Wegeholm

Vegeholm is strongly associated with one of Denmark’s greatest and most multi-faceted men during the Renaissance period; the landowner, soldier and champion of the nobility and Catholicism, Tyge Krabbe. He owned Vegeholm and several other estates in the mid-1500s. In 1530, five years after Sören Norby’s farmers’ uprising, he decided to replace the previous stronghold at Vegeholm, which was built in the early 1500s. It was situated on an island in the river, Vegeån, but despite the protected position it had been burned and destroyed during the uprising. The new castle was built on the same site, but the island was divided, with one islet being used for barns. The castle was a three-story quadrangular building with an inner courtyard and three defensive towers.

An allure, loopholes and a drawbridge over the natural moat were built for the castle’s defence. Today, the well-preserved castle still has the same character as it did in the mid-1500s.

Tyge Krabbe had had interests in Scania since 1507, when he was granted the castle of the realm, Helsingborg, and was soon drawn into several wars with Sweden. He was also involved in the conflicts for the throne of Denmark in the 1520s, and in the Danish Counts’ Feud of the 1530s, with the aim of defending both the nobility’s and the Catholic Church’s interests. His life was marked by a conservative attitude towards change and he fought against all such signs of the times, both in terms of the Danish Crown and Scania’s vulnerability to Sweden. Tyge Krabbe died at Vegeholm in 1541, remaining a faithful member of the Catholic Church until the end.

The Krabbe family again owned Vegeholm at the time of the Swedish takeover of Scania, but in 1662 ownership went to the governor general of Scania, Count Gustav Otto Stenbock. He carried out an extensive restoration of the dilapidated building in 1670, which was largely transformed into a baroque castle. The estate was sold in 1684 to the trader, Olof Nilsson Engelholm, who after only two years sold it to John Cedercrantz.

During the 1700s and 1800s, Vegeholm was owned by the families Cedercrantz, Ehrenborg, Sjöcrona and Gravenhorst Lövenstierne. In 1902, it passed to the von Geijer family through Captain Wilhelm von Geijer and his wife, Irma von Hallwyl.

The present owners are Stefan and Elisabet von Geijer.

The surroundings
Vegeholm is located 5 km south-west of Ängelholm, close to the attractive coast. The landscape is varied with extensive broadleaf woods along the river, Vegeån.

The von Hallwyls come to Scania
In 1902, Walter and Wilhelmina von Hallwyl bought Vegeholm Castle and its estate for their youngest daughter Irma and her husband, Wilhelm von Geijer. The Hallwyls had lived for 10 years at the “Hallwyl Palace” on Hamngatan in Stockholm. The daughter’s move to Scania created a need for a summer residence close to Vegeholm, so Hildesborg, north of Landskrona, was bought in 1908. There they could socialise with their daughter and her family as well as guests from far and wide by the beautiful Öresund coast. Hildesborg was altered to better suit its new purpose with changes made to the building and park by the architect, Isak Gustav Clason.

Holidays in Scania started with the Count travelling to Hildesborg in May, to be followed a fortnight later by the Countess and her lady’s companion. The house on Hamngatan was then closed for the summer. All the valuable furniture, works of art and chandeliers were covered over to protect them, especially from sunlight. The car’s winter coachwork was replaced by the open summer coachwork, after which it was put on the train south and transported to Landskrona. It was used, among other things, for the hour-long drive to their daughter and son-in-law at Vegeholm.

Countess Wilhelmina von Hallwyl was the daughter of one of the successful “timber squires” of the
Norrland coast, Wilhelm Henrik Kempe and his wife Johanna née Wallis. Kempe owned and ran the Ljusne-Voxna works in Hälsingland, which was one of the most profitable Swedish companies of its time. In the summer of 1864, the family stayed in Germany "to take the spa waters” and it was there that Wilhelmina met Walter von Hallwyl, who "was courteous and well-mannered". As the parents approved of the marriage, the wedding took place on 10 June 1865 at home on Kornhamnstorg in Stockholm. The youngest daughter, Irma, later lady of the manor at Vegeholm, was born in 1873 and after her father’s death in 1883 her husband, Walter von Hallwyl, succeeded his father-in-law as MD for the Ljusne-Voxna works.

The family moved to the Sörenssonska House on Blasieholmstorg in Stockholm, and it was there that Wilhelmina started as a serious collector. She had shown an early interest in beautiful things, but a girl at that time lived in modest financial circumstances, even if the family was wealthy. She had gradually gained knowledge on antiques and art, and when her father died in 1883 there was a special agreement that she would receive an annual sum for the purchase of carefully selected articles for her collection.

In the early 1890s, the family decided to build a new house in Stockholm, partly because the collection took up an increasing amount of living space. The couple acquired a plot of land at Hamngatan 4 and engaged the architect, Isac Gustav Clason, who in 1894 presented plans for a Renaissance palace enclosed by walls and with iron gratings on the windows. It was built in the years 1894-1898.

The collecting continued in the new, spacious home and the idea of turning it into a museum became ever stronger. In 1920, the couple donated the house to the state and in 1938 it opened as a museum. Today, you can explore the Hallwyl home that Wilhelmina put together with great love and care to give future generations an insight on her times.