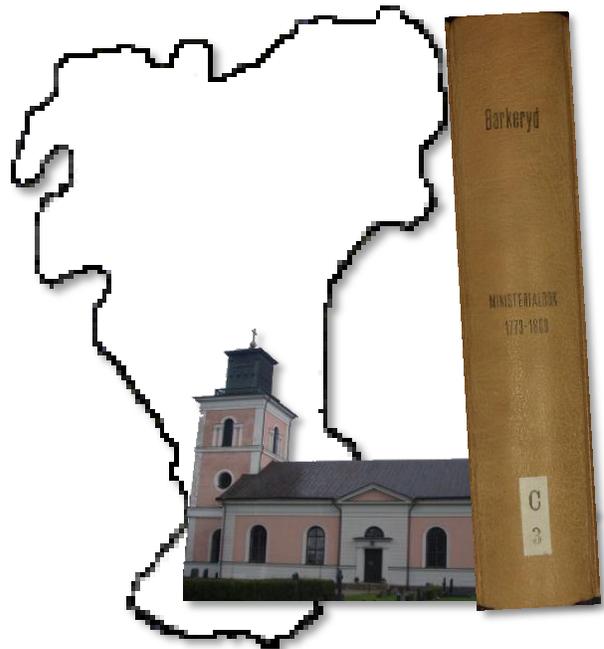


Barkeryd Parish

Barkeryd (Béar-ke-rude) Parish, located just west of the city of Nässjö, contains nearly three centuries of history significant to the High family. Barkeryd is where Maria Svensdotter, Sven Hög's mother, was born in 1771 and grew up. Maria's parents, Sven Nilsson and Anna Månsdotter, lived at Gransäng, a farm in east Barkeryd, from 1759 to 1795. All three of Maria's siblings, Jonas, Sven, and Beata were also born in Gransäng and lived out their lives in Barkeryd. Maria left Barkeryd in 1789, shortly after her mother, Anna, died.



Barkeryd Parish

(Béar-ke-rude)

County: Jönköping

Municipality: Nässjö

Significance to High Family:

- Where Per i Äng lived during the early 1500s.
- Where Joen Persson lived during the late 1500s.
- Where Per Joensson lived during the early 1600s.
- Where the family of Måns Persson and Elisabeth Månsdotter lived during much of 1600s and early 1700s.
- Where Urban Jagendyvel lived during much of 1600s.
- Where Bengt Månsson Engdahl lived from 1670 until the early 1700s.
- Where Beata Urbansdotter lived from 1677 to 1715 and 1718 to 1759.
- Where Maria Engdahl lived from 1704 to 1732.
- Where the family of Sven Nilsson and Anna Månsdotter lived from 1759 to 1795.
- Where Maria Svensdotter lived from 1771 to 1789.

Area: 99.75 sq. km.

Population (as of 2000): 1112

At least seven generations of Maria Svensdotter's ancestors lived in Barkeryd. Maria Engdahl, her maternal grandmother, was born at Gransäng, Barkeryd in 1704. Her parents, Second-Lieutenant Bengt Månsson Engdahl and Beata Urbansdotter, resided at Gransäng, which in old times was a place for military officers to reside. Urban Jagendyvel, Beata Urbansdotter's father, had also lived at Gransäng, while the family of Bengt Månsson Engdahl hailed from Äng, a village in central Barkeryd. Bengt's great-great-grandfather, Per i Äng (1520-1568) is the oldest known ancestor of the High family. Per was a farmer and soldier who served and died in the Great Northern War. His son, Joen Persson, was likewise a farmer and a soldier who served in the Swedish-Russo War of 1590-1595 and died in 1592. Joen's son, Per Joensson, was a juror in Jönköping. Måns Persson, the son of Joen Persson and the father of Bengt Månsson Engdahl, was a crown forester in Barkeryd.

Barkeryd Parish is 99.75 square kilometers. The parish contains the villages of Barkeryd, Fredriksdal, Rötja, and Äng. Barkeryd Church is located near in the village of Barkeryd. North of Barkeryd are the parishes of Flisby and Järnsnäs. The parishes of Almesåkra and Malmbäck border Barkeryd to the south. Forserum Parish and Lekeryd Parish lie west of Barkeryd, while Nässjö Parish lies east of Barkeryd.



