Schäffer). There were also three Secretariats. The first Secretariat handled heritage, legacies and estates, education and church affairs. The second Secretariat dealt with justice, public services and personnel whilst the third handled finances. At this stage the roles of each secretariat were not apportioned to a specific Magistrate. Like the Chancellery the Magistrates functioned collegiately. This arrangement lasted up to 1857.

During the period 1830 to 1840 there was increasing pressure for the 32 Man Council to be replaced by a Council which had its membership elected by city tax payers and land owners, and that this body should have at least a share of the executive powers of governance in the city. Both the Overpræsident, Andreus Kierulf and Borgmester Schäffer (although they could not get on with each other at a personal level77) were conservatives in this area however and in general the Magistrates were not willing to give up any of their powers.

There was increasing dissatisfaction with the way the whole of the city government worked amongst the general populace, and among the members of the city government itself. It was very difficult to obtain quick or decisive decisions on any issue of importance. The 32 Man Council could only recommend matters to the Magistrates, and although the Magistrates had executive power this was limited and could be overruled by the Chancellery. In points of dispute judgements thus often had to be handed to the Chancellery to decide and this was a time consuming process. It also was difficult to get an overall picture of what was happening in the City government. There was no central account for the City finances for example. Different funding agencies had grown up over the years and these could act independently from the main city cash account. It is not surprising that there was no production of an overall annual budget for the City. Compounded on top of this was the fact that both the 32 Man Council and Magistrates had become almost self-perpetuating bodies and this added to the resistant to change.

The newly crowned King Christian VIII was therefore persuaded to grant a new constitution for the city. This replaced the 32 Man Council by a 36 man strong council of representatives, the ‘Borgerrepræsentants’, that is city councillors, who were to be elected by the members of the major tax payers and property owners of the city. Elections to membership of this new body (which from now on will be referred to as the ‘City Council’) were to take place annually with one sixth of its membership being up for election on each occasion. Half of the city councillors were to be property owners. Voters were required to either own a property with an insurance value of at least 4000 Rdr

77 Københavns Bystyre gennem 300 aar, Flemming Dahl, Copenhagen.
or pay at least five portions of business tax. Consequently out of a city population of 120819 only 1929 men were qualified to vote. This was not exactly democracy as we know it today but it did represent a first move towards a modern electoral system. According to the 1840 constitution the King continued to appoint four of the Magistrates, the Overpræsident and the three Borgmesters, but the six (later reduced to five) Raadmænd were to be elected by the city councillors.

In the transition to the new constitution 17 members of the outgoing 32 Man Council were appointed to the new body. David was one of these. The first meeting of the City Council took place on the 23rd April 1840 chaired initially by Hans Casperson, the last chairman of the outgoing 32 Man Council. After a brief debate Hans Peter Hansen was then elected as chairman of the new body (see Plate 6.4) and Henrik Frederik Prætorius as deputy chairman. Hans Hansen was a bank director and a politician. He had been a member of the 32 Man Council and from 1835 to 1846 he served as one of Copenhagen’s representatives on the Provincial Assembly of the Isles. Henrik Prætorius was one of Jeppe Prætorius’s sons and like Hans Hansen was a banker.

There was much fine tuning to be done as the new constitution was inaugurated and it says much about David’s standing that at the first meeting of the new City Council he was appointed a member of a joint committee with the Magistrates tasked with settling the salaries of the Raadmænd and fees to be paid to the City Auditors. There were incidents that showed David was fully prepared to take a stand at Council meetings even when this was in clear opposition to the majority view. Thus for example in June 1840 when the City Council agreed 32 votes to 1 against to present a politically loaded address to the new King on the occasion of his Silver Wedding (The so called ‘Kroningsadresse’) David’s was the lone voice in opposition.

The new constitution was initially greeted with enthusiasm, however this did not last. It became rapidly apparent that the Chancellery and hence the King still retained the real power and the relationship between the Magistrates and the new City Council had deteriorated, largely because the latter body, now having been elected by citizens, expected to have more executive powers than had been the case with the 32 Man Council.

As a consequence of his work on the City Council David acquired new responsibilities. In 1840 he was appointed as an alternate representative to the Provincial Assembly of the Isles (see Plate 3.6). The City of Copenhagen returned 12 representatives and 12 alternates to this body. David retained this appointment until 1846. In 1841 David became the Administrator for the ‘Forøede Undersøttelsesselskab’, the ‘United Benevolent Society’. This was a private organisation founded under royal patronage in 1788 in order to help small trades-people and manual labourers. Its membership made regular payments in to its funds during their working lives and in return it gave them financial help when the needs arose such as with injuries from accidents, unemployment or in old age. In many ways it resembled a British Friendly Society of the period. When considering David’s activities out with his main employment his work as treasurer of the Trinitatis Church mentioned in

78 Villads p192
79 The full membership of this committee was Borgmester Bentley, Raadmand Skibsted and Councillors Hvidt, Borgen, Meinert, Haagen and David, see Flemming Dahl, vol1, p204
80 Statsbiblioteket (The Danish State Library) - Københavns Borgerrepræsentanters Forhandlinger 23rd April 1840.
81 Villads p422.
an earlier chapter must also be remembered. It is likely that David had liberal views and the desire to help the poorer and more vulnerable members of society. This is exemplified in his support of a petition made in 1857 by the occupants of a small shanty town situated in an area close to Sorterdam Dossiering in modern Copenhagen. The inhabitants were poor and had been given temporary accommodation there by the City authorities during the cholera epidemic of 1853. In 1857 the Magistrates wished to clear the houses and so ordered the occupants to vacate them by April of that year. The occupants petitioned for a delay owing to the cold winter weather and the fact that they were too poor to afford to buy freehold properties. David felt on humanitarian grounds that the occupants should be allowed to stay until the onset of summer weather and strongly supported the petition. Unfortunately his intervention on their behalf failed and all were evicted. (It is possible that some of these people ultimately received help from Pastor Visby’s building association in Christianshavn, the same organisation as that mentioned in Chapter 4).

In 1841 Hans Hansen was elected a Raadmand and so became one of the Magistrates. He was replaced as Chairman of the City Council by Lauritz Hvidt whilst a new councillor, Orla Lehmann, was elected as Vice Chairman. As described in a previous chapter Lauritz Hvidt together with Joachim Schouw and Henrik Clausen were involved in the creation of the National Liberal party. Two other members of the new Town Council were also to have a significant role in the development of this party, these were Ditlev Gothard Monrad and Orla Lehmann. All these men were also involved with the activities of the provincial assemblies and later they also made significant contributions to the processes that in 1849 resulted in the change from absolute to constitutional monarchy. The affairs of the Copenhagen City Council thus were tied in to the broader debate as to how Denmark should be governed. In this context the Kroningsadresse mentioned above related to this debate. There is however no evidence that David was against the introduction of an elected National Government, his opposition to the address probably related to its propriety given at a time of national tension (The silver wedding celebrations amongst other things had generated rioting in the streets of Copenhagen! Unhappily Christian VIII’s short reign was marked by increasing civic discontent and disorder).

