Kronovall

Kronovall’s early history is not known with any certainty, but in a description from Kristianstad county in 1767, it is stated that the original building would have been a noble’s manor farm surrounded by a moat, built by the couple, Anders Sinclair and Kirsten Kåås.

In the first half of the 1600s, the military man, Falk Lykke of Skovgaard, was the owner not only of Kronovall, but also Bollerup, which is not far away. In the mid-1600s, it is known that the estate belonged to the Rosencrantz family and that it was sold after the Swedish takeover in 1658 to the Swedish nobleman, Gustav Banér. Like all the big landowners of the time, Banér was hit by Charles XI's restitution of inalienable estates and Kronovall was confiscated. However, it was returned to Banér’s daughter, who in turn sold Kronovall in 1718 to the Swedish war commissioner for Scania, Peter Malmberg, later ennobled as Palmcreutz. It was during his ownership that a simple manor was built during the 1740s. Surviving paintings show the main building surrounded by a moat, with a high hipped roof and gable pediments on the main facades. The barns were half-timbered.

After Peter Palmcreutz’s death, Kronovall was kept within the family through families that married in, von Essen of Zellie and Hamilton. Several owners had the estate for short spells, but the last of the family, Count Axel Raoul Hamilton, was to own Kronovall for a longer period. He married Anne Mary Russel-Cruise from Ireland. This brought Catholicism to Kronovall, which lives on through the castle chapel and the nearby nunnery, Mariavall.

In the 1870s, Count Carl Gustav Sparre of Sövdeborg took over ownership. He carried out an extensive restoration and modernisation of the castle in the 1890s following designs by architect Isac Gustav Claeson. After three generations within the family, Count Erik and Countess Angelica Sparre donated Kronovall to the Swedish Nobility Foundation in 1991, which since then has managed the whole estate in a foundation named after the donors. During the last decade of the 20th century, the castle was transformed into a public facility of great distinction. Åkessons Viner AB have contributed considerably to this by making Kronovall into a wine castle, thereby linking together the historical and modern Scania. The company, Petri Pumpa, operates the hotel, restaurant and café as the main business areas.

The castle has a beautiful and well-tended park, in which the French baroque garden with its rectangular box hedges is particularly well-known and admired. Kronovall is beautifully situated in an area of Österlen's interior that has varied, open and wooded countryside. In and around the estate there are extensive beech woods and a rich cultural landscape with many secular and church monuments. On the coast are the beautiful fishing villages Baskemölla, Vik, Kivik and Vitemölla. The central position in Österlen gives good accessibility to other parts of the area and the whole of eastern Scania.

The Dead Man’s Plot

North-east of Kronovall is a wooded tract with a lot of marshy and mossy areas. North of the largest wetlands, "Gidding’s Bog" is a parcel of land with the dramatic name ”The Dead Man’s Plot”. Its origins go back to the 1600s, when three brothers were to receive a share of an inheritance divided into three equal parts. Two of the brothers lived in the local district, but the third had travelled abroad and never returned. He was considered to have disappeared, was later declared dead and his area of land went to St Olof council as ”The Dead Man’s Plot”.

When the plague broke out in Scania in the 1700s, The Dead Man’s Plot became ”The Plot of the Dead”, when the council partitioned off a small area of the plot for a plague cemetery. It was probably never used, but the place can be found even today.

After Scania’s takeover by Sweden, the local militia were a constant threat in north-east Scania. To free the countryside from these militiamen, Swedish soldiers were stationed at places such as Kronovall. The militiamen often hid in the marshy and mossy areas in St Olof parish. In the western part of The Dead Man’s Plot is a place that is still known as “Hangman’s Hill”. The story is told of how the militiamen had fled to the dry islets in the bog. The location of their hiding place was
betrayed and the Swedish soldiers from Kronovall could attack and destroy the small group. Many drowned, but 11 were taken prisoner and hanged from nearby oaks. The memory of their deaths remains and the site of their death is still called "Hangman’s Hill".