



1_Karl-Johan-slo-flytebro-over-Svinesund-under-angrepet-på-Norge-i-1814_Bro-ble-liggende-i-mange-år_Her-illustrert-i-1826-av-WR-Wilson_HhS---Kopi.jpg

(svint in Norwegian) thorough the sound.

SVINESUND – THE GATEWAY TO NORWAY

No one is quite sure of the origins of the name «Svinesund», but we do know that the name was used way back in the time of the old sagas about the Norse kings. Some researches claim that it means the “Swede’s inlet” (in Old Norwegian svearna meant the Swedes), but the name may also have been chosen to reflect how the water passed swiftly

During the Middle Ages, Svinesund was the border between the Ranrike and Borgarsyssel fiefdoms or counties. In 1658 the county of Bohuslän was ceded to Sweden and the national border between Sweden and Norway was drawn right down the middle of the sound.

The ferryman

In 1658 a graceful building was erected at the ferry landing just where you can see later version of it now, in addition to serving as the ferryman’s home, it was also used as a customs post and border post office in 1658, customs offices were established on both sides of the border. From then until 1946 it was a ferry connection across the sound. The ferryman’s house burned down in 1723, but was quickly rebuilt.

The first automobile was road across the sound in 1906. The ferryman used seven metres long pars to row across. In 1917 two barges were equipped with engines and were able to carry two cars each. They remained in service right until the bridge was opened.

All international mail to and from Norway passed through Svinesund. The post office in its time was the largest in Norway and situated in the ferryman’s building. However, in 1871 the postmaster position at Svinesund was abolished as once the Kongsvinger railway line was open, and all international mail carried by the railway.

The union period

From 1814 to 1905 Norway was united with Sweden. From 1901 to 1903 a large fortress was constructed at Hjelmkollen. The fortress was armed with modern cannons, including two 12 cm French Schneider armored turret guns. It was the first stage of a defensive line from Hjelmkollen and Fredriksten fortress along the Halden watercourse across Veden redoubt, the Ørje forts, Vittenberg redoubt, Urskog fort and the Kongsvinger fortress. All the arrangements were moved in 1906 when the union was dissolved the year before.

Svinesund: facts and figures

1658: Bohuslän becomes Swedish after peace negotiations in Roskilde. The new border with Norway runs along Idefjorden and Svinesund.



5_Svinesundbroa_detali_Foto-Svein-Norheim_DSC_6772.jpg

Norwegian and Swedish Parliaments decided to build a motor-vehicle bridge using Swedish granite. Work started on 1 April 1939 under Swedish management. But on 9 April 1940 the Germans invaded Norway and this brought an abrupt halt to construction. But the Swedes and the Germans placed mines on the bridge during the period 1940-1942. On 6 July 1942 an explosion on the Swedish side destroyed just about all of the almost completed bridge. The alleged cause was that an explosive charge on the Swedish side had been hit by lightning. The German rebuilt Hjelmkollen into a fortress. Substantial defence fortifications were also constructed on the Swedish side.

After the war, construction of the bridge was resumed, and it was opened with great pomp and ceremony on 15 June 1946 by the Norwegian King Haakon and the Swedish Crown Prince Gustav Adolf. Sweden had then paid 85 percent of the construction costs.

Svinesund is Norway's premier border crossing. Almost 5.8 million motor vehicles crossed the bridge in 2004, an average of 15 650 vehicles a day. The record is 19 July 2003, when 25.025 vehicles crossed.

Svinesund Bridge: facts and figures

1938: The Swedish Riksdagen and Norwegian Stortinget decide to construct a road bridge.

1 April 1939: Commencement of building.

9 April 1940: Germany invades Norway and building operations are suspended.

1940–1942: Swedes and Germans mine the bridge.

1666–1946: Ferry connection across the sound.

1675: The Norwegians erect Sponviken fortress.

1716: The Swedes, led by Charles XII, construct Sundsborg fort and build a pontoon bridge across the sound.

1906: The first car is rowed across the sound.

1900–1935: Several Swedish proposals for a railway bridge across the sound.

1946: Svinesund Bridge inaugurated.

1950: A customs house is built on the Norwegian side.

1984/1986: New customs houses are built on both sides.

2005: The new Svinesund Bridge is inaugurated. The old bridge is classified as a historic building.

Bridge across Svinesund

The more motor vehicle traffic increased, the more the need for a bridge. In 1938 the

6 July 1942: Explosions on the Swedish side destroy large parts of the bridge, which has almost been completed.

Specifications

Length: 450 metres

Height: 65 metres

Clearance: 60 metres

Two-lane carriageway: each lane 3.5 metres broad.

Two footpaths: each 1.25 metres broad.

Swedish side: six granite pillars

Norwegian side: two granite pillars

Amount of granite: 8,650 m²

Volume of concrete: 1,750 m³

The Stone Age at Svinesund

Early Stone Age

During the Atlantic period 5.5000 BC, the people living at Svinesund hunted, fished and gathered mussels and plants. The climate was warm and humid. Man thrived the ocean and boats were the principal means of transport. Where the current E6 enters Norway there was a fjord during the Stone Age. Here there was a settlement used by the surrounding people for centuries that served as the centre of community life. At appointed times throughout the year the whole extended family would meet her to discuss politics, gossip about major and minor events, to enjoy song and dance and pla for the future. For the rest of the year they would disperse across a large area. People lived in tents or gamme, a small hut made of earth and turf on a wooden frame, and their most imported possession was the large log boat made of linden logs cut and hewed into shape wit stone axes.

Today Østfold county and Norway are on the periphery of the metropolises of Europe and the world. No such metropolises existed during the Stone Age. Wherever you were was just as much the centre as anywhere else. The outdoor life today's stressed workers might dream about was the everyday life of people living at Svinesund. The wood spends perhaps two hours a day finding food, perhaps less. The rest of the time was theirs to do as they pleased.

Late Stone Age

Towards the end of the Stone Age, 2.200 BC, the world had changed. People now farmed and kept animals. The climate was drier and warmer than today. The sea continued to be an important transport artery, but people wanted to live where the soil allowed them to cultivate grain and grass, and where they could feed the animals. The rise of the land after the ice age hade made the fjord smaller, and the dwellings of the early Stone Age were now far from water. These sites were now the best tilling soli for farmers. They erected longhouse 20 metres long, building where the roof and walls were supported on logs dug into the ground. They painstakingly cleared the soil of rocks and ploughed using riding

ploughs. Barley was sown and raped using flint stone scythes. Trees were cleared so that herds of cattle, goats and sheep could graze under the watchful eye of the herders. People lived in and worked on the farm all their lives. When a house fell down from age or burned down, a new one would be constructed on the same site.

The growth of the outlying district

At the end of the late Stone Age we find the roots to modern society. In principle farms and farming were as we know them from historical times. The most important thing is probably that the mental sphere of these people was similar to our own. The best farming districts in Østfold County were located further from the sea, but these too were outlying districts compared to the large centres growing in Europe. Here people made metal tools and powerful rulers held sway over thousands of subjects. At Svinesund, the inhabitants had tools and design traditions similar to southern Europe. Some of the artefacts had actually been imported from Denmark. They had become part of a larger community than the people living in the early Stone Age, but where they happier or more successful?