Wanås

Wanås is located some 20 km north of Kristianstad. The oldest parts originate from the end of the 1400s, when the estate passed, through marriage, into the ownership of the Brahe family. The oldest house, probably a stone house surrounded by water, was gradually extended into a quadrangular Renaissance castle with a moat. The castle still has certain elements from the 1400s. The first recorded events associated with Wanås took place during the power struggle for the Danish throne between the deposed Christian II and his uncle, Frederick I, who in 1523 was made king with the support of the nobles and the city of Lübeck. In contrast to the majority of the nobles in Scania, the owner of Wanås, Niels Nielsen Brahe, had wanted the return of Christian II, who during his reign had supported the farmers in their fight against oppression and taxes. Brahe allied himself with the rebel, Sören Norrby, who led the Göinge farmers in a bloody uprising against the nobles. Frederick I became king and Niels Nielsen Brahe was arrested and sentenced to death. After Brahe’s death, Wanås passed to the Bille family until the mid-1600s, when it was owned for a period by the Beck family of Färslöv. In 1649, it was taken over by Anna Ramel, widow of Malte Juul of Maltesholm. During the Northern Seven Years’ War 1563-70, part of the castle was burned down. It was rebuilt by Steen Bille in the 1570s and was given part of the appearance it has today. In the late 1600s, Wanås was owned by the old noble Putbus family from Rügen. After the von Putbus period, Wanås was bought in 1756 by county governor, Carl Axel Hugo Hamilton, who was married to the wealthy Betty Jennings. She became a widow in two marriages and died in 1801. During her time, great changes were made at Wanås with rebuilding and extensions of the house and grounds. Betty Jennings made Wanås an entailed estate, and in 1801 her grandson Carl Axel Wachtmeister of Johannishus became holder of the entailed estate. The Wachtmeister family remain the owners and farmers of the estate to this day through Count Carl-Axel Wachtmeister. The grounds of Wanås contain an extensive and beautiful sculpture park, where sculpture and nature are unified in harmonic symbiosis.

The Göinge district’s storyteller

In 1842 the vicar, Tufve Svensson Cederborg, was engaged as a private tutor at Carl Axel Wachtmeister’s estate, Wanås. His family moved into the new tutor’s lodge, east of the castle. His son Carl August was born there on 9 April 1849. Tufve Cederborg dreamed of his own parish, but it was not until 1859 that he became vicar of Kviinge-Gryt and in 1866 dean of the Östra Göinge hundred. The son, Carl August, writes in his autobiographical Book of Thoughts that his childhood was good, but that his father was strict and overbearing and his mother self-sacrificing and loving. In the 1800s, it was common that vicar’s sons followed in their father’s footsteps, which is why Tufve started to teach his son Latin as a child. Carl August started his studies officially at the Cathedral School in Lund, in the autumn term of 1864. He lived at the house of the potter, Almström, at Råttesträtet 191. The first term’s grades were passes in most subjects, but strangely enough he failed Swedish. During his third year he started thinking about leaving the school. This is what happened, but it was on the condition that he continued to study privately both at home and in Kristianstad. He lost interest in this as well, and ideas about farming started to take shape. The father contended that no-one became a farmer except through practical experience and therefore sent him to a farm in Hörby. A year later he took over responsibility for the father’s "vicar’s farm", where he stayed for seven years, after which he bought his own farm in Hökaröd, just south of Kviinge. During the 1880s there were several years of crop failures and Carl August considered selling the farm. He started getting involved in politics with a liberal line and absorbed all that was written by August Blanche in the newspaper, Ny Illustrerad Tidning. Carl August himself wrote political articles in Kristianstadbladet, which attracted a lot of attention in the district.
He was elected to the county council and there he met the former MD of the Torsebro gunpowder plant, Baron Staël von Holstein. The plant had gone into bankruptcy in 1881 and von Holstein had become a newspaperman publishing Södra Sverige. The Baron offered Carl August a position, which was accepted on condition that he mainly got to write think-piece articles. The newspaper soon went bankrupt and the Baron fled to America.

The same autumn he met the newspaperman, Lars Österling, father of the poet, Anders. He owned Skånes Allehanda and offered Carl August a position that soon developed into a partnership. His talent meant that he was in demand, and in 1897 he was employed by Göteborgs Aftonblad. The same year he got a generous offer from Borås Tidning, but chose to go back to Helsingborg and his family. There he rented a house and wrote the novel, The Göinge Governor and the Local Militia. It was his first historical novel and a prelude to the whole of his future output.

In 1898, the family moved to Stockholm, as Carl August had got a good job at Svenska Dagbladet. Later, he was editor of the international news supplement of Allers Familje-Journal.

In 1905, he concluded his newspaper career to become a full-time writer. He bought a house in Saltsjöbaden and wrote the rest of his novels there. He never deviated from his central theme, even though he had not visited his native district in Göinge since 1886. Carl August Cederborg died in 1933.