1843 saw an important change in David’s career. There was a general recognition amongst both Magistrates and City Council that the finances of the City needed reform. As mentioned above over the years a variety of different accounts had grown up and these were administered on an ad hoc basis by a variety of officials. There was a desire to bring these under a central control. As part of the new City constitution in 1840 the King had devolved the task of appointing salaried Council Officers from the Chancellery to the City Magistrates and so in 1843 the Magistrates were able to advertise for a new city treasurer (called the ‘Kæmner’). Given the need for reform which might also require subsequent alterations to the post of treasurer itself the post advertised was for a ‘Konstitueret Kæmner’ that is an ‘Acting’ Treasurer. One says advertised but from David’s application for the job one cannot help feeling the Magistrates had him in mind from the start, a loose translation of what he wrote follows (see Plate 6.5):

82 Villads Ch 8 p541.
DAVID BORGENS LETTER OF APPLICATION TO THE MAGISTRATES FOR THE POST OF KONSTITUERET KÆMNER FOR THE CITY OF COPENHAGEN.

To the municipal authorities I here-bye request the liberty to forward the respectful wish to fill the constitution of the present vacant Kæmners post.

As a City Councillor for 18 years it has been possible for me to gain some knowledge of the business of the Kæmner as well as of the city’s everyday affairs, and as I therefore in private as well as public matters have had the possibility to gain such experiences which would be of an advantage and even a necessity for the work of the Kæmner, I hereby express the hope that I will be able to perform this task to the satisfaction of the municipal authorities.

Should the municipal authorities find me qualified to appoint me to the post, I ask if I may add the wish, that the starting date could be postponed to the 1st April, in order for me to complete some public duties as well as some private affairs.

Copenhagen 15th March 1843.

Yours faithfully

D.Borgen

Merchant.

Needless to say he was appointed to the post of acting City Treasurer, and despite the term acting he was to hold this post unaltered until 1857. The supposedly temporary nature of the post may explain why David was allowed to remain a city councillor despite now becoming a paid official of the municipality. Regarding the last paragraph in his letter of application it is not certain which of the ‘public duties’ he decided to drop but they were probably his Directorships of Efterslægten, the Royal Frederik’s Hospital, and Bombebøssen. With regards to the latter a list of its governing board for 184483 shows that David was no longer a member, incidentally the board at that time was chaired by Wilhelmine’s brother Christian Paludan. The list also shows an ‘A.Borgen’ as the board’s ‘Kasserer ved Stiftelson’, that is ‘Treasurer of the Institution’, and (unless this was a printing error and it should have read ‘D. Borgen’) this person could be David’s half-brother August.

The next few years were occupied by a lengthy debate about the duties and functions of the city’s Kæmner. The post as it stood had many functions ranging from overseeing the main cash account (hovedkasse) and the functions of the city accountant’s office to the collection of rents and grazing fees relating to city properties, for the registration of marriages, and for payments regarding the

operation of the sand pits and the collection of refuse. Arguments ranged around whether roles such as the day to day operations involving banking should be given to subordinates thus leaving the Kæmner to concentrate on overseeing the finances of the city or that the post be abolished altogether and all the finances be brought under a single organisation such as one of the secretariats with the other roles of the post being transferred to different departments of the administration. Despite considerable time and effort all these debates came to naught until the reforms of 1857. As the records housed in the Stadsarkive show David was thus kept hard at it overseeing accounts, collecting and making payments and all the time reporting on his activities to the Magistrates and carrying out their requests. It is amazing given his activities as a sugar refiner and wholesaler, how he managed to find time to perform all these activities.

In 1846 recognition of David’s public service brought about the award of “Ridder af Dannebrog”, literally “Knight of the Dannebrog” but in British terms more akin to an O.B.E.

David as well as fulfilling the duties of Kæmner continued his work as a city councillor. As well as committee work especially committees involved in the organisation and reform of the city’s finances he participated in debates in the council chamber. A good example of this comes from the early 1850s when the future of the properties held by the city out with its walls came under consideration by the Magistrates and the Council. The debate was sparked off by the sale of land to make way for the new Sjællands Railway, the sale had been forced on the town by the national government in 1847. David had argued that the 10,346 Rdr raised by this sale should have been used to purchase more land for the town. Although he had some support from the councillors his views ultimately were overruled and the money dissipated in to general funds. The Magistrates and Council then went on to decide on the sale of its other properties out with the walls. In the middle of the 19th century there were some 56 tenants renting the city’s grounds. David was not necessarily against the sale of these grounds but it was his firm opinion that the money so raised should be used to buy further ground for the city so maintaining its investments for future generations. Again his opinions were overruled. The majority view was that the city should divest itself of its lands so as to encourage home ownership by its citizens. David then attempted to have the city authorities set a fair market price for the lands being sold. In the face of this the potential buyers (these being the tenants of these lands) then appealed to the Magistrates and managed successfully to persuade the Magistrates to authorise the sale of these lands at knock down prices. The final outcome took the form of a new bylaw, introduced in May 1852, permitting the sale of the lands to those who had previously held life tenancies from the city. The money raised was then used in general funds. Later historians have taken the view that the city would have been much better off in the long run if it had adopted David’s proposals.

Throughout the late 1840s there had been much civic unrest regarding the National Government. This culminated in the reforms accepted by King Frederik VII (who had followed King Christian VIII in 1848). The rule of the Chancellery was over and a constitutional government elected by popular vote took its place in 1849. The new national constitution gave the right to self-government to all municipalities. The rules for running the local government of Copenhagen were revised at this stage.

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84 Villads Ch 1 p93.
85 Villads Ch 1 p97.
and these included the way the magistrates were to be appointed. The appointment of the Borgmesters was transferred to the National Government; the King however retained his right to appoint the Overpræsident. The number of Borgmesters was increased to 4 to be appointed for life and these would be joined by 4 Raadmænd. The Magistrates were no longer to function collegiately but instead each of the Borgmesters was to take specific responsibility for one of the Secretariats, in modern parlance to become Directors of specific services. The number of Secretariats was increased to four. The first Secretariat dealt with matters such as school management, cultural activities, libraries and so forth. The second Secretariat administered the city’s finances whilst the third was responsible for social services. The fourth Secretariat handled infrastructure, roads, parks and cemeteries.

As a result of the very lengthy discussions that had taken place over the years the organisation of the City’s financial bodies underwent a major change between 1857 and 1858. As indicated above all finances now came under the second secretariat and its borgmester in 1858 Johan Peter Holm (see Plate 7.1). One of the major problems in assessing the city’s budget had been the fact that a number of accounts were kept separate from the Municipal main account (The so called “box system”). These accounts were now incorporated into the main account thus allowing for the first time publication of annual accounts covering the whole of the city’s finances. The role of the Kæmner was reduced. The responsibility for the supervision of the council’s main treasury passed to the Head Cashier of the city, and all accounting matters to the office of the Bookkeeper. The post of Kæmner for the time being remained but David’s activities were limited to the financial administration of properties belonging to the city. There was at this time the further complication that David’s Sugar Refinery business was declared bankrupt in December 1857. The consequences of this and also the financial reforms of 1861 will be dealt with in the next chapter.
Some of Copenhagen’s Magistrates during David Borgen’s membership of the City Council.

Mundt & Driefer from Royal Library Portrait Collection, remainder from Flemming Dahl - København’s Bystyre gennem 300 år
Plate 6.2

Copenhagen City Hall and Law Courts as seen in the 1820’s

The Room in the City Hall used by the 32 Man Council and later by the City Council
Copied from Flemming Dahl ‘Københavns Bystyre gennem 300 aar’
The Royal Frederik Hospital as seen in 1805
Copied from History of Copenhagen - Copenhagen Portal
www.copenhagenet.dk/cph-history.htm

The second building used to house the Seaman’s Charity “Bombebøssen” (It was used from 1824 to 1844).
Copied from Boesgaard H. - Sømandsstifvelsen Bombebøssen

Buildings associated with two of the Organisations David Borgen joined as a Director following his appointment to the 32 Man Council
The Signatures of the members of the Copenhagen City Council made on the 23rd April 1840 following the reform of the local government and the abolition of the 32 Man Council.

