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In death, nothing is private! Public registration of the private home

Pernille Ulla Knudsen

On Saturday, 29 December 1798, the funeral procession for the deceased *gehejmeraadinde*¹ Margrethe Elisabeth Stampe set off. The entourage departed from her mansion in Frederiksholms Canal, Copenhagen, and processed the 700 metres to St Peter's German Church, where the family's burial chapel awaited Margrethe's body.² The entourage consisted of seven horse-drawn carriages. The bells of St Peter's Church rang out, and they were likely heard all the way back at the mansion in the icy, snow-covered capital. The funeral cortège was escorted by four police officers who had been seconded from their other duties expressly for this purpose. The procession then slowly passed the shopkeepers who had gathered in the square in front of the town hall.

For four parade days before the procession, Madame Stampe's body rested in a double coffin of oak that had been placed in the large hall of her residence, which was completely covered in black cloth for this occasion. The body of the *gehejmeraadinde* was wrapped in a white shroud with laces and long white gloves. The stairs leading up to the great hall were clad in black. Accounts of the funeral costs mentioned sixty-four boxes of wax candles that were used to illuminate the otherwise carbon-black staircase and parade hall. The accounts also mention the following items: the oilcloth that was placed under her body, the paper shavings and pins that helped maintain the form and shape of the deceased, and the spiced water, spices and spirits intended to purify the air within the covered black hall.

In death, nothing is private. All of the expenses for Madame Stampe's funeral were carefully recorded and accounted for. The price for her funeral totalled an impressive 3,161 *rigsdaler* (rdl.).³ The entirety of Stampe's funeral ritual well attests to the fact that she was a member of the highest level of the elite in Denmark-Norway. Despite this, Margrethe Stampe has not attracted any significant historical interest. Scholars have been far more interested in her husband, Henrik Stampe, and his public work as a senior official in the absolutist Danish-Norwegian central administration. Nevertheless, it was Margrethe Stampe's private estate that, after her death, made it financially possible for her husband's nephew, Holger Stampe (1754–1827), to enter the nobility as the baron of Stampenborg.

The purpose of this article is to demonstrate how one can use the extant records produced by the public administration of the probate system in order to illuminate

aspects of the private household that have traditionally formed a fundamental element in the scholarly articulation of the 'private' during the early modern period. This article, therefore, is a micro-historical study of the division of Margrethe Stampe's estate after her death, and its aim is to examine how far one can reconstruct a specific household. This reconstruction follows the meticulous comparison of the statement of contents for the division of her estate on the one hand, with the property assessments of the deceased's mansion in Frederiksholm Canal, which she acquired in 1792, on the other. We can supplement this source material with other administrative archives, such as auction protocols, wills, marriage contracts, church registers, censuses and guild protocols, as well as with contemporary diaries and newspapers.

The probate records for the *gehejmraadinde* are found in the Copenhagen Probate Commission's executor cases. These records consist of an execution protocol numbering 188 pages, as well as a myriad of loose appendices and overviews that made up the registration and assessment processes for the estate's significant volume of movables.⁴ At the Stampe family's private archive, however, we additionally find an entire archival box with private documents from the estate division after Margrethe Stampe's death, which provides us with a unique opportunity to supplement the public archives.⁵

The Danish archives for probate administration are an important source for biographical, cultural, social and economic history, and probate documents have been instrumental in producing detailed historical studies.⁶ However, not all probate proceedings took place in the public probate courts. When, as was the case with Stampe, the couple had made a will, it was the couple themselves who appointed the executors who would take charge of the division of their goods. Only once the division was complete did the probate court need to be informed, whereupon inheritance tax would be paid to the state.⁷ The executors of the deceased's estate, who were responsible for seeing through the deceased person's last wishes, generally kept thorough documentation of everything they did. The abundance of such material creates extremely favourable conditions when it comes to conducting micro-historical studies of individual people.

Following one of the main tracks of this present volume, which pursues the private in a spatial context, this article aims to reconstruct the home of the *gehejmraadinde* as a sort of giant, mental dollhouse. It does so by comparing the two house contents statements of the mansion's furniture – one itemizing what was sold at auction, the other itemizing what the heirs wanted to keep – with the property assessment from the fire insurance policy.⁸ Based on these documents, we can prepare a reconstruction of the grounds of the entire property on Frederiksholms Canal, along with floor plans for each of the mansion's three floors (see Figures 2–5).⁹

Margrethe Stampe was one of the wealthiest women in Denmark-Norway, and the layout of her mansion was a clear expression of the interior design preferences of the elite in the late eighteenth century, at a time when those preferences wavered on the edge between rococo and neoclassical styles. Her fortune came from her parents, but she had diligently and competently contributed to the growth of her estate, both while she was married and as a widow. Yet unlike Hampton Court or Soane's house in London, the original interior of the mansion under discussion in this article no longer exists.¹⁰ Fortunately, the interiors of other distinguished Copenhagen mansions from the period still survive, and the studies of these have been invaluable for the present article. These studies have made it possible to compare the unique information

contained in the specific probate records with other stately homes of the time, and thus have enabled some more general conclusions.¹¹ Since the information on the Stampe mansion cannot explicitly be linked to wider European developments in interior design, no attempt has been made to draw comparisons with similar studies of European mansions. However, Amanda Vickery's classic work, *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England* (2009), has been a source of inspiration.

A basic precondition to understand a private home is to familiarize one self with its inhabitants. In the case of Margrethe Stampe, this is particularly important because the following case study will challenge the traditional scholarly view of the private home as a private space.

Who was Margrethe Elisabeth Stampe?

Margrethe Elisabeth was born in 1727 as the youngest of three daughters to the silk and cloth merchant, Michael Grøn (1685–1742), and to Elsabe Dorothea Krug (1700–1774). The couple originally came from Lübeck (Germany) and in 1719 they settled in Copenhagen, where Michael Grøn became a member of the Silk and Clothing Traders' Company.¹² In 1726, Michael Grøn bought a large merchant's estate in the centre of Copenhagen that faced the market square, Amagertorv.¹³ However, the Grøn family lived in the modern building that faced Østergade; Michael Grøn had this house purpose-built, and it was one of the very few townhouses in Copenhagen that had the honour of being reproduced in Thurah's large, prestigious work, *Den Danske Vitruvius* (1746–9).¹⁴ After Michael Grøn's death in 1742, his wife took over his position in the company, and continued the cloth trade until December 1747.¹⁵

It was in this environment that Margrethe grew up, alone with an enterprising mother and as a member of the economically elite group of foreigners living in Copenhagen. Such an upbringing no doubt shaped her sense of self-determination, and allowed her to develop the economic and financial skill set that would serve her so well in life. The skills of accountancy and the assessment of value, which were necessary for business success, were widely recognized in the eighteenth century as those that women might acquire.¹⁶ Her mother, in 1750, negotiated the marriage contract between the 23-year-old Margrethe and the 44-year-old secretary of the Danish Foreign Service, Joachim Gustav Klinggraf (1706–60).¹⁷ Their childless marriage lasted ten years until Klinggraf's death.¹⁸ After this, Margrethe took over the joint estate and moved back to her mother's house; as a widow, she gained legal control over her own property. Margrethe was now thirty-three, and could start a new family, perhaps even with a spouse of the same age this time. Gossip about potential suitors can be found in the diary of the high-ranking official, Bolle Willum Luxdorph, one of the key political and personal sources for Copenhagen's history in the second half of the eighteenth century.¹⁹

Nevertheless, Margrethe lived with her mother until the latter's death in 1774.²⁰ After that, Margrethe acquired full control as the sole heir over the Grøn family's enormous estate. She chose to remain a widow following her first marriage. It is, therefore, remarkable that Margrethe, in 1776 and at the age of forty-eight, chose to enter into a new marriage with Henrik Stampe, fifteen years her senior; Stampe, like her, had lived alone as a widower for many years after the death in childbirth of his

Figure 8.1 Margrethe Elisabeth Stampe (1727–98). Posthumous pastel painting by the great Danish portrait painter, Jens Juel (1745–1802) as a preliminary study for a later oil painting. Statens Museum for Kunst.

first wife and child in 1761.²¹ The son of a rural dean from North Jutland, in 1759 Henrik Stampe received a personal nobility patent after working for many years as a senior lawyer in the Danish-Norwegian central administration. By 1774, he acquired the title of *gehejmeraad*, which placed him among the highest rank of the elite.