Lake Barkerydsjön

Barkeryd is mostly forested, and its hills reach 356 feet above sea level. The forests of Barkeryd are filled with alder, birch, oak, pine, and spruce. Most of the soil in Barkeryd is sandy and is poor for agriculture. There are 25 lakes in Barkeryd, including Lake Barkerydsjön, Lake Ryssbysjön, and Lake Fredriksdalasjön.¹ Although these lakes are poor for fishing, some contain perch, pike, roach, and a few other types of fish. The Esperyd River runs through eastern Barkeryd before passing through Lake Fredriksdal in Almesåkra Parish and flowing into Lake Nätarn in Järnsnäs Parish. Barkeryd also contains several dense swamps and murky bogs.



Forest in Barkeryd

Johan Fovelin's Description of the Wildlife in Barkeryd

“Wild animals are found in the forest such as hares, foxes, squirrels, martens, rarely seen wolves, lynxes, roe-deer, and otters, which are sometimes trapped. The following birds are to be seen here: capercaillie (great grouses), black grouses, wood pigeons, herons, loons, ducks, woodpeckers, ravens, crows, magpies, hawks, kites, seagulls, peewit, starlings, thrushes, cuckoos, sparrows, owls, falcons, wagtails, larks, song-thrushes and sometimes goldfinches.”

- Fovelin's Descriptions of Barkeryd and Nässjö Parishes - 1785

¹ Svensk Uppslagsbok: Barkeryd socken

Timeline of Barkeryd Parish

4000 – 3000 B.C.	The first settlers arrive in Barkeryd.
Early 1100s	Barkeryd Church is founded.
1307	The first recorded mention of Barkeryd.
1579	The first time the modern spelling of Barkeryd is used.
1785	Pastor Johan Fovelin writes a detailed description of Barkeryd Parish.
1847	The current building of Barkeryd Church is constructed.
1865	Håkan Svensson became the first person to emigrate out of Barkeryd to the United States
1971	Barkeryd Parish becomes part of Nässjö Municipality.

Barkeryd has been inhabited since the Stone Age. It is believed that original settlers traveled to Barkeryd via the local waterways from approximately 4000 – 3000 B.C. There are several burial cairns and stone circles from the Bronze Age in the parish, as well as a burial ground from the Iron Age. Near the cemetery of Barkeryd Church is a rune carving.

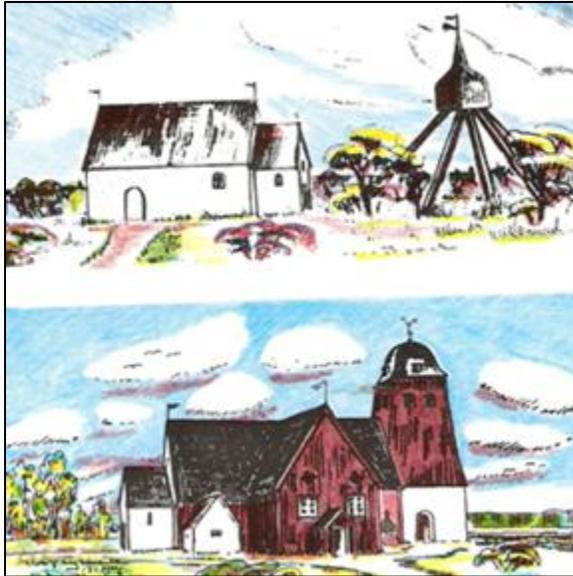


Rune stone in Barkeryd

The Meaning and History of the Name “Barkeryd”

The first written mention of Barkeryd occurred in 1307, when it was known as “Bierkrydhum.” The name most likely derives from the words *biärk*, “birch” + *ryd*, “clearing.” The current spelling of the parish is from 1579.

In the early 12th Century, Christianity spread throughout Sweden and a wooden church was built in the village of Barkeryd. A second church was later built in 1174, and a third building was constructed from stone in 1355. Wooden extensions were added to the church in 1738.



How Barkeryd Church appeared in the 14th to the early 19th Centuries

By the 19th Century, Barkeryd Church had fallen into disrepair. In the 1835, the congregation of Barkeryd decided to construct a new church. The construction of the new church carried on through the 1840s, and the current building of Barkeryd Church was completed in 1847.