Some of David Borgen’s colleagues on the Council
Signatures copied from Flemming Dahl - Københavns Bystyre gennem 300 aar. Portraits from Royal Library collection.
Letter of Application for the post of Kæmner made by David Borgen on the 15th March 1843. Copy from a manuscript in the Stadsarkiv.
CHAPTER 7. THE END OF THE SUGAR REFINERY OWNED BY DAVID BORGEN

“Den største af alle Ulykker ramte mig”

In December 1857 David Borgen filed for bankruptcy. In doing so he joined the 41 other businesses in Copenhagen that went bankrupt during that month. Altogether 224 businesses in Denmark went into liquidation during the winter of 1857/8. The cause of this economic downturn had started far from Denmark. It began in the United States of America in August 1857 with the failure of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company. The early 1850s had been a period of economic prosperity both in the United States and Western Europe. Credit expanded throughout this period in both of these regions and speculation leading to increased levels of debt had taken place. In Denmark prices of grain had risen to very high levels and farmers in particular were doing very well. The failure of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company however triggered off a fall in property values and railroad stocks in America that in turn led to a failure of confidence in the world’s stock markets. A run on the banks ensued and a crisis that had initially started in America rapidly developed into the first fully blown world-wide economic crisis. In early October in reaction to a falling money supply the National Bank of Denmark increased its bank rate to 6% and then again in November to 7%. Soon it had become apparent that this bank was unable to supply money to all who wanted it so interest rates rose even higher. By December the credits from Hamburg failed triggering a financial panic and as a result the price of shares on the Danish stock exchange fell. The price of grain also fell sharply at this stage. Many speculators and farmers were ruined, and the Danish economy ground to a halt. To use modern terminology a ‘Credit Crunch’ had taken place and those with major debts were particularly vulnerable to its effects. Although many of the features of this crisis had similarity to world events in 2008 it was, fortunately for Denmark, relatively short lasting. Prompt action by the King and by the then rising entrepreneur and financier, Carl Frederick Tietgen (1829 – 1901),87 restored confidence in the Danish money market so that by 1859 the country’s economy was on a relatively firm footing, however, all this was too late for the life of David Borgen’s sugar refinery.

Although the economic crisis of 1857 was the immediate cause of the collapse of David Borgen’s business with hindsight it is apparent that there were underlying weaknesses in its finances that had been slowly growing worse during the preceding two decades. As discussed in Chapter 5 in the 1830’s there was a growing pressure on the Danish government to liberalise the tax laws to improve free trade. This cause was championed by such figures as the economist and newspaper editor Mendel Levin Nathanson (See Plate 5.1) who attacked the sugar refining industry for hiding behind protectionist laws and pursuing outdated and inefficient methods of production. As described in Chapter 5 David Borgen strenuously opposed Nathanson in a pamphlet published in 183588 but to no avail for in 1838 new customs laws were introduced which opened the sugar industry to foreign

86 “The greatest of all accidents that has affected me” – an extract from a letter by David Borgen to the two commissioners appointed to oversee his estate following his declaration of insolvency in December 1857. Original in Rigsarkivet.
87 Tietgen at the time was the managing director of Copenhagen’s Privatbank.
88 “Om Sukkerraffinaderierne i København” by David Borgen printed by Biancoluno & Schneider, Copenhagen 1835.
competition. Following 1838 therefore the Danish refiners steadily came under pressure to lower their cost to meet those of refiners out with Denmark. Profit margins were smaller and in addition new techniques of refining the sugar which involved the use of high pressure steam boilers were becoming available and these greatly improved the efficiency of production so adding to the pressure to lower costs. Matters were further complicated by the fact that the installation of these new processes involved a substantial outlay of capital. David Borgen thus had to raise a substantial mortgage in order to modernize his refinery when in 1854 with the help of Hans Caspersen (Plate 7.3) he installed three new steam powered boiling pans in his refinery (see Chapter 5). Unfortunately this exposed him financially just before the crisis of 1857.

In short therefore David Borgen’s refinery failed because it was undercapitalised. This is well demonstrated by the very different history of the sugar refinery just a few doors away from David’s refinery on Adelgade. This was the ‘Helsingørsgades Sukkerraffinaderi’ owned by Ferdinand Tutein. This latter refinery was modernised in 1847 with the introduction of steam equipment developed in Britain and France and it successfully weathered the storm of 1857 and only closed in 1912 following a major fire. (The name of the Helsingørsgades Sukkerraffinaderi appears in David’s customer records, this could indicate that the two refineries were prepared to help each other out with orders on occasion). The ‘Phønix’ sugar refinery in Christianshavn also survived the economic crisis and it is significant that both it and the Helsingørsgades Sukkerraffinaderi ultimately became part of the ‘Danske Sukkerfabrikker A/S’ founded by Carl Tietgen in 1872 and which survived into modern times. The effects of the economic and technical changes on the sugar industry in the middle of the 19th century are shown by the fact that of the 11 sugar refineries situated in Copenhagen in 1834 only 8 survived in 1843 and 6 in 1847. By 1870 just 4 of these remained.

In December 1857 David Borgen petitioned the King to have administrators appointed to oversee his estate. The petition was submitted to Johan Daniel Wroblewsky (See Plate 7.1) who headed the ‘rentekammeret’, the office that dealt with government finances. The legal side of the bankruptcy proceedings was administered by the law firm of Nicolai Christian Levin Abrahams. (It may be noted that Abrahams coupled his work as a public notary with that of being Professor of French at Copenhagen University!). Following David’s petition two administrators were appointed to liquidate David Borgen’s estate, these were Carl Christian Alberti and Johan Peter Holm (See Plate 7.1. Both men would have been well known to David through his work on the Copenhagen City Council.

Like David, Carl Alberti served as a member of the Copenhagen City Council, his period of office being 1848 to 1854. By profession he was a lawyer and he later became a high court attorney. Throughout his life he had a strong interest in politics both at the local and national level. In terms of politics he was a radical and was actively involved in the events that led to the introduction of constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy in Denmark. He joined the ‘Friends of the Farmers Party’ (Bondevennernes Selskab – this was one of the forerunners to today’s ‘Venstre’ party

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89 see www.gribskovgymnasium.dk/fs/wwwDamp/10_Tutein_Helsingørsgade_1833
90 KVV 1870.
in Denmark). He was very concerned with the situation of the peasant farmers of Denmark and worked hard throughout the latter part of his life to improve their conditions. In 1856 he helped found a savings bank for the Sjælland farmers (Den Sjællandske Bonderstands Sparrekesse) which provided loans at low interest rates to small farmers. As a result of activities like this he gained the respect of the farming community. Following his death a monument was erected to his memory just outside the town of Sorø in Sjælland.

The second administrator, Johan Holm, by profession was a lawyer who during his career served as a public prosecutor and later a Copenhagen City Court Judge. He was also a Director of Sparekassen, a savings bank based in Sjælland. Like Carl Alberti and David Borgen, Johan Holm was for a time a Copenhagen city councillor, serving in that capacity from 1842 to 1847. Following this from 1847 to 1858 he was a Raadmand of the city and from 1858 to 1869 the Borgmester of Division 3 of the Copenhagen Magistrates. This division (fattigvæsenet) dealt with the relief of the poor in the city.