The marriage contract between Margrethe and Henrik gave each spouse joint ownership over the family property, and named each party as the other's universal heir. The surviving party thus gained full ownership and disposal of everything that the deceased had left, without risk from any legal claims that may be brought by the deceased party's other heirs.²² The 1799 division shows that Margrethe and Henrik kept their personal property completely separate during their marriage. Yet, on the other hand, their joint will from 1787 stated that at least 192,000 rdl. of the joint property should subsequently go towards the establishment of the barony of Stampenborg, for Henrik Stampe's oldest nephew.

Margrethe's second marriage attracted public attention. On 1 December 1775, the front page of the newspaper read that their engagement had been declared at the royal

court.²³ It was likely something of an upheaval for the clothier's daughter. Nevertheless, after the wedding, the couple rented one of the bigger noble mansions in Copenhagen, Greve Lerche's Mansion, which was close to the royal castle and to Henrik Stampe's workplace in the Danish Chancellery.²⁴ Margrethe sold the property on Amagertorv in 1780, and the total value of the mortgage bonds in the sale was calculated at 43,625 rdl.²⁵ The income from the sale went directly into her separate property.

In 1784, Henrik Stampe became prime minister, thereby joining the government of the double monarchy Denmark-Norway. This placed the Stampe couple, who were both of non-noble blood, at the pinnacle of the Danish social elite's ranking system. At the same time, Stampe had his first apoplectic seizure, and he gained no real political influence in government.²⁶ Henrik Stampe died at the age of 76 in July 1789. On 20 July 1789, he was buried in the Grøn family chapel alongside his long-deceased in-laws, Margrethe's first husband and her two sisters.²⁷

Margrethe Stampe once again had full control over her estate, which now also included her deceased husband's private estate, valued at nearly 100,000 rdl.²⁸ Yet the late Henrik's estate constituted only a fraction of Margrethe's wealth: according to the final estate inventory from 1799, her total wealth at the time of death amounted to 664,381 rdl.²⁹ It seems like in the years immediately following Henrik Stampe's death, Margrethe disposed of most of his property contents. However, she kept the securities and his extensive collection of medals. Henrik Stampe is largely invisible in the executor's estate after his widow's death in 1798, and there are very few personal traces of him in the contents of the probate case.³⁰

On 9 December 1791, at a public auction, the *gehejmraadinde* bought the baroque mansion in Frederiksholms Canal, with a direct view of the Royal Palace. She paid the cash purchase price of 22,150 rdl.³¹ Margrethe Stampe was sixty-four when she moved into her own home in early 1792, and it was here that she lived until her death in 1798.³² A long-standing chest weakness gave her time to get her business in order; the last testamentary changes to hers and Henrik's common will from 1787 are dated only three weeks before her death.

Margrethe's mansion

The estate that Margrethe Stampe bought comprised several buildings. The actual mansion itself consisted of a building that measured 34 metres by 11.5 metres. Three separate floors had a total area of 1,129 square metres; these floors consisted of a high basement (mezzanine) with windows facing the street, and the first and second floors each had eleven large bays for windows. A 4-metre-wide gate led into the courtyard, and it bisected the two lower floors into two separate sections. In the courtyard, two large side-buildings formed an extension from the main building, with each of these wings having a total area of nearly 500 metres². The large garden, which had a fountain and a pavilion, stretched 100 metres back into the estate, and its 2,400 square metres formed a significant proportion of the total estate size of roughly 3,800 metres². Finally, two minor properties with an entrance through the street Ny Vestergade also belonged to the estate. One was used as stable for six horses and three carriages (no. 319), and the other was used as a warehouse (no. 321).

We know of these details because of the property's fire insurance policy, which provides a highly descriptive account of the estate.³³ *Kjøbenhavns Brandforsikring* (Copenhagen Fire Insurance) was Denmark's first insurance company. It was established in 1731 following a big 1728 fire in Copenhagen that destroyed more than 30 per cent of the city's houses.³⁴ According to the insurance company's instructions, two building experts carried out the valuation under the supervision of a member of the insurance company's board.³⁵ It seems likely, therefore, that the opposing interests between the customer purchasing the insurance and the company providing it created a good basis for a balanced assessment.³⁶

These records also contain information that is relevant when studying the physical frameworks in which concepts of privacy might have developed – and this is true regardless of whether those records describe room decoration within large mansions or that of the many single-room apartments located in the city's slums. Otherwise, one tends only to catch glimpses of these places when the private home has been exposed to public scrutiny following some disturbance, such as in court cases. But when one looks at private life or privacy based on descriptions and testimonies of court cases, one is left with a conflict-orientated view of private life in the past, and our impression of the past becomes too skewed towards issues about the violation of privacy. Take, for example, Amanda Vickery's interesting study of Old Bailey procedures from the principal criminal court in London. She uses court records 'to open the door of the London house to consider how internal

Figure 8.2 Layout of the entire property, with the main building (lower floor) facing Frederiksholms Canal. Towards the courtyard we find the two independent side buildings, which were rented out. Behind was the large private garden with a pavilion and a fountain. The planting is 'freely' reproduced according to J. H. Rawert's cadastral map of Copenhagen from 1800. The two properties in Ny Vestergade contained the stable (no. 319) and a warehouse (no. 321). The model is drawn on the basis of the information provided in the property valuation in *Københavns Brandforsikringsselskab*. Knudsen 2020.

space was conceptualized, demarcated and policed.³⁷ In cases of breaking and entering, she illustrates the inviolability of the domestic threshold and efforts to protect private property, as well as highlighting the major role that locks seem to have played in defining the private home.³⁸ However, in cases concerning property crimes it is important to clarify under what conditions the stolen goods had been taken from their owner if one is to determine the nature of the crime. Breaking and entering, for instance, is a more serious crime than simple theft. The issue of locking doors, therefore, has a specific, forensic purpose within a court record, making it uncertain how far locks (or not) can be considered as essential when defining the thresholds of the private home. On the other hand, in reading within the insurance policy for the Stampe mansion, for example, that all the doors in the home had locks, one acquires factual information about the actual physical ability to create potentially private spaces within the 1,129 square metres of the main building.³⁹

The basement

The property valuation worked from the ground-up, beginning with the basement. The basement had two large rooms and two smaller ones, all with tiled stoves. It also had plank floors, plastered ceilings and windows that faced on to both the street and the courtyard. A covered staircase descending from the courtyard led to an entrance hall, which granted access to the basement's storeroom, and also had a staircase leading up to the first floor.

Figure 8.3 Floor plan of the two basements divided by the gate-room that ran through the main building. The right basement was used as a residence for the servants. Descent into the left basement was possible from the courtyard, and led directly into the 100 metres² large kitchen. Behind the kitchen was access to a distribution room that led into two chambers, and to the only through-going staircase in the mansion. The red circles indicate the location of tile-stoves, while the red squares represent the chimneys. The model is drawn on basis of the information in the property valuation in Københavns Brandforsikringselskab. Knudsen 2020.

