

Örenäs

Örenäs was one of the last castles to be built in Scania. As in several other cases it is the result of successful farming and trade in the late 1800s. In 1897 Carl Tranchell, who had become known as "The Sugar King", bought the Maryhill estate on behalf of the company, Skånska Sockerfabrik AB. Tranchell took over private ownership in 1911 and a few years later engaged the architects Frederick Sundbärg and Harald Holmqvist to plan a new castle. It was designed as a two-storey building with a mansard floor under a high, curb roof. The style was German baroque, which was very common in monumental buildings at the turn of the century.

The castle was built in the years 1914-1918 and was named Örenäs, after the neighbouring farm. The building, with its surrounding park and sloping lawns in the west, has a very beautiful location on the shore of the Öresund and a good view of the island of Ven. The area is strongly associated with the poet, Gabriel Jönsson, who made Ven a literary setting. He was born in the small fishing village of Ålabodarna, west of Örenäs Castle, where his father ran the local shop. Gabriel Jönsson's grave is in the churchyard of the beautiful Glumslöv Church from the 1100s. The place was surely chosen by the poet himself, as during his life he loved the enchanting view from the nearby hill he called "Scania's crown".

The Örenäs farm came about as a result of the single-lot land reform in the early 1800s. Previously, the farmhouse was part of Glumslöv village, west of the church, but when the land reform was carried through, a new half-timbered house was built on Örenäs farm around 1870. When the farm was sold to district judge August Anderberg in 1867, he was not satisfied with the simple half-timbered house and built a new villa on a plot closer to the strait. He called the house Mariehill, after his wife Maria. In 1883 the property was sold to Countess Constance Wachtmeister, who was the widow of the foreign minister, Carl Wachtmeister. She changed the name of the house to the more English-sounding Maryhill and restored both the house and grounds. The house was taken over in 1892 by Count Frederick Posse and, from 1897, by the Skånska Sockerfabriken AB. Between 1923 and 1942, Örenäs Castle was owned by Count Frederick Bonde of Björnö, followed by the travel organisation, RESO, and later the Swedish trade union body, Landsorganisationen, which developed the castle into a high-class hotel and conference centre.

Amelie Posse

In 1888, Frederick and Gunhild Posse and their children, Amelie (4), Arvid (3) and one-year-old Mauritz moved from the city of Malmö to the house called Maryhill near the Örenäs farm in Glumslöv. Amelie later revealed how she waited for the spring day of the move and how they would always live happily at Maryhill "to our dying days – i.e. for ever!" However, for Amelie it was not to be. The move from Malmö to Örenäs was the first step in an adventurous, roving life, full of hardships, sorrows and joys. As an adult, she was the strongly committed author, Amelie Posse, who in her books dared to oppose the evil forces that she felt were controlling Europe's development.

Amelie Posse's mother, Gunhild, was the daughter of Hedda and Gunnar Wennerberg. He had become well known as an author and composer of the Uppsala-related work "The Boys" and a member of the Swedish Academy. He was minister of education and ecclesiastical affairs for a couple of periods and later county governor of Västergötland. The father, Frederick, was the son of Amelie and Arvid Posse. He was an estate owner (Charlottenlund), co-founder of the Ruralist Party and became prime minister (1880-1883). Frederick Posse devoted his working life to railway building in Scania and Blekinge, gunpowder production and ore extraction in Norrland. He died in 1897 and the family had difficult financial problems as partners in the mine business had swindled him out of his profit share and capital in the company. Gunhild and the three children were forced to move from their beloved Maryhill to an apartment in Lund.

Amelie's family background, with many multi-faceted and successful people, brought her into early

contact with several of Sweden's leading figures.

Amelie Posse was born in 1884 in the "Sörensen Palace" in Stockholm. A year afterwards, the family moved to Malmö and a few years later to Maryhill. She went to school in Landskrona, 10 km south of Örenäs. At that time a young teacher worked there called Selma Lagerlöf, who in her spare time wrote books. In 1891, she published her story about the drunken vicar, Gösta Berling, and his quarrelsome group. Amelie wrote in her autobiography, *In the Beginning There was Light*, how she was given a "stinging smack" by Selma Lagerlöf, because she once "by mistake" blew a paper ball through a pipe that hit the teacher Selma right on the nose. When they met later in life, Selma Lagerlöf revealed that the smacking of Amelie Posse was the only corporal punishment she had even given.

In the years 1902-1904, she attended Målar School in Copenhagen, after which she married the criminal psychologist and writer, Andreas Bjerre. They lived for time in Berlin, but the married broke up in 1910. Amelie then moved to Rome, where after a few years she married the bohemian artist, Oki Brazda, and stayed there until 1925.

The couple then moved, with their two sons, Slavo and Jan, to Czechoslovakia and the castle Zemek Lickov, 80 km from Prague.

There she began her writing career in 1931 with the novel *The Incomparable Captivity*. This was followed by a further nine books until 1954, three years before her death. The eleventh book, *When the Iron Curtain Fell on Prague*, was published posthumously in 1968, with the journalist Barbro Alving as editor.

Amelie returned to Sweden in 1940, where she established the anti-Nazi "Tuesday Club". She went back to Czechoslovakia (1946-1948), was in Sweden a few years and then in Italy (1951-1952). Amelie Posse died in Stockholm in 1957.