

HISTORY

HØJER - workmanship through generations

From a minute sole proprietorship at the end of the 19th century to one of Denmark's leading factories – from bankruptcy to success, HØJER has a longstanding and interesting history. With its 130 years long history, HØJER is one of the oldest in Europe – and traditions and knowledge have been passed down through the years.

From spinning mill to carpet factory

The forerunner of the present carpet factory was founded already in 1878 in the town of Højer in Southern Jutland, Denmark – under the name Sønderjydsk Tæppefabrik (Southern Jutlandian Carpet Factory). At that time, it was primarily a spinning mill and dye works, which processed the wool from the local farmers. The factory employed 2-3 persons.

Following a fire in 1899, a set of looms and a spinning frame were installed for the purpose of producing yarn and clothing. However, it was not until the start of the 1920s when the factory was facing financial difficulties that the owner at the time, A.R. Kjærby and his wife attempted to produce carpets. With rolled-up sleeves by the rinsing tank, they created the foundation of the carpet factory we see today.

The restructuring of the factory to carpet production was a success – demands were sky high. In the course of the following years, the factory expanded and more machinery was invested in – among this were two of which was the widest loom made at the time with a 4 meters span. This width is in fact still offered as a standard width today. At the beginning of World War II, the factory employed 130 persons – the carpet factory was one of Denmark's leading companies.

The downfall and resurrection of the factory

During the war, however, the factory suffered from the massive lack of raw materials. After having been owned and run solely by A.R. Kjærby for many years, the company was turned into a family company in 1937. It remained so for many years until it was acquired by a group of business speculators in the 1960s, who expanded too much too fast and led the factory to bankruptcy in 1975-76.*

Having endured a turbulent existence, which also caused the factory to be moved to Aarhus, Denmark, in 1995, the factory was purchased by the Degn-Hansen family. The factory was moved to Skævinge, just outside Copenhagen. Today, the company is going through a rapid and exciting development, and the carpet factory's reputation as innovative and quality conscious has been restored – Højer Tæppefabrik is now part of Fletco Carpets A/S.

**Source: Sønderjydsk Tæppefabrik, by Claus Eskildsen, Publisher Guldhorn Thanks to Henny and Poul Birkelund, Højby.*