Both Alberti and Holm thus were lawyers with experience of finance and thus highly suited to their role as administrators of David’s estate. Much of the detail that follows in this chapter is taken from documents preserved in David Borgen’s personal file held in the Rigsarkiv situated in Copenhagen. 1858 must have seemed a very long year to David. After his petition to the King the next document held in his personal file that relates to the bankruptcy proceedings is dated 20th April 1859. Presumably over a year must have been necessary for the administrators to establish the true position of his finances. In April 1859 he received a letter from the Public Trustees Office in Copenhagen notifying him that he could incorporate the outstanding balance of a mortgage from the City into his estate. In 1854 David had taken out a mortgage of 100453 Rdr from the City Magistrates using his Adelgade 210 property as a security. It would appear that in 1858 because the outstanding balance on this mortgage amounted to 40,000 Rdr, he by law had to sell this property so as to repay the mortgage before coming to any agreement with his other creditors. As no suitable bidder for this property had come forward by early 1859 David had therefore asked the Public Trustees if he could incorporate this debt into his estate as this would allow him to negotiate a final settlement of his affairs. The document shows that the Public Trustee was prepared to grant David’s petition subject to it having the approval of David’s creditors. Attachments to this document include the signatures of the various creditors giving the required approval. Having thus obtained approval for this arrangement the commissioners were at last able to produce a proper audit of David’s estate. This appeared 11th May 1859. Assets were summarised as follows:

92 Carl Alberti should not be confused with his son Peter Adler Alberti who embezzled money from this bank.
93 The details of Holm’s life are principally taken from the DBL vol 7 p579.
94 Rigsarkiv ms cat No RD-062
95 Rdr denotes ‘Rigsdaler’ the currency in Denmark at this time. As a crude guide multiplying Rdr by 20 gives a value in £ Stirling at 2010 values.
Assets

- Deposits in the National Bank 43500
- Jydsk Kjøbsteds Creditforening Bonds 1479
- Proceeds of sale of property held on matrikel No 171 Copenhagen’s udenbys Klædeboe Quarter 8200
- Sales from property inside Copenhagen 2300
- Miscellaneous assets 10000

Total 65170

(A note was added to this list stating that the assets of the properties matrikels 210 and 321 in St Anne’s West Quarter in Copenhagen (the first property) had not been realised owing to lack of suitable buyers).

Expenses deductible from assets

- Outstanding bills arising from the auction of items held in the First property 1600
- Costs of probate 2800
- Taxes, rents and small items relating to the estate. 1500

Total 5900

Grand Total of Assets 59270

Debits

- Outstanding debt from mortgage on matrikels 210 & 321 40000
- Personal debts* 2300
- Vekselaccepter (acceptances )* 104384
- Vekselendorsmenter (Endorsements)* 22101.36
- Solaveksler(Bills of Exchange)and other costs+ 116870.60
- Other debts+ 22040.88

Total 307696.88

(*Personal debts. +Foreign debts. The distinction between ‘personal’ and ‘foreign’ debts may denote bills of exchange drawn on the Danish market and those drawn on markets out with Denmark, notably Hamburg.)
David’s estate thus had a shortfall of 242526.88 Rdr or in modern currency about £4.9 million Sterling.

From this summary it would appear that David had managed to sell off some of his property. The auction mentioned in his assets related to a sale of the equipment in his sugar refinery and an inventory of this equipment is preserved in his personal file held in the Rigsarkiv (see Plate 5.4). As mentioned in chapter 5 the property in Copenhagen’s udenbys Klædeboe Quarter (an area out with the city walls) was first acquired in November 1845 from Hans Wilster. Copenhagen in the 1850s was beginning to develop outside its walls and associated fortifications. The property owned by David lay to the North West of the Assistens cemetery and not far from Jagtvej and is now included in the Nørrebro quarter of the city. Of the other assets listed, the property inside Copenhagen has not been identified, and there is no description of the items included under the miscellaneous heading. In a letter attached to the audit statement David estimated that his unsold property had been valued at least at 48000 Rdr. In the same letter he informed his creditors that he would be able to offer them a dividend of 21.5%. It would appear that this offer was accepted by them.

Some idea of who the creditors were and how much he owed them can be gained from hand written balance sheets preserved in David’s personal file in the Rigsarkiv. Some 48 names are listed on a balance sheet titled “Dividende til samtlige mine Creditorer” (Dividends to all my creditors). This list gives the names of the creditors, the amount of money owed to each, and the dividend paid (Pictures of some of these creditors are shown in Plates 7.2 and 7.3. The total sum of money owed amounts on this list to 256408 Rdr, this is 96% of the total debits shown in Alberti and Holme’s audit statement (267696 Rdr after subtracting the 40000 Rdr mortgage from the total). The balance sheet is therefore accurate enough to give a reasonably true reflection of the mix of creditors involved in David Borgen’s estate.

It is perhaps not surprising that over 51% of the total sum shown on the Dividend balance sheet is attributable to various financial institutions. Some 21% of the total sum is owed to the National Bank thus making it the largest single creditor on the list. The Danish National Bank today is Denmark’s central bank. It is a private bank independent of state control and is responsible for setting the Danish monetary policy and interest rates. Historically the bank was created in an attempt to stabilise the currency following the financial collapse that had taken place in 1813 consequent to the countries involvement in the Napoleonic Wars. The bank received its charter in 1818 from King Frederik VI and was given the sole right to issue Danish banknotes. At the period of David Borgen’s bankruptcy the National Bank’s lending comprised discounting bills of exchange for the business sector and extending loans against securities as collateral and against mortgages on property. It may be noted that for most of David’s period as a sugar refiner the National Bank was headed by Lauritz Nicolai Hvidt who was the banks director from 1835 to 1856. As described in Chapter 3 Lauritz Hvidt was also a city councillor from 1840 to 1856 and furthermore was chairman of the council (a post later incorporated into that of Copenhagen’s Overborgmester) from 1841 to 1853 so he would have been well known to David.

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96 The History of Banking in Denmark published by Danmarks Nationalbank.
Of the other financial institutions listed amongst the creditors David Borgen owed 48500 Rdr to Fyens Disconto-Kasse, one of the first commercial banks to be founded in Denmark, it was established in 1846. Its business was primarily involved in discounting bills of exchange, that is, the owners of the bills of exchange sold them to the bank at a discount. This bank was based in Odense and in the 1850s it dominated the business life of Fyn (It was eventually incorporated in to Den Danske Bank one of Denmark’s major present day banks). The sum owed to this bank formed 19% of the total debt thus making it the second largest creditor of David’s estate. There were other banks also involved in David’s estate. At the time of his bankruptcy David owed the Aalborg Sparekasse 13421 Rdr. The Sparekasser were savings banks and although the first came into existence in the late 18th century they expanded markedly from about 1830 onwards. They took in savings and guaranteed a fixed rate of interest. They were allowed to place some of their deposits with the National Bank but this was limited to specific amounts. They were also able to give loans but again this activity was limited by law. Another savings bank involved with David’s estate was the Skive Sparekasse which was owed the relatively modest sum of 1800 Rdr.

Several small commercial banks were also involved in David’s estate including banks in Randers, Horsens and Middelfart. The entry concerning Middelfart is interesting as David’s records show Hans Peter Hansen (See Plate 6.4) was involved in the debt owing to this bank. Hansen was one of the founders of Copenhagen’s Privatbank which today is incorporated into the Nordea Bank, and perhaps more importantly in the present context, he was from 1856 to 1861 the director of the National Bank itself and thus in this capacity would have been very interested in David’s financial affairs. Hansen would also have known David personally as he was also a member of the Copenhagen City Council and twice its chairman.

