Bosjökloster

The name Bosjökloster stems from its location on Bosön, which was completely surrounded by water, as well as its earlier function as a nunnery, (nunnekloster) within the Benedictine order. The oldest parts of the nunnery were almost certainly built during the last decade of the 11th century, possibly due to a donation of land from Captain Tord Thott. The oldest reliable document is a papal letter from 1181, which mentions both the site of the nunnery and the Benedictine order. The nunnery had high status from early times, which meant that only daughters of wealthy families were admitted, in return for valuable gifts. Thus, Bosjökloster gradually became one of the richest nunneries in Scania, which the extensive and largely preserved buildings bear witness to. The Romanesque nunnery church, built in the mid-1100s, has only been changed with the addition of a tower in the mid-1800s. The building complex gradually expanded around the rectangular courtyard, which still retains its original form.

The most important changes to the buildings are the demolition of the previous “monk wing” during the 1760s to make way for other buildings, and two extensive restorations done in the mid and late 1800s. The first, mainly concerning the nunnery church, was done under C. G. Brunius, and the latter, which covered all the buildings, under Helgo Zettervall.

Bosjökloster was taken over by the Crown during the 1530s, as a result of the Reformation. The estate was granted to the archbishop in Lund, Torben Bille, for life, but was transferred into private ownership in 1560 when King Frederick II granted the property to Thale Ulfstand, the widow of Povel Laxmand of Stenholt. This was the start of the Ulfstand family’s ownership, which lasted just over 60 years. In the 1620s, the estate was taken over by an heir, the landowner and industrialist Jochum Beck. This initiated, with the exception of 1650–1735, the ownership period of the Beck, and later Beck-Friis, family lasting until 1908. The first generation’s Jochum Beck was very wealthy, but his failure with the Andrarum alum works was so serious that he was forced to sell all his property, including Bosjökloster, in the 1650s. The buyer was another well-known noble, Corfitz Ulfeldt, who was married to Christian IV’s daughter, Leonora Christine. He got into difficulties with both his own countrymen and his new ones in Sweden, and moved abroad for the rest of his life. The Crown took the property, but gave it back in 1735 to the rightful heirs of the Beck family. In 1908, Bosjökloster was bought by Count Philip Bonde, who got the estate back into shape and developed large-scale agriculture according to the conditions of the time.

Bosjökloster is beautifully situated on the neck of land between the Ring Lakes, Ringsjöarna, 6 km south of Höör. The present owner is Count Tord Bonde of Björnö and family.

The traitor, Corfitz Ulfelt

Few Danes in history are so despised as Count Corfitz Ulfeldt, at one time Christian IV’s favourite as Lord High Steward and son-in-law. Corfitz Ulfeldt owned Bosjökloster, along with a large number of Scanian and Danish estates, when he was at the peak of his political and economic power.

He was born in 1606, a member of one of the oldest and most renowned noble families in Denmark. From an early age, he displayed a great talent, becoming a very young feudal lord in Möen and entering Christian IV’s service in the mid-1630s. He became Governor of Copenhagen, and as Lord High Steward, the country’s highest government official, he was close in rank to royalty. His marriage to Christian IV’s beloved daughter, Leonora Cristina, also influenced his position as Denmark’s most powerful man, especially when Christian IV’s health gradually deteriorated in the early 1640s.

It was in these circumstances that Corfitz Ulfeldt led the Danish delegation in the peace negotiations at Brömsebro in 1645, after 15 months of war with Sweden. However, he did not have his customary success, and was forced to sign a humiliating peace treaty that gave Swedish, Finnish, Livonian, Pomeranian and Wismarian ships exemption from duty in the Öresund strait.
Denmark also had to relinquish Jämtland, Härjedalen, Gotland and Ösel forever, and Halland for 30 years.

Back in Copenhagen, he was met by the king’s disapproval, but he managed to keep his position until the king died in 1648, and even controlled the country for a short period before his brother-in-law, Frederick III, was crowned.

This event was a turning point in Ulfeldt’s career, and a few years later, he was accused of embezzling large sums from the Öresund duties, which he administered personally. Faced with this situation, Corfitz Ulfeldt fled to Sweden, where he quickly became a part of the court circle around the queen.

The ignominious Treaty of Brömsebro soon awoke thoughts of revenge in Copenhagen, and war was declared in 1657. Then the Swedish army attacked Denmark from the south under the command of Charles X Gustav, and with Corfitz Ulfeldt as generous financier and expert ”guide”.

The Danish king’s former favourite was now marching with the enemy against the capital of his homeland, and had a considerable war chest from his time in charge of the Öresund duties. The severe winter favoured the Swedes, who, with the traitor at the forefront, marched over the frozen Öresund and were soon so close to Copenhagen that the Danes gave up the fight. As a reward for his services, Corfitz Ulfeldt was sent to negotiate the treaty and on 26 February 1658 in Roskilde, he signed the document that relieved his former homeland of 1/3 of its territory. His personal reward included getting back all his Danish property and a little more, around 900 farms in Scania, Sölvesborg Castle and county, and, at very favourable prices, the estates of Torup, Bosjökloster and Gladsax in Scania.

Corfitz Ulfeldt soon got into trouble in Sweden as well, all his property was confiscated and he was forced into exile. He died in Rehndalen in 1664, missed only by Leonora Cristina.