The storeroom housed the stocked furniture. All this furniture – chests of drawers, tables, mirrors and chairs – was described as ‘old’.⁴⁰ But because there was so much ‘old furniture’, one must assume that these items had been collected in this part of the basement for the express purpose of registering them for the subsequent public auction. The storage of old furniture in this basement means it is impossible to form an impression of what the original decor in this part of the mansion would have looked like. On the other hand, all this old furniture suggests that the rest of the *gehejmeraadinde*’s home was decorated in line with the latest fashions, and that she had probably acquired numerous items of new furniture when decorating the mansion. Thus, even though the basement furniture was described as old, this need not necessarily mean that it was worn. The change between the rococo and neoclassical styles was so radical that all Danish interior design prior to 1790 could be described as old by 1799. A mansion’s interior design was primarily meant to display the owner’s wealth, and it was thus largely intended to impress guests, rather than to satisfy the mistress’s personal tastes.⁴¹

The following is based on Thomas Lyngby’s definition of the three types of quarters (*lejlighedstyper*) that can be found in Danish stately homes from the middle of the eighteenth century. I shall briefly describe the three types here, which can subsequently be used when referring to different sections of the mansion. The first type consisted of the *paradelejlighed* (parade quarters), which from the 1750s onward was designed to demonstrate the owner’s economic and cultural prestige.⁴² The second type was comprised of the *selskabelige lejlighed* (quarters for entertainment), which flourished during the second half of the eighteenth century, and constituted an alternative space that did not require the formal manners appropriate to the parade quarters.⁴³ Finally, the mansions also contained the master’s and mistress’s *personlige lejligheder* (private quarters), where they could retire from ‘public life’ activities in their mansions. Private quarters, however, were not necessarily any more ‘private’ than the other sections: guests were received here as well. Moreover, it was within the private quarters, in particular, that the master and mistress depended on intimate help from their servants several times a day.⁴⁴

The other residents of the mansion

The right section of the basement most likely formed the residence for the servants. The narrow room facing the gate – and with its own exit – must have housed the porter, who was also accessible to outsiders at night, when the large oak gate had been securely closed. Beyond the porter, the staff comprised ten people: a postilion, a groom and two servants, a cook, a housemaid, a chambermaid, the married couple Poul Gundestrup and Louise Berg – a servant and chambermaid respectively, who, after the death of the Margrethe Stampe, served as housekeepers with responsibility for the other staff – and a coachman. The household also included the coachman’s wife, and the couple must have lived in the building on Ny Vestergade, where the stable was located.

The large rooms in the right basement facing the street may have been used by the four male servants. The last, somewhat smaller space that faced the courtyard was probably used by the couple of Gundestrup and Berg. Usually, servants left their employment once they married. Their continued employment at the mansion must have

been by special agreement with the *gehejmraadinde*. Two canopied beds with a green damask curtain were in the basement.⁴⁵ These were the most expensive beds listed in the inventory.⁴⁶ Maybe Margrethe Stampe had left her old marriage beds to the couple? It is at least a nice thought that the expensive beds ended up in the servants' quarters!

In the first preserved Danish census from 1787, we find the names of the residents of Lerche's mansion, where the Stampe couple had lived. In addition to the Stampe couple, thirteen servants lived there.⁴⁷ Most of these servants were still in the service of Margrethe Stampe at the time of her death. Some of them may even have gone back to her childhood home. They had experienced the changes in Margrethe Stampe's life as members of her household for many years. The *gehejmraadinde* thus did not live alone in the mansion. In addition to managing her own economic business, she had the day-to-day responsibilities over her eleven employees. She had also rented out the two large side houses in the courtyard behind the mansion. One was rented to the couple Antoinette and Peter Uldall – Peter was one of Henrik Stampe's old colleagues from the Supreme Court, and Antoinette grew up within the same social circles as Margrethe Stampe. This couple perhaps also made use of the private garden and socialized with Margrethe. At any rate, there was a financial relationship between Margrethe and Mrs Uldahl's family, who were among Margrethe's business associates.⁴⁸

Margrethe's servants continued to be employed by their late mistress's two principal heirs until May 1799 – i.e. for some five months after Margrethe's funeral – in order to prepare the house for its sale and for the liquidation of its contents. On the day that the servants left the mansion, the heirs paid all of them a double wage.⁴⁹ Three weeks before her death, Margrethe Stampe had also supplemented her earlier will from 1787. Among the persons she considered in her revised will were her servants, all of whom were granted a lifelong pension, roughly equivalent to the annual salary that they had received while in her employment.⁵⁰ Two of the servants were over fifty, and the coachman was seventy-one, though he died before the division of the estate was finally settled. The heirs therefore allowed his widow to take over the pension.⁵¹ Costs of medicine from during the coachman's illness also appeared in the heirs' bills, showing something of the obligation they felt towards Margrethe Stampe's staff.⁵² The employees were not just anonymous, easily interchangeable servants.

The kitchen region

In the left basement, a covered staircase from the courtyard led directly into the 100 square metres kitchen, which ran all the way from the front to the back of the house, and was the second largest room in the mansion. The same phenomenon can be observed in another of Copenhagen's large mansions, Gyldenløve's Palace, which was built in the same period.⁵³ The Stampe mansion's kitchen was fully equipped. The chimney wall was dominated by the large fireplace with a built-in oven, eight stoves and a built-in cauldron. An open-brick chimney shaft hung over the fireplace, and the kitchen equipment recorded in the inventory shows that the fireplace also could prepare a whole roasted pig on a skewer. Kitchen stoves only became common in Copenhagen during the nineteenth century, and thus the Stampe mansion kitchen was a modern one for the standards of the time. The kitchen's interior went back to the previous owner, and had been installed before 1779.⁵⁴

The kitchen region was the mansion's largest workplace. The inventory lists contain a wealth of information about the kitchen's interiors, which well attests to the fact that most of the housework took place here. There were several washbasins, kettles, tubs, a stool for beating washing, a linen and tablecloth mangle, a napkin press and an iron. The napkin press and iron had certainly been used diligently if the 207 tablecloths and 2,418 napkins registered in the inventories are anything to go by. It was also possible to brew beer, distil alcohol and knead dough in this space, and there were several worktables and kitchen cabinets, in addition to the many shelves and permanent-mounted cabinets mentioned in the property valuation.⁵⁵

The varied metal and wooden kitchenware provides insight into the elegant cuisine on offer at the Stampe mansion. There were moulds for soufflé, terrine, pâté, sugar bread and pudding; there were kettles for broth, pickled pork and fish; other implements such as skewers, baking-trays, carving knives, a coffee roaster, ice-moulds and waffle irons were also mentioned.⁵⁶ The annual bill from the royal court confectioner, Michael Aagaard, which is found in the probate records, can be used as a supplementary source. This bill shows that regular supplies of fresh lemons, Spanish wine, sugar bread, macaroon cake, almond cake, vanilla ice cream, macaroni, olive oil and parmesan cheese were all delivered to the mansion.⁵⁷ The library contained cookbooks, household books and gardening books, although this hardly meant that Margrethe Stampe herself was responsible for any of these activities.⁵⁸

There were two rooms behind the kitchen, each over 20 square metres, which were used as a larder and as a room for the maids, respectively. At least two beds with fabric curtains were found in the kitchen region; and in the fire insurance assessment from 1779, one of these chambers was referred to as the maids' room.⁵⁹ A single bed may have been shared by the two maids, and the other bed may have been used by the cook. A common tiled stove was installed in a partition between the two chambers, which provided heat to both rooms. Finally, another room behind the kitchen contained the single staircase that led to the other floors of the mansion. This staircase formed the main conduit between the kitchen and the rest of the house.

The inventory lists for the kitchen region provide other examples of the kinds of work done in the household. There were two spinning wheels, which indicates that yarn was spun in the mansion. There does not seem to have been a significant level of in-house production, however; the enormous quantities of upscale textiles in the mansion suggest that there was no need for home production. It seems likely, instead, that the spinning wheels were used by the house's servants, who may have spun yarn for their own use. Mentions of a wheelbarrow, a woodcutter's axe, a sawbuck, nail baskets and stepladders also demonstrate that chopping firewood, gardening and other general maintenance activities were included in the normal work routines at the mansion.

First floor

The gatehouse led to the entrance of the two separate sections of the mansion's first floor. On either side of the gate, three stone steps led to a set of double doors with large glass panes. On the right side, the door led into a vestibule that provided access to the other three rooms, as well as a staircase leading up to the second floor.

Figure 8.4 Floor plan of the two sections on the first floor. As in the basement, the first floor was bisected into two by the gateway. This floor has both the quarters for entertainment and the *gehejmeraadinde's* private quarters. The model is drawn on basis of the information in the property valuation in Københavns Brandforsikringsselskab. Knudsen 2020.