In the context of financial institutions it can be noted that assets amounting to 1479 Rdr consisting of Jydske Kjøbsteds Creditforening Bonds are included in Alberti and Holme’s audit summary. The Jydske Kjøbsteds Creditforening was one of the first building societies set up in Denmark and it was founded in 1851 in Viborg. David Baruch Adler (See Plate 7.2) was one of the founders of this institution. With an investment of 1250 Rdr, Adler was also one of David Borgen’s creditors. Adler was the son of a stockbroker and after gaining experience in Hamburg and London took over his uncle’s banking business which he continued under the name D.B. Adler and Co. His company made big losses during the 1857 financial crisis but just managed to avoid going bankrupt. Like Hans Peter Hansen mentioned above he was one of the cofounders of the Copenhagen Privatbank and he remained for a time on its Board of Directors but eventually resigned following a disagreement with the banks policy (One of his daughters became the mother of Niels Bohr, the famous Danish scientist who contributed so much to our present day understanding of the nature of the atom). Adler was active in politics both as a Copenhagen City Councillor and as a member of the Danish Parliament first in its lower chamber, the Folketing, and later in its upper chamber, the Landsting97.

Turning to the rest of the list of creditors98 the occupations of the businessmen that appear on this list are various. Many of these men had a mix of different activities throughout their careers,
combinations of banking, food marketing and shipping being especially common. Like David Adler just mentioned, a good deal of these businessmen also combined their trade activities with active political careers either in local or national government. Many of them were members of influential bodies such as the management committee of the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society. Christian August Broberg (see Plate 7.2) was an outstanding example of this type of creditor. As described in earlier chapters he owned the trading company Christian Broberg and Son which he had inherited from his father. The company was owed the substantial sum of 15379 Rdr making it one of David’s largest creditors after the financial institutions described above. Broberg’s personal signature is conspicuous on the document allowing David to include his mortgage as part of his estate! Under Broberg’s management the firm of Christian Broberg and Son had developed into a large shipping company specialising in importing coffee, indeed for a time it was the largest importer of coffee in all Scandinavia. Aside from this Broberg was very much involved in banking. He was a cofounder of the Copenhagen Laanebank and later the Chairman of the Board of the Copenhagen Privatbank (In the latter capacity he was personally responsible for the appointment of Carl Tietgen as Managing Director of the Privatbank). He also had a place on the board of the National Bank. He had a political career in that he was a Copenhagen city councillor from 1845 to 1851 and later he was elected a member of the lower chamber of Denmark’s national parliament. Needless to say he was a member of the management committee of the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society. 

Another businessman that exemplified this type of creditor was Moritz Gerson Melchior (Plate 7.2). Melchior was the owner of the firm of Moses and Son G.Melchior, The firm had been founded by his grandfather and its special interest here is that it ran a fleet of ships trading between Europe and the Caribbean. It traded in particular with the island of St Croix. Raw cane sugar was exported from this island to Denmark. As discussed in chapter 5 it is possible that this firm may have been providing David Borgen’s refinery with raw sugar. Melchior was also a co-founder of the Privatbank and for a period he was also the bank’s vice-chairman. Turning to other activities Melchior was a member of the management committee of the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society, a member of the Copenhagen Harbour Board and he served as a city councillor from 1851 to 1868. He became a member of the upper chamber of the Danish National Parliament in 1866. He served on many committees of national importance including one that was responsible for policy concerning the taxation of sugar!

Regarding shipping several creditors were involved in this activity including the German firm of C.H.Donner of Altona. This firm, based in a province that at the time was governed by the Danish Crown, had a fleet of ships operating across the world trading in coal, grain, spices and sugar. David’s liabilities to this firm amounted to 14560 Rdr.

Another ship-owner amongst David’s creditors was Bernt Wilhelm Westermann (Plate 7.3), the sum owing to him being 4785 Rdr. As noted in Chapter 5 Westermann not only was a shipowner but he owned the Phœnix sugar refinery in Christianshavn and he was a noted collector of insects! Regarding the Phœnix sugar refinery, as mentioned earlier this eventually became part of Carl Tietgen’s company the ‘Danske Sukkerfabrikker A/S’. In his early years Bernt Westermann had travelled in India, Indonesia and the Cape Province of South Africa. He developed an interest in insects whilst on his travels and in the end had acquired a collection of 45,000 different species. This
The firm of J.P. Suhr and Son had an investment of 3500 Rdr in David Borgen’s business. This firm had been founded in 1749 and traded in a wide variety of goods although its activities after 1830 had focused on trade in iron and coal. Its director in the 1850’s, John Theodor Suhr (Plate 7.3) was a wealthy man who was able to purchase and restore the house called Sølyst situated in the Copenhagen suburb of Gentofte. This house had at one time belonged to Count Ernst Schimmelmann (Schimmelmann was mentioned in Chapter 2). Returning to Theodor Suhr, for a period he was a member of the 32 Man Council. In addition to the house Sølyst Suhr owned several large estates outside Copenhagen. Aside from his company Suhr also had a bond (obligation) of value 1600 Rdr drawn on David’s estate. Suhr died in the year of David’s bankruptcy and his considerable fortune was bequeathed to a family foundation (This is still in existence today).

The firm of Jacob Holm and Sons was also one of David Borgens creditors with an investment of 2359 Rdr. At the time of David’s bankruptcy this firm was being run by the sons of its founder, Jacob Holm (Plate 7.3) having died in 1848. Jacob was born in 1770 and trained as a grocer. He set up his own shop in Christianshavn in 1794 but then steadily expanded his business activities so that by 1824 he had acquired a shipyard and become a shipbuilder and repairer. In this capacity he pioneered the construction of steamships in Denmark. By 1840 he had also become the largest ship owner in Copenhagen with a fleet of 18 ships all trading overseas including the West Indies. During the 1830s he was also a member of the 32 Man Council. He enjoyed the reputation of being a good employer that took a lively interest in the welfare of his employees. A group of the buildings that stood in Christianshavn until the 1930’s were built by him for his workers and these became known as “Holms Huse”.

The Greenland Trading Company had a small (103 Rdr) investment in David’s sugar refinery. This company, founded in 1744 was essentially a state owned company which enjoyed a monopoly of trade with the inhabitants of Greenland. Items such as fish, furs and sealskin were exported to Denmark in return for general provisions produced in Europe. Several other companies with small investments are also included in David’s list of creditors. One example is listed as “Sø Assuranc Foreningen” (313 Rdr), this is probably “Den Kjøbenhavnske Sø Assuranc Foreningen Limiteret” a maritime insurance company founded by Copenhagen merchants in 1852. These companies may well have been involved in David’s marketing operations and so they could have played a much greater role in his business than the size of their investments suggested. Hans Caspersen for example only had 65 Rdr invested in the sugar refinery but, as described above, he played a very important role in the business in that his firm carried out the installation of the steam apparatus as part of the modernisation that took place in 1854.

Perhaps not surprisingly a number of David Borgen’s friends and members of his family invested in the sugar refinery. Rather confusingly David Borgen’s eldest son Valdemar Peter appears twice on the list of creditors, one entry for 14255 Rdr and a second entry for 11000 Rdr. Both of these sums are substantial and one wonders if they were different accounts on account of second parties not
mentioned. No other of David’s siblings appear on the “Dividends paid to Creditors” list but there is an entry in another document in the Rigsarkivet file which shows his next eldest son Edvard had a bond (obligation) of 1200 Rdr on the refinery. The bond appears to have been repaid separately from the other creditors. David’s third son Carl Emmanuel does not appear on any list of creditors, however there is correspondence involving him in the Rigsarkivet file.

