

Klågerup

Like a number of Scanian estates, Klågerup can trace its origins to the 1300s. Its early history cannot be clarified, but it is assumed there was a stronghold here and that it could have been sited a few hundred metres south of the present building. Originally, Klågerup was surrounded by a small lake and thus easy to defend.

There is only fragmentary knowledge of the earliest owners, but it has been established that from the late 1400s, the estate was owned by members of the old north German noble family, Has. Through marriage, the estate soon passed to the Krognos and Sparre families, before becoming the property of Knud Henriksen Sparre in the 1530s. After two further Sparre generations, the estate was acquired in 1640 by Malte Juel of Maltesholm, and on his death in 1648 it went to the daughter Else, who was married to Otto Lindenov of Borgeby. He was the last owner during the Danish era, but he did not feel comfortable under Swedish rule, sold off his Swedish estates and went to live on Zealand. However, his move did not mean that the Lindenov family died out in Scania, as his daughter, Anne Sofie Lindenov, took over ownership of Klågerup in 1681. She was succeeded by her daughter, but through marriage the estate went to other Swedish or Swedecised noble families such as Ramel of Maltesholm and Trolle of Näs and Eriksholm. After his wife's death in 1732, Frederick Trolle began planning extensive rebuilding at Klågerup. At that time there was an old quadrangular stone and half-timbered manor house surrounded by water, and entry was via another islet, where the barn was situated. The changes were made between 1737 and 1761, and the estate's heavy materials and closed character from the 1600s were replaced by light and air with freestanding buildings in wooded greenery.

One of the sons, Arvid, inherited Klågerup at the tender age of eight, after his mother's death in 1732. His father continued to manage and develop the estate, while the son devoted himself to studies in France and England, and finally at the University of Lund. After completing his studies, he took over the estate in the mid-1740s, but quickly became regarded as an odd person, as he distanced himself from the manners of the nobility in terms of his clothes and social circle. He married a commoner, a professor's daughter, Liboria Harmens. This meant that he was excluded from being a holder of the entailed estate when the father instituted the Trolle entailed estate.

When Frederick Trolle died in 1779, Klågerup went to his third son, Nils. He was very dynamic and carried out the gradual division of the estate's acreage into suitable farming units, which the farmers could rent. Another of his initiatives was to abolish the hated obligations of the day-workers. He also took part as an elected representative in the development of both health care in Malmöhus County and the defence forces in Scania – it was a period of serious rioting.

In 1908, Klågerup was sold to the Swedish Sugar Factory Company and after a few owners, the estate was taken over in 1964 by Irma and Otto Silfverschiöld, who have now transferred ownership to their son, Nils Silfverschiöld.

Klågerup is situated in beautiful, varied farmland alongside the road between Lund and Svedala.

Riots in Klågerup

A bloody episode happened on the Klågerup estate on 15 June 1811. The contributory factors were both the farming population's pent up anger at the landowning nobles and their sadistic servants, and the 1811 decree on the conscription of reinforcements for the army amounting to 15,000 men. In January 1810, Sweden was compelled to become part of the "continental system", which was a French initiative. It meant that all countries under Napoleon's control were forbidden to trade in British goods, which would make England bankrupt. Sweden opposed this and the French therefore threatened to declare war.

The new crown prince, Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, responded resolutely and demanded in a decree dated 23 April, 1811 that the army should be increased with a reinforcement corps of 15,000 men. Conscription would be among parish populations, and mainly "farmhands, farm labourers,

cottagers, tenant farmers and poor lodgers”, would be called up.

This led to strong reactions from the poor rural populations and violent riots in many places. Anger was directed both against the law and its originators, and the nobility, royal officials and soldiers who supported conscription and beat down any protests with great brutality. In battle-fatigued Scania, the protests became so violent that the state executive, the crown prince, decided to give Scanian commanders full freedom to use force of arms to crush the uprising.

After a series of riots at several places in Scania, it was decided to assemble at the Klågerup estate on 15 June 1811, to protest against the conscription and repression. The day before, ”Mörner’s Hussars” from Malmö, led by major general Hampus Mörner, had been ordered by the crown prince to gain control over the mob. Many were scared and left, but around 800 of the brave remained until the next day, 15 June.

The ragged mob of farmhands, farm labourers, cottagers, tenant farmers and poor lodgers had nothing to fight back with except hayforks, flails and other primitive farming tools. They flocked to the estate’s buildings and onto the roofs, and when fighting broke out the hussars showed no mercy ”but cut down and slashed with sabres in all directions so that the ground was turned red with blood.” As if that wasn’t enough, they opened fire with pistols and cannons and ”used the crowd as target practice and cut them down just to pass the time”, as one witness expressed it.

When the guns fell silent and the smoke had cleared, many had been able to escape. Friends and relatives took away the dead and wounded, so they would not be buried in a mass grave on the site. Therefore, it is not certain how many lives were taken. The military gave the official figures as 30 dead and around 60 wounded. Of the 395 people captured, most were locked up in the Malmöhus fortress.

The crown prince’s hussars returned in triumph to Malmö with major general Mörner at their head. During the celebrations, the brave soldiers displayed confiscated “weapons” such as hayforks and scythes. At the rear of the triumphal procession limped the captured, exhausted and hungry farmhands, farm labourers, cottagers, tenant farmers and poor lodgers, on their way to Malmöhus and an uncertain fate.

The prisoners endured terrible conditions, which only ended on 4 November 1811, when, in a wretched state, they were taken to the main square, Stortorget, to be sentenced. A few were released, whereas 20 were sentenced to losing their right hands, beheading or being broken on the wheel, 43 received sentences of 40 pairs of lashes and six years imprisonment, 31 were given 40 pairs of lashes, and the rest received short jail sentences on bread and water, or floggings. At the end of the year, the king reduced the punishments in most cases. Of the 20 sentenced to death, only three were executed.