The two sections of the first floor were divided into a 'front', consisting of the large halls that faced the street, and some smaller rooms facing the courtyard that formed a kind of 'back' to the large, en suite living rooms. Here, the decor distinguished between what Thomas Lyngby has called 'the essentially different types of social scenes' provided for by the layout of eighteenth-century mansions.⁶⁰ By dividing the rooms in this way, 'corridors' were established whereby the servants could work and move around the house without disturbing the mistress or her guests. Similarly, the back rooms created another exit so that people did not need to use the large, en suite rooms as passageways. When combined with the entrance halls, the division of space within the mansion points towards a greater design emphasis on the functionality of different rooms. This represents a key difference separating the decor of baroque mansions from their rococo counterparts. The mansion in Frederiksholms Canal was originally built in the baroque style, but the smaller cabinet rooms that faced the courtyard were added sometime later. The many 'secret' stairways that made it possible to move relatively unseen throughout a rococo mansion cannot be found in other houses on Frederiksholms Canal.⁶¹ Yet the Stampe mansion's first floor, which served as the middle floor, had three separate staircases, two of which in the right-hand section were located very close to each other. The large main staircase that led up from the vestibule to the distinguished second floor of the mansion was reserved for the mistress and her house guests. The back set of stairs connected the first floor of the right section to the basement, and allowed the servants to move back and forth for work, without having to use the main staircase.

Each of the three rooms located in the right-hand section had a large, porcelain-covered tiled stove placed in walled niches, right up against the chimney. To the left of the gate, the first floor consisted of an entrance hall leading to the other rooms of

the floor, which mirrored the right-hand section that faced the street. A large, tiled stove was also installed in every room in this left-hand section. The stoves were located in niches and placed on marble tiles. Facing the courtyard, there was a room behind the entrance hall; here, a set of stairs went down to the kitchen regions and up to the house's largest hall on the second floor.

The property valuation records also contain information about the interior decoration and design of the first-floor rooms. Consistent with the fashions of the time, the two upper floors had panels on the lower part of the walls, while the walls between the windows were covered with panels from floor-to-ceiling⁶² Above the dados, according to eighteenth-century fashion, the walls were divided into independent panels, each framed by mouldings and friezes. It left the visual impression that each independent panel constituted a separately framed painting. These panels consisted of a canvas-covered frame that provided the foundation for the many different types of wall decoration that competed in the late eighteenth century, and of which the Royal Palace's decor offered such an excellent example.⁶³

Wallpaper had been known for a long time, but its use increased exponentially in the latter part of the eighteenth century.⁶⁴ This was an international development, so it is unsurprising that one of the highest fashions of the time also influenced Danish interior design. Wallpaper covered the walls on the mansion's first floor: the wallpaper in all the living rooms in the right-hand section was framed by mouldings and friezes, and those located close to the vestibule were even gilded. Various paintings hung above the double doors located between the three rooms on the right-hand side.

The walls of the living rooms in the left wing, on the other hand, were painted. In the largest living room on this side – the one with three window bays – the walls were covered with canvases painted with foliage. In the second living room facing the street, the walls had painted borders. Both these styles of decoration were neoclassical, which became common from the last decade of the eighteenth century.⁶⁵

During the eighteenth century, the salons located within a house's entertainment quarters had become the primary centres for the social activities that went on inside a mansion. These rooms, unsurprisingly, fostered the development of a salon culture. The idea of a 'salon culture' plays a major role in research about the private and the public, and was key in Jürgen Habermas's influential work, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962). This culture developed in the private households of distinguished mansions after the French model. It was often the mistress of the house who acted as the hostess and centre of attention for the societies forming around the salons. In contrast to the parade halls located on a mansion's upper floors, the salons were more accessible for people, mirroring the fact that social conventions in the salons were more intimate and contributed to a sense of equality for its participants.⁶⁶ In this context, salon culture should be seen in a much more nuanced light when thinking about discourses of the private home versus the public and political on the one hand, and when thinking about the roles of men and women on the other. In Frederiksholms Canal, the *gehejmraadinde* was the undisputed hostess. Therefore, it is also interesting to see

how she followed the latest and highest fashions in interior design, decorating her first-floor salons with light fabrics.⁶⁷

The two salons were decorated with white and yellow furniture, respectively. The large white living room furniture consisted of a sofa and eight armchairs with white embroidered upholstery, and six further armchairs with embroidered upholstery in a different fabric. Faience plates rested on tray tables, which were probably placed under mirrors between the windows. An alabaster vase stood atop a corner console table, and on the walls hung six bracket lamps in white lacquered frames. The mirror frames and the mouldings framing the wallpapered panels on the walls were gilded. The white salon was also equipped with two harpsichords, making it possible for the mistress and her guests to play duets.

The slightly smaller yellow salon was furnished with four chairs that had open back-rests, and a further six armchairs in a yellow damask fabric. There were also several smaller tables, either painted in yellow or gilded. The three tea tables in the yellow salon give some indication as to the uses of this particular salon. Lighting for the room was provided by a four-armed chandelier that hung from the ceiling, along with the six brass bracket lamps. Together with the gilded mirror frame between the salon's windows – a very yellow impression!

A systematic analysis of the insurance policy and the executor's inventory lists makes it possible to recreate the interior design choices made for the individual rooms. We start to form an image of the salon culture of the time when we can place these many comfortable pieces of furniture, upholstered in their bright, costly fabrics, alongside various musical instruments within a concrete space. The development of a salon culture first took place in the stately homes of the elite, and it was not until the next century that this style of furnishing spread to the homes of the bourgeoisie, where the comforts of the living room made it the standard space for a bourgeois family's salon in the nineteenth-century Victorian house.⁶⁸ These bourgeois houses, which in the late 1800s and early 1900s set the norms for ideas about the nuclear family and for ideas about private life within the home, still shape the physical and mental frameworks by which we today understand the concepts of privacy, the private home and the household.

The salons in Margrethe Stampe's first-floor 'entertainment quarters' were arranged according to the new fashion, but these two living rooms cannot be considered as a part of her private life. They were only arranged to receive and entertain guests, and she probably only used them when she had visitors. It is, for instance, clear from the inventories that the mansion's furniture was also equipped with extra canvas covers, which would have protected the furniture when not in use.

On the other, left-hand side of the entrance gate, we find Margrethe Stampe's bedroom, befitted with a throne bed that had an exclusive, red chintz curtain, lined with yellow-patterned silk taffeta. There was also a myriad of storage furniture, which of course included the very large wardrobe of the *gehejmeraadinde* that was registered in the heirs' inventory list. Among other things, seventy-two dresses were mentioned in the inventory, including the forty 'old' and 'useless' silk dresses, valued at only 1–3 rdl. per dress. However, we should probably not take these

sums at face value. The low valuation of these dresses likely reflected the efforts taken to avoid paying the full inheritance tax of 4 per cent on what was, in fact, quite a valuable part of the inheritance. Undeniably, dress fashion had changed radically in the 1790s, but even in her old age, the wardrobe of the daughter of a silk and cloth merchant was probably anything but 'old' and 'useless'. While the wages paid to seamstresses to update the many changing tastes in fashion would have been rather insignificant, the dress fabric itself would literally have been worth a fortune. The interest shown by the heirs to the *gehejmraadinde*'s clothing, however, may also reflect their desire for these items not to be disposed of at a public auction for everyone to buy.

The many pieces of furniture in Margrethe Stampe's private quarters do indicate, not surprisingly, that the rooms may have been used during the day. In the bedroom and the main hall facing the street, which was furnished as a living room, we find the following: an ottoman and twelve chairs, as well as an armchair with red damask covers; ten chairs and two armchairs with red silk cushions; a canapé, four chairs and two stools with red plush covers; and an oak bureau with a cabinet, which was presumably Margrethe Stampe's personal desk. Additionally, there were several small tables, including a card-table and a tea-table fitted with a brass tray and a brass tea box. Gilded mirrors and bracket lamps, in combination with the red furniture, would have given the 67 square metres room a personal look. The volume of furniture indicates that the *gehejmraadinde* also received visits in her private quarters, but, contrary to earlier traditions, she did not receive visitors in the actual bedchamber, which was a custom no longer considered to be proper behaviour.