Two of David’s half-brothers were amongst his creditors, Carl August Borgen and Ole Christian Borgen (both preferred to use their middle names in correspondence).

Carl August Borgen appears in the census of 1840 as an office worker and in 1845 as a book keeper in a trading company. His entries in the KVV for 1855 and 1860 show that like David he had become a sugar refiner, this description also appears on his wedding certificate (he married in 1855). His involvement with the sugar industry did not last long however as in 1863 he founded an insurance company, the “August Borgen Assuranceforretning”. This company enjoyed success, being further developed by Carl August’s son Arthur. Eventually the firm came under the direction of William Malling who had married into the Suhr family (see the firm of J.P.Suhr and Son mentioned above). In 1969 the firm amalgamated with a Swiss insurance firm and today trades under the name Winterthur-Borgen Forsikring. Letters preserved in the Rigsarkivet show that as David grew older Carl August joined with Carl Emmanuel in helping to look after his financial affairs.

As mentioned in Chapter 3 Ole Christian Borgen owned the Copenhagen firm Chr Borgen & Son, wholesalers and retailers of sugar and syrup. His investment in David’s refinery is shown “for Petersen og Hevy”, these could have been clients of his firm.

Other investors belonging to the family included David’s brother in law Commodore Captain Ferdinand August Paludan (Plate 2.5), his investment was small (192 Rdr) but he also featured in the correspondence held in the Rigsarkivet file. As suggested by his rank Ferdinand had a distinguished career in the Danish navy, however, he had the misfortune to command the navies lead ship, the Christian VIII, when it was sunk in action in the Eckernfjord during the first Schleswig war. He was court martialed over this event. Later he obtained the appointment of military governor of the island of Fehman in Slesvig-Holstein.

It is very likely that George Ryan (Plate 7.3) was more than a business colleague of David’s as David’s fourth son was named after him! George Ryan had an investment in the refinery amounting to 2179 Rdr. He was unusual amongst the merchants of Copenhagen as he hailed from Ireland. He was born near the small town of Kilcock in County Kildare. He move to Copenhagen on account of his brother Phillip who had already via a family friend obtained a general business in the city. On Philip’s death

he inherited the business which specialised in importing wares from Britain. George Ryan was also a ship owner. He became well established in the merchant’s community of Copenhagen and for a time was a representative of the community on the board of the National Bank. Later he joined the board of the Copenhagen Privatbank. Interestingly another of David’s creditors, Joseph Knight worked in the office of George Ryan’s business and the 1850 census shows that Joseph was born on the Island of St Croix, one of Denmark’s Caribbean islands. Having an English name suggests Joseph could have been a member of the coloured community. Joseph had 500 Rdr invested in David’s business.

From the biographies listed above it will be seen David had a wide involvement with the merchant community in Copenhagen. It is interesting that certain institutions such as the National Bank, the Copenhagen Privatbank and the Copenhagen Merchant’s Society are particularly evident and that many of the merchants who had their own businesses also had positions in these institutions as well. Another common factor amongst David’s creditors are their connections with local politics. Many of them had positions either in the 32 Man Council or its successor the Copenhagen City Council. All this indicates that David Borgen must have been a known quantity to his creditors. Whilst one can imagine he must have felt that he had led his creditors down, his previous good standing and the fact that so many other businesses were involved in the same financial crisis could have mitigated at least in part the effects of the bankruptcy on his reputation as a businessman. As described in chapter 8 in some ways the most telling event after the fall of his business was that the City Council decided to keep him on as their Kæmner. Sad that the bankruptcy was, its consequences in terms of the surviving records have provided posterity with an interesting insight in to the finances of David Borgen’s sugar refinery and also in to the mercantile milieu in which he worked.
Plate 7.1

The Liquidators appointed to wind up David Borgen’s estate

Carl Christian Alberti

Johan Peter Holm

Nicolai Abrahams

Johan Wroblewsky

All portraits copied from the collection in the Royal Library
Plate 7.2  
Some of the Creditors (Part 1)

David Baruch Adler

Christian Broberg

Moritz Melchior

Jacob Holm

All portraits copied from the collection in the Royal Library
Plate 7.3  Some of the Creditors (Part 2)

George Ryan  Theodor Suhr

Hans Caspersen  Bernt Westermann

All portraits copied from the collection in the Royal Library
CHAPTER 8. DAVID BORGEN'S LAST YEARS.

Three phrases stand out in a letter written in May 1859 by David Borgen to the two administrators appointed to liquidate his estate J.P.Holm and C.C.Alberti: “I sincerely hope that you will co-operate with me in dealing with these unfortunate circumstances and agree with my strategy to cope with the greatest accident that has ever befallen me”, “It is most painful to me that I can only offer such a small return but I offer all that I possess, there is nothing left over” and “I have therefore taken responsibility for the property (i.e. Adelgade 210 and Helsingørsgade 331) although I am at present uncertain as to how I can cope with its running costs, especially with regards to the factory”. In a way these quotations summarise the problems facing David in the years immediately following his bankruptcy, the need to maintain his good reputation in financial matters, his need to continue to earn an income, and his need to cope with the property still remaining in his hands. Fortunately, despite the fact that his age was now 66, he still had initiative and energy and in consequence he was largely able to cope with the calamity that had befallen him.

In 1858 David as a result of being declared bankrupt had to resign his post as a City Councillor. He also had to resign as the Treasurer of the Trinitatis Church, the governing body for this church at the time was the consistory of the University of Copenhagen. Typical of a University body it immediately carried out an audit of the Trinitatus church funds and having found them correct thanked David for his past work as Treasurer!

Fortunately for David’s self-esteem the City authorities took a more generous view of David. As mentioned in chapter 7 at a meeting of the council held in January 1858 it was decided to retain David as Kæmner as is shown in the following translation (See Plate 8.1 for the original):

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING REGARDING DAVID BORGEN'S BANKRUPTCY

Lieutenant Colonel Borgen had indicated to the Magistrates that he wished to continue serving the City Council as Kæmner despite the fact that his own business had been taken into administration. Following this the Magistrates had contacted the Administrators who confirmed that Lieutenant Colonel Borgen had been declared bankrupt. As a consequence of this the Kæmner’s duties regarding the collection of taxes and the supervision of the Councils main treasury had been suspended with effect from the 1st January 1858, in the meantime the Kæmner’s duties would be restricted to the administration of those properties belonging to the city. Financial transactions involving the collection of rents, fees for the registration of marriages, and payments regarding the operation of the sand pits and the collection of refuse should be made directly to the main treasury. The Kæmner was instructed to issue invoices regarding charges for marriage registrations, delivery of sand, stone and manure and that he should report to the main treasury all receipts for the same. The question regarding the future collection of large sums of money such as the payment of grazing fees that had been the responsibility of the Kæmner was deferred by the council for consideration either at the end of May or at some later date, in the meanwhile the Kæmner was to remain authorised to handle
small sums of money such as the payment of wages and other running expenses. The latter sums would not exceed some hundreds of rigsdalers at one time and the council were confident of the management of these sums by Lieutenant Colonel Borgen given the security made by him consisting of shares to the value of 1000 Rigsdalers in the National Bank and £200 in 3% Danish-English bonds. The Magistrates had inspected the Kæmner’s personal finances and were satisfied all was in order; in consequence they had no hesitation in recommending to the council that Lieutenant Colonel Borgen should be allowed to retain his position as Kæmner. The council accepted this recommendation.