Margrethe Stampe's private rooms also housed the cabinet containing her husband's medal collection. At the auction, these were sold for a total sum of 2,269 rdl.; by keeping such costly items within a cupboard in her private room, we may appreciate something of the care that the *gehejmraadinde* gave to her valuables.⁶⁹

But in thinking about Margrethe's private quarters, it is the red furniture that especially attracts our attention. This furniture was of the comfortable kind, just as in the white and yellow salons, with numerous plush and silk cushions. In considering the mansion as a whole, there were no fewer than eighty pieces of red furniture, which corresponds to nearly 25 per cent of the total volume of furniture. I would suggest that the red furniture should be seen as an expression of Margrethe Stampe's personal taste. However, it should also be noted that a 1777 book about Copenhagen design tastes mentioned red as a fashionable colour for furniture fabrics, and also emphasized that red silk cushions and gilded furniture were in vogue.⁷⁰ Earlier in the century, for example, red damask had been very popular, and it was said that within Count Moltke's large rococo mansion, whose interior was completed in 1754, the countess's visiting room was almost entirely decorated in red damask – the walls, the curtains and the furniture.⁷¹ Whereas the yellow and white salons in the right wing of Margrethe Stampe's mansion displayed the latest neoclassical trends in home decor, the red living rooms in her personal quarters can be considered as a more traditional – or even private – choice.

We also learn of another item of furniture that was located in Margrethe's personal quarters: a wicker cot. Such a bed may have been placed in Margrethe's bedroom, or in the room with the staircase that faced the courtyard; its presence could suggest that Margrethe Stampe's chambermaid slept close to her mistress, as opposed to sleeping with the other women behind the kitchen. This may even have been a permanent arrangement, since it had been normal in earlier times. With the rococo mansions, however, it became common for servants to sleep in basements. The apparent arrangement between Margrethe and her chambermaid may, therefore, have been something specific for the last period of Margrethe's life, when she needed constant care.

Toilet facilities were left unmentioned in the insurance valuation, and this was probably because none were installed. The decor of rococo mansions had encouraged the creation of spaces for small retreat rooms. By the late eighteenth century, Renaissance ideas about the symbolic significance of faeces had long since been complemented by the great medical interest in the various functions of the human body.⁷² The Copenhagen fashion book from 1777 instructed that 'although a toilet might be necessary in cases of illness, ordinarily, the daily considerations of health, cleanliness and the sensitivities of the senses should take precedence over convenience, unless one could have an enclosure that was tight enough so as not to spread the toilet's unpleasant atmosphere.'⁷³

If, conversely, one looks at the insurance valuation of the courtyards off Ny Vestergade, one finds outdoor privy sheds in both of them. These were probably used by the mansion's servants, while Margrethe herself used a chamber pot which was then carried down the kitchen stairs.⁷⁴ Yet evidence for items related to this particular bodily function was not entirely omitted from the inventory lists (as opposed to the insurance valuation). Thus, included in the list of tin wares was an enema syringe in a holster.⁷⁵ One wonders, further, if the toilet furniture with two drawers, located in Margrethe's bed chamber, had been arranged in a practical way so that the lower drawer also contained a cupboard for a chamber pot with lid.⁷⁶ Such furniture is known from this period.⁷⁷ Regardless, one thing is for sure, Margrethe Stampe's chamber pot did not cause the same trouble as the chamber pots we encounter in Camilla Schjerning's chapter in this volume.

The inventory also shows that the windows were covered with curtains, according to the fashions of the time. Blinds, which were primarily intended to protect the furniture from sunlight, also hung from the windows. It was not to avoid curious glances of passers-by that led the *gehejmeraadinde* to install fixed blinds in all her windows, because no one would be able to look through her windows anyway. When the inventories were completed in early 1799, only the blinds were left hanging; the other two sets of curtains had been taken down and placed with the rest of the mansion's linen. The inner curtains were made of a thin cotton fabric that could be pulled up and down.⁷⁸ In the late eighteenth century, this type of cotton fabric, made in Asia, was an extremely expensive luxury item.⁷⁹ The outer layer of curtains was solely meant for decoration. As was in vogue at the time, these curtains had to be long, they had to be draped around the curtain rods with ribbons and rosettes, and they had to fall obliquely down each side of the window sills.⁸⁰ Here the decor once again shows that

Margrethe Stampe followed the latest fashions, going from the heavier, more elegant curtain fabrics to the lighter cotton fabrics, which were available in both embroidered and striped variants throughout the mansion.⁸¹

All the mansion's windows had English frames and were made of white glass, which meant that the window panes were larger than they would have been in older, metal frames.⁸² With only the low wall encircling the Royal Palace's riding arena on the other side of Frederiksholms Canal, the south-east-facing mansion would have had plenty of light in the living rooms – especially in the high-ceilinged second floor, to which we now turn.

Second floor

The second floor was the mansion's *bel étage*, which formed the heart of the display quarters in large mansions. Here, the doorways between the rooms were placed in a line in order to emphasize the splendour of the mansion – the so-called *enfilade*.⁸³ The floor-to-ceiling height was 4.4 metres, and the ceilings were decorated with stucco.

Figure 8.5 Floor plan of the second floor. The upper floor constituted the most distinguished part of the mansion, with three en suite halls, the largest of which was more than 170 metres². This hall, however, had smaller room dividers that created the illusion of a section facing the courtyard, which lined up with the vestibule, and the two en suite cabinet rooms to the right of the main staircase. Behind the large hall, by the stairs leading to the basement, was a cabinet room that extended into the left side building. The model is drawn on basis of the information in the property valuation in Københavns Brandforsikringsselskab. Knudsen 2020.

On the street-facing part of the floor, there were en suite halls that ran the entire length of the main building. The two halls on the right-hand side each consisted of three window bays. One of these halls was upholstered in silk damask, which clearly demonstrates that the silk and cloth merchant's daughter found this type of wall decoration to be better suited to add distinction to the hall, compared to the modern wallpapers that were used in the first-floor halls.⁸⁴ In the first hall, the walls were covered with painted canvas. Unlike the painted walls with borders and foliage in the *gehejmeraadinde's* private room, there were no motifs here. Coloured wall panels reflected the neoclassical fashion of the 1790s, where colour choices and motifs drew inspiration from Antiquity.⁸⁵

Above the double doors between each of these two halls on the right-side of the house hung four paintings in carved, gilded frames. The floors in one of the halls were made of walnut, while those of the other hall were made of oak planks, dating back to the previous owner. Both halls were equipped with large, three-tier stoves placed in walled niches on marble tiles.

These two halls also housed the rest of Margrethe Stampe's red furniture. The first hall was furnished with an ottoman, two armchairs and twelve chairs with red damask covers, while the second hall had twelve gilded chairs with red damask covers. Both halls had large glass chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. There is, therefore, a clear difference between the furniture in the first-floor salons, which included many comfortable reading chairs, on the one hand, and the more limited furnishings in the second-floor halls, where the chairs were most likely arranged along the walls, as was the general custom for parade quarters.⁸⁶

The first hall had a wool carpet. Carpets are only seldom found in Danish decor during this period, and only in the wealthiest circles. This carpet, together with the damask wallpaper and the red chairs, leads one to think that red was the favourite colour of the *gehejmeraadinde*. There is reason to believe that this first 'red' hall was Margrethe Stampe's preferred place to receive distinguished visitors, and that it served as a pleasant alternative choice to the mansion's huge hall, which took up almost half of the entire second floor.

The twelve gilded, high-backed chairs, which usually stayed in the adjoining hall and were arranged along the walls, probably constituted the dining-room furniture, along with the folding-table in the adjacent cabinet room, whenever Margrethe Stampe invited guests to a banquet and displayed her sumptuous collection of table linen, porcelain and silverware.⁸⁷

Yet there was an object located in the first 'red' parade hall that complicates our formal impression of the space: an exercise machine, which was unfortunately not described in greater detail. What was an exercise machine doing in one of the mansion's most elegant rooms? Exercise machines are, of course, known from the period. For instance, one such machine was mentioned in the estate inventory of the late Johan Leonhard Fix, who died in his house in Amaliegade in 1807. But in Fix's case, the exercise machine was located in his bedroom.⁸⁸ Further, exercise machines also appear in several newspaper advertisements from the time. For example, locksmith Lars Bagsværd's advertisement from 1779 reads, 'Since I for some gentle persons have made

several steel springs for exercise chairs and wagon seats of all kinds and shapes'; he thus announced to the paper's readership that he made steel springs on demand for a range of uses.⁸⁹ Moreover, in 1787, the owner of a shooting range in Sølvgade announced that he offered potential clients shooting practice and 'good and unadulterated milk ... for those who use a milk cure', and to this he added that he had also set up exercise machines.⁹⁰

Although it is not possible to describe these specific devices, we are left with the impression that exercise machines – and probably also diets – seem to have attracted the interest of the elite. In the closing decades of the eighteenth century, the leading circles in Copenhagen are known to have been preoccupied with natural bodily ideals and with health, in accordance with Enlightenment ideals.⁹¹ An active communicator of health information was the doctor Professor Johan Clemens Tode (1736–1806), who contributed to the wider view that the body was central to understand the individual. Lifestyle and health were no longer subject to God, but became an individual matter.⁹² Tode's *Health Journal* (*Sundhedsjournal*), moreover, was included among Margrethe Stampe's book collection.⁹³ The *geheimeraadinde* was thus also caught up in these health trends, and it is probably in this light that we should understand why the exercise machine was located in the middle of the display quarters. Conversely, the placement of the machine suggests that Margrethe Stampe mainly used it for display purposes.⁹⁴

Behind the first 'red' hall – the one with the exercise machine and carpet – there were two smaller cabinet rooms that faced the courtyard, following the same room division as on the first floor. In the first cabinet room stood a canapé and eight armchairs in blue damask covers. The furniture immediately makes us think of the more comfortable decor found in the salons downstairs. In the 'blue' cabinet room, Margrethe could invite her guests to a more informal gathering space, while still making use of the splendour of the parade quarters. The second cabinet room contained six small tables, of which half were gilded, in addition to the folding-table that was mentioned earlier. This cabinet room was used for storing the furniture that served the halls. The tables would only have been brought out when needed.⁹⁵ Additionally, this cabinet room also contained a so-called 'Polish' bed (or *polonaise*) with modern, striped-cotton curtains and six cane chairs with red damask seats, as well as two bureaux.

The executor's protocol specifically mentioned the two bureaux. According to the protocol, the heirs and the executor opened the two bureaux together, and extracted from them the wills and the many financial securities that constituted the largest part of the wealth of the *geheimeraadinde*'s estate. One of the bureaux also contained a large cash holding, which was immediately handed over to the future Baron Holger Stampe; Holger was then responsible for the funeral and for the payment of any receivables owed to any of Margrethe's creditors.⁹⁶ The accounts concerning this bit of the probate case are, perhaps unsurprisingly, located in the Stampe family's private archive.

One wonders if the inner cabinet room functioned as Margrethe Stampe's 'official' office, where she received her business contacts. The modern Polish bed may indicate that this cabinet room could also be used as a guest suite, together with the blue cabinet room.⁹⁷ Alternatively, Margrethe Stampe may have used the bed to receive visitors

during her illness at the end of her life, or used it simply to retire when she had guests in the two 'red' halls.

The great hall

On the left side of the second floor was the mansion's largest and most distinguished hall, which encompassed five window bays across the entire width of the building, and corresponded to an area of just over 170 square metres. This hall was equipped with two, three-tier stoves that were placed in walled niches, as well as an additional faience stove used to help heat this huge room. The walls of the great hall were decorated with painted canvas.

Placed between the windows, according to the latest fashions, were the many mirrors that formed an integral part of Copenhagen mansions. The inventory list itemizes twenty-six mirrors in gilded frames. Such mirrors (in their gilded frames) were mounted on all the walls between the street-facing windows on both floors, and the windows in the large hall and in the cabinet room facing the courtyard also had mounted mirrors in gilded frames. The mirrors, in part, had an aesthetic function; but they also had a practical purpose in that they helped make the rooms seem larger and helped reflect the light emanating from the glass chandeliers and the many gilded bracket lamps mounted to the walls. The mirrors also had an important social function, letting one view others – and be viewed by others – unbeknownst to the person being watched. Mirrors exercised a major influence upon how the people acted and interacted within these halls.⁹⁸ The mirrors on both sides of Margrethe's great hall meant that her guests would have behaved as though they were participants in a public event, in view for all to see.⁹⁹

It should now be obvious that what was by far the largest part of Margrethe's mansion had nothing to do with the type of privacy that is associated with private homes in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This statement applies to the mistress and to her servants alike. Perhaps it was the porter, in fact, with his own room located in the basement and with direct access to the entrance gate, who came the closest to having something vaguely resembling modern privacy.

After her death, Margrethe's coffin rested on a *lit de parade* placed in the great hall, where it remained for the four days prior to the funeral. Her rank and status as a *gehejmeraadinde* had a decisive importance in this regard because only the two upper ranks of the nobility were allowed to display the coffin on a *lit de parade*. Margrethe's coffin was covered with black cloth, and a canopy had been placed above it.¹⁰⁰

Three six-armed chandeliers hung in the hall. In the official inventory list we find the console tables that stood under the mirrors, as well as a host of small tables, barometers, thermometers and plaster figures that were found in rich quantities throughout all three of the parade quarters' halls. None of the great hall furniture, however, was listed in the inventories with the other items to be auctioned off. Initially, the hall must have been emptied in preparation for the *lit de parade*. Nevertheless, in the inventory of the goods that the heirs kept for themselves, we find descriptions of the hall's furniture. This comprised a sofa and six chairs with embroidered upholstery; eighteen chairs with open backs; twenty-four gold-plated chairs, upholstered in a gold-plated leather;

and ten mahogany tables that were of the highest fashion. The items that the heirs kept also included twelve pairs of silk curtains, and six sections of red damask curtains that hung in the two 'red' halls. The heirs may thus have chosen to hold on to the *gehejmeraadinde's* absolute finest, most expensive and most modern furnishings.

Behind the staircase leading to the kitchen region was the last cabinet room on the floor. Here, the walls were of painted canvas, framed within friezes. Over the doors hung three paintings in gilded, sculpted frames. This cabinet room presumably served as Margrethe Stampe's audience room, and was reserved for particularly distinguished visitors. It must be here that the canapé, the twelve armchairs in green damask and the two mahogany chests of drawers were placed. Upscale audience rooms such as this can also be found at other Copenhagen mansions. Those who wanted an audience with Margrethe thus had to ascend the main stairs, progress through the two 'red halls' and the large hall, all the while seeing a display of the *gehejmeraadinde's* impressive wealth.¹⁰¹

Margrethe Stampe's business associates, however, must have come more frequently to the mansion. For this purpose, direct access to Margrethe's office in the cabinet room with the two bureaux was provided from the vestibule. She could, therefore, receive her business contacts without requiring them to be invited into the parade quarters. It would seem, accordingly, that business and social gatherings could be kept separate, if desired. From the many financial securities that Margrethe had, we know of the identities of her business connections, who came from both the nobility and the bourgeoisie. It is with these connections that all the traditional notions of the private home as the framework for women's life fall apart: even though the *gehejmeraadinde* did not continue her mother's work in the public clothing store, she nevertheless had just as much business activity, if not more, than did her mother.