In fact the reforms in local government that took place over 1857/8 greatly reduced the Kæmner’s responsibilities so David’s new job description chimed in with these.

David’s title of Kæmner remained up to 1861 when a further change in local government took place. The title was then abolished and instead David simply became an “Økonomiforvalter” that is a “Financial Administrator”. David probably retired from this post in 1862.

With regards to income the tax returns for 1861/2 held in the Stadsarkiv show in that year David had an income of 2000 Rdr. As this would amount to approximately £40,000 per annum in 2010 prices it is apparent that although his income would have been much less than before the bankruptcy he had not been reduced to penury. The fact that he and his wife lived at the Adelgade property for the rest of their lives also indicates that David was still able to maintain a reasonable lifestyle. Some of this income would have come from his work for the City Council, however the tax returns suggest that he was suplimenting his income by renting out his properties in Adelgade and Helsingøresgade. KVV shows that in 1855 David was living in Adelgade 310 but in 1860 his residence was now Helsingøresgade 331. It would appear he had moved into the accommodation in Helsingøresgade described in Chapter 5. The taxation records for Adelgade 210 show not only David but his son Carl Emmanuel and two other people, one a ‘Gasmester’ (a gas fitter) and the other a ‘Snedkermester’ (a master carpenter) being taxed on the property. KVV shows Carl resident in the same Helsingøresgade property as David but the other two taxpayers do not appear resident either at Adelgade or Helsingøresgade and this agrees with the Danish Census records. It may thus be concluded that the two non-residents were hiring parts of the old refinery buildings for their own purposes. This pattern is repeated in the following taxation records with four names in 1863 and eight in 1867 extra to those of David and his son. The tax returns show David had a declining income in the years following 1861, in 1863/4, that is after retiring from the Council, his income was 1500 Rdr, and in 1867/8 the year of his death 700 Rdr. Some income remained however for in the tax year 1870/71 Wilhelmine, now a widow, had an income of 500 Rdr.

Early photographs have survived of David and Wilhelmine taken sometime after 1860, these are shown in Plate 8.2. David was helped by his offspring in the years following 1858. His eldest son Valdemar Peter had moved away from Adelgade sometime between 1840 and 1845 but was still living in Copenhagen. Edvard with his wife were living in Adelgade at the time of the birth of their eldest son Axel in 1856 but by 1859 had moved to Aabenraa 215 an address close to the Trinitatis church. Carl Emmanuel remained resident at Helsingøresgade until 1875 when he sold the entire Adelgade property to Frands Peter Roerup a furniture dealer101.

101 Maalebrevets (property assessments) held in the Stadsarkiv.
There is a number of letters in the Rigsarkiv file on David that cover financial transactions between him and his son Edvard. These show that Edvard was involved in winding up the sugar refinery. Various balances appear showing sales of sugar, receipts of income and outgoings including domestic charges relating to the refinery and covering the period 1860 to 1862. Edvard’s name then disappears from the surviving correspondence, and of course being an officer in the army reserves, he would have been absent from Copenhagen throughout 1864 if not before owing to the second Schleswig War.

Intriguingly it is also possible that David continued wholesaling sugar after the closure of his refinery. He had the knowledge and a customer base and even allowing for the renting out of parts of Adelgade 210 there could still have been storage space available to him. That he continued as a wholesaler is suggested by a letter written in January 1864 from David’s half-brother, Carl August, warning that one of David’s customers in Aarhus was not capable of paying his bills! In 1865 David became seriously ill and this probably explains why correspondence relating to his estate is handled from that time on by Carl Emmanuel. There is correspondence regarding the estate between Carl and people such as Ole Christian Borgen, Carl Rentzmann and Christian Schouw.

The days were now drawing in for David. He suffered much pain during the closing years of his life and in 1868, just short of his 75th birthday he passed away. Wilhelmine’s brother Julius wrote his obituary:

“On the 1st February 1868 at 11 o’clock in the morning died my dear friend and brother-in-law David Borgen. He was thus released from the sufferings he had especially during the last 2 years and 7 months of his life. He left an outstanding record of public service but I will not describe this aspect of his life as it has been well covered by the obituaries published in the daily newspapers. He deserves also to be remembered with love regarding his private life at home. Soon, within this year, he would have lived through 50 years of marriage with my sister. His many loving children together with other relations and friends stood grieving around his coffin. As he was honoured and loved in his inner circles he was likewise honoured in the outer circles of his social life, a fact reflected by the many people who attended his funeral. On the 8th February he was taken from the Trinitatis Church to the Assistens churchyard. We grieve at the loss of my brother-in-law but at the same time thank God who released him from his sufferings and his family from having to watch him suffering so much.”

Notices of his death and funeral were published in a number of the Copenhagen newspapers including the “Berlingste Tidende”, the “Dags Telegraffen” and the “Folkets Avis”. Edvard would probably have been involved professionally in the funeral as on his return from the war he had been appointed a “Stads-Bedemand” that is a “City Funeral Director” and linked (as a “Graver” i.e. Sexton) to the Trinitatis church. After the funeral Wilhelmine continued to live in the Adelgarde property until she died in 1872. Again Julius wrote an obituary for her:

“When my mother in 1799 moved to this city (Copenhagen) she was a widow with nine children and not at all well off. Her economic situation became worse after the first bombardment in 1807 as this
created fires and all that she owned in the house she was living in was destroyed. Later with the 
difficult war years from 1807 to 1814 she had to struggle to bring up her family. The education my 
sister had received before this traumatic time had never been great, but it got less during this time 
and by the time of her confirmation it had stopped altogether. Despite the consequential lack of a 
general education she (Wilhelmine) was really quite intelligent and active in her spiritual life as well 
as in the practical affairs of housekeeping. Maybe it was this quality that attracted her husband. In 
1818 they were married and created a very hospitable home, and as her family grew to 13 children 
she had a lot to take care of, but in no sense was she demanding nor did she need to take part in 
public life. Therefore she could not expect in this life or after her death to receive a public 
recognition of her life’s work. It is however a great satisfaction for me to mention how much she was 
given a public appreciation of her life at her funeral. During the last evening of her life she was 
sitting working within her circle at home. She went to bed feeling well and slept well for the first 
couple of hours, but towards the early morning she had an attack of coughing which brought up 
blood, and at 6 o’clock in the morning she died.”

It is a great pity that no domestic correspondence has survived from the family, as a result we do not 
know a lot of detail about Wilhelmine’s life.

What happened to David and Wilhelmine’s children following their deaths? Valdemar Peter their 
eldest son had studied at Copenhagen University gaining the Cand Philos Degree before entering 
business and eventually becoming the treasurer of Copenhagen’s “Industrial Society” 
(Industriforeningen). The object of the society was to promote industry in the Danish state and to 
further this aim it organised in Copenhagen in 1872 a highly successful exhibition entitled “Nordic 
Industry and Design”. Valdemar must have been closely involved with the organisation of this 
exhibition in that in 1872 he was appointed “Ridder af Dannebrog” and also awarded the Swedish 
equivalent, “ Ridder af Vasaordenen”. He had married Emma Angelica Eckhart in 1854 but there 
were no children from this marriage. He became a property owner and lived a long life, he died in 
1901.