Margrethe Stampe enjoyed eight productive years in the mansion, during which her wealth grew considerably. She subscribed to the monthly official releases of *Statstidende*, *Kollegietidende* and the published decisions of the local court. Since she speculated in securities and shares, she needed the most up-to-date information provided in the two daily Copenhagen newspapers. She also managed to become the first female member of the newly founded Natural History Society,¹⁰² which was located in the neighbouring Palace of the Crown Prince.¹⁰³

The garden pavilion

Finally, we come to the garden pavilion that Margrethe Stampe had built at the far end of the large private garden. A 40-metres-long tree-lined path led from the courtyard towards an open, tree-lined circular area with a fountain in the middle. On the edge of the circular area, opposite the path, we find the stone-built pavilion of 34 square metres, consisting of two smaller side rooms and a hall in the middle, upon which rose an octagonal dome. The walls inside the pavilion were marbled.¹⁰⁴ The panels and the inside of the dome were painted with images of foliage and sparrows, and the entrance to the pavilion, in the middle of the hall, consisted of a double door with twenty-four glass panes. At the age of sixty-four, Margrethe Stampe had decided to construct

her very own pavilion, a decision which fit perfectly into the styles and tastes of the time. Very few Danish pavilions from the eighteenth century have survived, nor are there many examples of stone-built pavilions within Copenhagen's private gardens in this period. The inspiration for the octagonal dome perhaps came from one of the finest pavilions in the period, namely *The Great Garden House* in the park at the royal summer residence at Hirschholm Castle, north of Copenhagen. *The Great Garden House* also had an octagonal dome over the middle hall, along with two separate wings.¹⁰⁵ The architectural drawing of the royal pavilion was included in Thurah's *Den Danske Vitruvius*, the publication which also reproduced images of Margrethe's childhood home.¹⁰⁶ The pavilion in Margrethe's private garden seems to have been an adapted miniature of the royal one.

A concluding perspective on public and private

With this, our reconstruction of Margrethe Stampe's residence is now complete.

Margrethe Stampe was almost invisible in public life. Nevertheless, a considerable number of exceptional public records end up providing us with much information about her and her life. These sources include the records from St Peter's German Church, where the family's private burial chapel still survives to this day, and whose congregation served as the primary network that formed the basis of Margrethe's social life. We also find traces of her life in the royal resolutions from the Danish Chancellery, whereby she and her husband secured permission for their legal arrangements over matters of family and property. Likewise, the protocols from the Copenhagen Silk and Clothing Traders' Company help us uncover her background and social status, and this company constituted the second main network that framed her life. Then there is the official auction protocol and the register of mortgage, both of which document all of Margrethe's property holdings. Further, from the first preserved census in Copenhagen, dating from 1787, along with the information provided in the execution protocol, we can glean that Margrethe knew how to keep hold of her servants. And last but not least, the property valuation of her estate and her fire insurance policy let us step into her mansion, which was anything but private. All of these *public* records, produced by various administrative processes of the state, end up showing us the frameworks of *private* law that structured Margrethe's life and her socio-economic horizons.

Margrethe Stampe can also be found in the pages of the Copenhagen newspapers. Although the papers were, *sensu stricto*, privately created source material, they nevertheless conveyed information to the public sphere. This same observation goes for the few contemporary private records that mentioned Margrethe, and which contain information about the people with whom she socialized. Such records help us reconstruct the third network that shaped the framework of her life: namely, her husband's social circle.

Mentioning the various networks that framed Margrethe's life is necessary in order to draw attention to the fact that the various financial dispositions she made as a private person took place within a social framework that was limited neither to her marriage nor to her private household. Margrethe Stampe's most important network

was comprised of her business connections, and it was these connections that formed the entire financial prerequisite for her various private opportunities.

The paradox here is that the public records help us uncover the size of the private space present in and around Margrethe's life, whereas the privately produced source material, on the other hand, reveals something of Margrethe's public life. It shows how open-minded the researcher must be if s/he is to penetrate the private during this period. In the vast majority of cases, only public records accord insight into the private. This methodological paradox underlines the fact that we very often are looking for the private in the past though the lens of public administration – thus we see the private not as a reflection in a mirror but more as the 'refraction' of light through a glass of water. The public administration will always constitute a disruption of the private, and one should, in general, be extremely careful when articulating the conceptual dichotomy between the private and the public.

Research into the private sphere has often been based on Aristotle's division between the private sphere or the *oikos* (the household) on the one hand, and the public sphere or the *polis* (society) on the other, with the *oikos* serving as the conceptual foundation for our understanding of the private. Aristotle, in particular, was constantly reinterpreted by political philosophers during the early modern period – not least in the context of Lutheran moral theology.¹⁰⁷ Aristotle's views of the *oikos* have also served as the basis for sociologists, such as Hannah Arendt and very likely Jürgen Habermas, for whom the *oikos* was a sort of Weberian 'ideal type', providing an explanation for the basis of modernity.¹⁰⁸ But it is often overlooked that Aristotle's model lost its relevance during the eighteenth century, when theories of state-formation were integrated into the modern natural law ideas about sovereignty and the social contract. Henceforth, the moral-theological Lutheran idea of the household lost steam when it was confronted with Enlightenment thought.¹⁰⁹

The study of Margrethe Stampe's private home paves the way for an understanding that challenges the traditional distinctions articulated to explain the relationship between women and men, and how they interacted in private and public spaces.¹¹⁰ The household in the eighteenth century was not the type of private home that we would later associate with private life and privacy, or with the relationship between men and women as economic agents.¹¹¹ The micro-historical approach allows us to see the details that nuance our understanding of these issues. Margrethe Elisabeth Stampe's economic situation was a unique. During this study, however, I have incidentally come across two other women within Margrethe's social network who also managed their own large fortunes.¹¹² Neither Margrethe nor these women are included in Carol Gold's recent study of women in business in early Modern Copenhagen 1740–1835 – a point that also applies to Margrethe's mother, Dorothea Elsabe Grøn. So maybe the *gehejmeraadinde* wasn't that unique after all. Yet the liquid capital that a woman like Margrethe Stampe made available for the Copenhagen credit market – together with other rich women who speculated in financial securities – was so large that it must have had a significant influence on the economic system within the city.

Margrethe Stampe conducted her business from her mansion, and this changes our understanding of the function of her household completely. As has often been pointed out in research looking at the private in the early modern period, households actually

allowed for very little privacy. Family, tenants and servants all tended to live under the same roof.¹¹³ Margrethe had 1,129 square metres at her disposal, and presumably she could have established some form of privacy; but the private households of the elite were, in fact, more about reflecting the economic and social status of their occupants to the wider public.¹¹⁴ Amanda Vickery has wittily called the visitors to elite households in this period ‘hyperactive’, and she mentions the example of Lady Mary Coke, who easily made eighteen visits a day to other households in May 1767.¹¹⁵ The visitors to these houses could also be described as ‘hypersocial’, to use another modern term. This same phenomenon can be observed in Danish diaries surviving from the period. The designation of being socially hyperactive would certainly apply to the civil servant Bolle Luxdorph or to Anna Christine Becker, the wife of a pharmacist, both of whom moved in the same circles as Margrethe Stampe.¹¹⁶ Both of them, like Margrethe, had a busy working life; nevertheless, their respective diaries are filled with mentions of social activities that would have taken place in homes such as Margrethe Stampe’s. This was a home that, in many ways, was designed more for her guests than it was for herself.¹¹⁷

Just like people today display a selective vision of their lives on social media with little regard for personal privacy or concern over who may be watching, so too did Margrethe Stampe decorate her private home in the same way as all other mansion owners: in order for it to be seen.

Notes

- 1 The title *gehejmerrådgiver* refers to the fact that Margrethe Stampe was the widow of Privy Councilor Henrik Stampe, member of the king’s Privy Council (*Gehejmerådet*). Women used their husbands’ titles also after the husbands’ death. The title Widow was never used in higher social circles. *Gehejmerrådgiver*, however, cannot be translated into English – the Danish term will therefore be used throughout this article.
- 2 Steenberg 1945–58, 387.
- 3 Private Archive B2.
- 4 Eks.bo 13 14.
- 5 See note 3.
- 6 Jørgensen 1968, 49.
- 7 Schous forordninger, forordning af 5. April 1754 anl. stifteforvalterens salær, § 5, and Nørregaard 1791, vol. 1, § 233. Fire insurance policies and probates have previously been included in building history studies, e.g. Tønnesen 1981, but they have not been used to study the ‘private’ household.
- 8 Københavns Brandforsikring, vurderingsforretninger over ejendomme, mat. no. 239–243B, Vester Kvarter. Police no. 3473 (1779/1797). (Hereafter Police no. 3473).
- 9 The reconstruction is in addition based on Police no. 3473 (1779/1797), *Geddes matrikelkort* (1757) and J.H. Rawerts *matrikelkort* (1800) of Vester Kvarter in Copenhagen, both of which are digitized on the Copenhagen City Archive’s website: Kbharkiv.dk.
- 10 Today, the mansion has been rebuilt to such an extent that only some of the exterior remains.