Their second son, Edvard, in 1854 married Elise Julie Antonie Rohde the daughter of a teacher at the 
Trinitatis Church School and also Church Cantor. Edvard served with distinction in the second 
Schleswig War and during it was promoted to the rank of Captain. As described above following the 
war he became a City Funeral Director. He and his wife had three children, in addition to Axel and 
Jens already mentioned Ingeborg was born in 1868. Sadly Jens died in 1864. Axel became an optical 
instrument maker and in 1891 married Anna Amalie Behrs, Axel died in 1933. (This book is 
dedicated to the memory of Axel’s youngest daughter Kirsten). Edvard’s daughter Ingeborg in 1901 
marrried the famous Danish Architect Carl Petersen, designer of the Faaborg Museum. Carl did so 
much to reinstate the reputation of the neo-classical style of buildings (such as Copenhagen’s 
Cathedral and Law Courts) which had fallen out of favour following the late 19th century’s infatuation 
with the gothic style of architecture. Edvard himself died in 1897.

Their third son, Carl Emmanuel was first a pupil at the Westenske Institute, the school headed by his 
uncle Vilhelm August Borgen. He then moved to the University of Copenhagen to study law, he
qualified Cand.Juris in 1856, and entered the Copenhagen Police service ultimately becoming a Registrar in the Courts of Justice. As mentioned earlier his career was very similar to Christian Schouw and Christian may well have influenced Carl’s career choice when a young man. Later in life he was also Treasurer of the ‘Forenede Understøttelsesselskab’ thus following his father who had served this society in the 1840’s. He was also treasurer of several other benevolent societies. Although he married in 1878 Mathilde Frederikke Bræmer he had no children. He died in 1891.

David and Wilhelmine’s next two sons were Georg Ryen and Otto. Both emigrated to the U.S.A. and became farmers, Georg in Mitchell, Kansas and Otto at Rooks also in Kansas. Georg married Christina Christensen and they had five children. Otto married Sarah Anne Reas and they had at least five children. David and Wilhelmine’s remaining son David worked at the Polytechnic Institute in Odense.

Regarding David and Wilhelmine’s daughters their eldest Louise married Harold Dahlerup in 1851. Harold Dahlerup’s early career was as a teacher at the Royal Institute for the Deaf and Dumb in Copenhagen. Later he founded the first school for the Deaf and Dumb in Denmark based on a method of teaching called the ‘speaking method’ (Talemetode). From 1851 he was Parish Priest successively at Ærøskøbing, Vaalse on Falster and in 1868 at Ørbek in Fyne. He and Louise had four daughters, Vilhelmine who was born in 1853, Marie born in 1855 (died 1856), Sophie born in 1858 and Louise born in 1863.

Of David and Wilhelmine’s later daughters Emma born in 1835 lived all her life in Copenhagen, she died on the 15th May 1912. Therese married Emanuel Christian Gamst Schroder a Copenhagen Merchant in 1857. They had one daughter, Ida Vilhelmine Emmanuela Schroder, who became a famous opera singer. She was a soprano and from 1876 to 1878 she studied at the Royal Music Conservatorium in Copenhagen. Later she studied in London, Paris and Milan. Her début as a lead singer was in 1880 at the Royal Opera House in Copenhagen in which she took the role of Zerline in Don Juan. She had a strong sympathy with the works of Strauss. Of the remaining daughters there are no records for Christine Frederikke other than for her birth, and Mathilde Benicdte and Marie Julie both died young.

David and Wilhelmine are both buried in the Assistents Cemetry not far in fact from the property David acquired from Hans Wilster, but no headstone survives, David’s cousin Bonaparte is the only family member to retain a headstone today. David and Wilhelmine have a legacy however in that the family goes on, today their two and three times great grandchildren walk this earth, not only in Denmark and Norway, but in Britain, Australia and the U.S.A. It must also be remembered David participated in the development of Copenhagen’s local government at a particularly critical time in its history and this contribution can also be seen as part of his legacy. The City has grown enormously since David’s time but if he were alive today he could take pride both in it and in the role he played as a City Councillor and as the City Kæmner.

102 Salmonsens Konversations Lexicon Vol21 page 65.
Mødet den 18de Januar 1858.

Direktørne havde meddelet, at den constituerede Kæmner, Oberstlieutenant Borgen, ved at underrette Magistraten om, at han havde siet sig nødt til at opgive sit Bo til Skiftebehandling, havde andraget paa, at han i modsætning fremdeles maaede fungere i den nævnte Stilling, hvorhos Magistraten fra de i hans Bo beklædt Skiftecommissærer havde erholdt Meddelelse om, at de havde taget Boet under Behandling som fallit. Som bekjendt, havde Vedtægten for den kommunele Forvaltning medført den Forandringer i Kæmnerens Stilling, at det ham tidligere overdragne Tilsyn med Skatteopkrævningen og Kommunens Hovedkasse fra den 1ste d. M. var bortfallet, så at han nu kun var at betragte som en Forvalter for de under hans Bestyrelses henlægde Elenomme, hvorhos Magistraten havde truffet den Forandringsafstand, at efternævnte Indstætter, som Kæmneren hildtil havde oppebaret og i runde Summer havde indbetalt i Hovedkassen, nemlig Vielsepunge, Indstætter af Stadium Sandgrav og af Reavolutionsskolerne, direkte af velkommenne Private indbetaltes i Hovedkassen, i hvilken Henvisning den Ordning var insført, at naar Kæmneren uforlidelige Attester om og hvilket Beløb der skulle erhverges i Vielse-
punge, samt meddelte Udførelsessecker paol solgt Sand, Stem og Gjodning, maatte Quitteringen for det, der efter disse Attester og Udførelsessecker skulle hølde, mellem de Hovedkassen, hvad angik de Grepene, som Kæmneren hiltill havde oppebaret, da blev der først Spørgsmålet herom i Slutningen af Mai eller senere, og først til den Tid behøvede der altsaa, om fornødent, at tages Bestemmelser om den Forandringer med denne Indstætternes Indkassert. Derimod vilde det ikke kunne undgaes, at der, som hiltill, anvises Kæmneren runde Summer til Afholdelse af Arbejdepunge og andre løbende, mindre Udgifter ved de under hans Bestyrelses henlægde Elenomme m. v., men for disse Sum-
ner, som ikke oversteg nogle hundrede Rigsdaler ad Gængen, vilde der, i alt Fald indtil videre, haves Betryggelse i den af Oberstlieutenant Borgen ved hans Bestyrelses still.
lende Canion, 1,000 Bnr. i Nationalbanknotter og 200 ø i 3 % dansk-engelske Obligationer. Ved et af Magi-
straten foretaget Ettersyn af Kæmnerens Pengetilføjelser var Intet blevet fundet at erindre. Under disse Omstændighede, og da Magistratens forestående Omorganisation fær-
mentligt ville melde, at Kæmneren som kort Tid indehavet blev besat, havde Magistraten ingen Betænskelighed fundet ved at lade Oberstlieutenant Borgens Constitution som Kæmner, hans Fallit uagtet, indtil videre blive i Kraft, ligesom Magistraten havde forudsat, at der fra Forsamlingen Selve ikke vilde haves Noget at erindre med den nedenlægde tankens Bestemmelser.

Dette Meddelelse tages af Forsamlingen til Efter-
retning.

Plate 8.1

Extracts of Council Minutes regarding David’s future employment as Kæmner following his bankruptcy

Minutes of the Borgerrepræsentants kept in the Copenhagen’s Stadsarkiv
Wilhelmine and David Borgen
Photographs taken sometime after 1860.
Copies from the Family archives.
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