- 11 Of recent Danish works that have contributed to this study, see Clemmensen and Raabyemagle 1996; Lyngby 2007–2008 and 2015; Bregnhøi 2010; Pedersen 2013; Skak-Nielsen 2017.
- 12 Københavns Stadsarkiv: Silke-, ulden- og lærredskræmmerlavet: Lavsprotokol (hereafter Lavsprotokol) 1718–39.
- 13 Københavns Byret: Tinglysningsafdeling, Pante- og brevskriverkontorets 1. Afdeling: Realregister: Øster kvarter 1759–1818, matrikelnummer 36.
- 14 Thurah 1746, vol. I, table 119. This work was a royally commissioned work meant to present monumental Danish architecture to an international audience.
- 15 Lavsprotokol 1739–70. December 1742 to December 1747.
- 16 Shepard 2015, 66.
- 17 Danske Kancelli: Sjællandske Registre 1749–50. The marriage contract was confirmed by the king on 3 April 1750.
- 18 Sankt Petri Tyske Kirke: Enesteministerielbogen 1728–67 (death). (Hereafter St. Peter).
- 19 Nystrøm 1930, vol. 1, 2–8 January 1770.
- 20 St. Peter: Enesteministerielbogen 1767–83, (death), 7 June 1774.
- 21 Ibid., 1728–67 (death) buried on 20 October 1761.
- 22 Danske Kancelli: Sjællandske Registre 1776–7, no. 4.
- 23 Adresseavisen, 1 December 1775.
- 24 Folketælling 1787, København, Strandens Kvarter, Bag børsen 96.
- 25 See note 13.
- 26 Deutzner 1891, 77.
- 27 St. Peter: Enesteministerielbogen 1783–1813 (death).
- 28 Private Archive B2: The statements concerning Henrik Stampe's estate were written by Stampe himself.
- 29 Eks.bo 13 14: Recapitulation attachments, which contain a complete overview of the estate's accounts.
- 30 Henrik Stampe's nephews must have received the property that is still in the family's possession today after his death but before Margrethe died, since it did not appear in the contents listed in the executor's statement following the death of the *gehejmeraadinde*.
- 31 Eks.bo 13 14, 9 December 1791.
- 32 *Kiøbenhavnske Danske Post-Tidender*, 17 December 1798.
- 33 Police no. 3473 (1797).
- 34 Knudsen 1945, 200–11.
- 35 Schous Forordninger, kongelig anordning ang. Brandforsikringen for Staden Kjøbenhavn af 17 July 1795, § 8 and § 10.
- 36 When Margrethe Stampe's home was put up for auction after her death, potential buyers were also directed to the valuation by the fire insurance company done in 1797.
- 37 Vickery 2009, 28.
- 38 Ibid., 31–4.
- 39 Police no. 3473 (1797).
- 40 *Gamle*. Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, XI furniture, 50.
- 41 See Vickery 2009, 18–20 for the importance of personal taste.
- 42 Lyngby 2015, 162–4. Lyngby uses the term 'apartments'. For the sake of clarity, and so that the word 'apartment' is not misunderstood to mean a 'separate apartment', I have used the word 'quarters' instead.

- 43 Ibid., 169–71.
- 44 Ibid., 173–5.
- 45 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, XI furniture
- 46 Clemmensen 1996, 198.
- 47 Folketælling 1787, København, Strandens Kvarter, Bag børsen 96.
- 48 Eks.bo 13 14, 9.
- 49 Ibid., 3.
- 50 Ibid., Copies of the wills are placed first in the probate.
- 51 Ibid., 26.
- 52 Private Archive B2, appendix 47.
- 53 Lyngby 2015, 137.
- 54 Police no. 3473 (1779).
- 55 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory list, XI furniture and XIII linen. Private Archive B2, III linen.
- 56 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, IV–IX.
- 57 Private Archive B2, appendix no. 55.
- 58 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, books.
- 59 Clemmensen and Raabyemagle 1996, 146.
- 60 Lyngby 2007–2008, 83: ‘De væsensforskellige typer af sociale scener’.
- 61 Ibid., 74–5.
- 62 Alstrup 2019, 72.
- 63 Skak-Nielsen 2017, 97.
- 64 Vickery 2009, 167–8.
- 65 Skak-Nielsen 2017, 94–5.
- 66 Lyngby 2015, 169–75.
- 67 Clemmensen 1996, 122–25 and Bregnhøi 2010, 103.
- 68 Lyngby 2015, 218–19.
- 69 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, medals and coins.
- 70 Anonymous 1777, 51–2.
- 71 Skak-Nielsen 2017, 79.
- 72 Lyngby 2015, 180, 255.
- 73 Bode 1796, 72. In J.H. Rawert’s cadastral map (1800), which plots out water pumps and buildings, and their corresponding number of ‘privies’, only the houses on Ny Vestergade have privies.
- 74 Police no. 3473 (1779).
- 75 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, IV tin.
- 76 Ibid., III silver.
- 77 Clemmensen and Raabyemagle 1996, figure 155.
- 78 Skak-Nielsen 2017, 98.
- 79 Pedersen 2013, 12.
- 80 Anonymous 1777, 49.
- 81 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, XII linen.
- 82 Clemmesen and Raabyemagle 1996, 124.
- 83 Lyngby 2007–8, 74.
- 84 Skak-Nielsen 2017, 55.
- 85 Bregnhøi 2010, 17–8.
- 86 Anonymous 1777, 50.
- 87 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, III silver, IX porcelain og XII linen.
- 88 Tønnesen 1981, 50.

- 89 'Da jeg for nogle høje herskaber har forfærdiget adskillige stålfjedre til motionsstole og vognsæder af alle slags facon', *Adresseavisen*, 17 November 1779.
- 90 'God og uforfalsket mælk ... for dem som bruger mælkekur', *Adresseavisen*, 20 April 1787. Ibid., 25 July 1788, 14 July 1792 and 8 November 1799.
- 91 Nielsen 2003, 47–8.
- 92 Mellemgaard 1995, 6–7.
- 93 Eks.bo 13 14, inventory lists, books, no. 849.
- 94 In the early 1800s, there are several examples of English advertisements with pictures for exercise machines (*gymnasticons*). Unfortunately, it has not been possible to discover if these were the same types of machine in Denmark. See also Kennaway and Knoeff 2020, 127–33.
- 95 Lyngby 2015, 174.
- 96 Eks.bo 13 14, 1.
- 97 Clemmensen 1996, 162.
- 98 Lyngby 2007–8, 84–5.
- 99 Clemmesen 1984, 32–3.
- 100 Schous Forordninger, sørgeforordningen af 14 April 1752, § 12.
- 101 Lyngby 2007–8, 76.
- 102 *Adresseavisen*, 23 October 1789.
- 103 Strøm 2006, 10.
- 104 Bregnhøj 2010, 145.
- 105 Hein 2016, 42–3.
- 106 Thurah 1746, vol. II, table 31.
- 107 Becker 2013, 136–7.
- 108 Becker 2017, 847.
- 109 See the chapter of Pernille Ulla Knudsen, in this volume.
- 110 Gold 2015, 70.
- 111 Shepard 2015, 73–4 and Gold 2018, 14–6.
- 112 Antoinette Uldall (1741–1804) and Caroline von Hoppe (1732–1819). Both women were a part of social circles.
- 113 Vincent 2016, 40–1.
- 114 McKeon 2005, 246–52.
- 115 Vickery 2009, 294.
- 116 Boritz 2000, 251.
- 117 Nystrom (Luxdorph) 1930 and Becker 1870.