Barkeryd Church

Pastor Johan Fovelin
(1745-1809)



Johan Fovelin was one of Barkeryd's most beloved vicars, who served the congregation in the late 18th Century and early 19th Century. Fovelin was born in Barkeryd Parish on May 2, 1745. In 1763, he entered seminary and became a pastor in 1767. Fovelin served as a battalion pastor to the Jönköping's Regiment in 1771. In 1785, Fovelin wrote "A Description of Barkeryd and Nässjö Parishes," a descriptive account of the land, farms, and churches of the two parishes he served as vicar. Johan Fovelin was honored with full pastoral authority in 1786. Fovelin was extremely well educated and was a member of parliament. He was very musical, a well-known singer, an expert in local history, and was well loved by the inhabitants of Barkeryd and Nässjö parishes.

Fovelin performed the funerals for Sven Nilsson and Anna Månsdotter, as well as the marriage of Anders Andersson and Maria Svensdotter. He died on June 24, 1807, which happened to fall on Midsummer Day.

In the Middle-Ages, most of Barkeryd was owned by the Church. By the 18th Century, the parish's land was distributed among the Church, the Crown, nobility, and taxed farmers. Barkeryd Church owned the finest land in the parish and had access to the best resources. After the Church, the parish's wealthiest lands were owned by nobility.



A field in Barkeryd Parish

Every homestead had to pay taxes for any repairs or renovations to the church or the vicarage. Almost every other homestead had its assessment units reduced. In 1785, there were 23 crofts, 13 rotehålls², 8½ rusthålls³, 6 flour-mills, 3 saw-mills, and a ruined iron-mill in Barkeryd. The following table describes the distribution and assessment of land in Barkeryd in 1785:

Land Assessment of Barkeryd in 1785 ⁴		
Homestead-type in 18th century Swedish	Homestead, full assessment units of land	Homestead, reduced assessment units of land
Frälse Säterie (Nobility Manor)	2 ^{1/2}	2 ^{1/2}
Säterie Rusthåll Manor responsible for providing for a cavalry-man	1	1
Frälse Owned by nobility	1/2	1/4
Skattefrälse Owned by the Crown, but paying tax to nobility	1	1
Krono Owned by the Crown	2 ^{1/4}	2
Skattekrono Freeholder, paying tax to the Crown	29 ^{1/2}	26 ^{1/8}
Total	36^{1/2}	32^{7/8}
Church, Churchyard wall, parish public room, poorhouse etc.	35^{1/2}	31^{7/8}
Vicarage	31	27^{7/8}

² Rotehåll - A farm responsible for providing for an infantry-man. This means Barkeryd provided 13 infantry-men.

³ Rusthåll = A farm responsible for providing for a cavalry-man. This means Barkeryd provided 8.5 cavalry -men.

⁴ Johan Fovelin's Descriptions of Barkeryd and Nässjö Parishes - 1785

By the late 18th Century, the homesteads in Barkeryd had been split up so much that some farmers only owned 1/48 of a homestead. In 1786, there were 224 households and 1075 parishioners in Barkeryd. Although much of Barkeryd was forested, there were also a number of fields, meadows, and forest clearings.



A peaceful grove in Barkeryd

The main road that passed through Barkeryd led west towards the city Jönköping and east towards the city of Eksjö. The farmers of Barkeryd were responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of this road. There was also a district road that ran north to Bästuhult Parish south to Järnsnäs Parish. Barkeryd was covered with several smaller roads as well, which were mostly in suitably maintained and provided access to the various homesteads in the parish. There was also an inn in Barkeryd with six privileged taverns and an entry courtyard.

Barkeryd Parish was divided into six districts, each of which elected its own assembly representative. This parish assembly of six made certain that the parish resolutions were carried out. They were responsible for the maintenance of the Church's buildings and the vicarage, and they also assisted the vicar in different matters.

Johan Fovelin's Description of the People of Barkeryd

"The people build beautiful homes, keep them nice, and are well dressed. They eat a meager diet, if not rather poor, but are courteous in word and conduct, and are helpful to others. Far from towns, and without any major property or work to be found, the commoners lack almost every chance to earn money, except to spin wool and transport iron ore from Taberg to Bruzaholm."

"Fields and meadows are routinely worked but there are also many forest clearings. The womenfolk are no less laborious and are quick in their handicrafts; they are gentle and honorable; if they haven't stayed for some time in alluring places."

"Few parishes around here are equipped with so many craftsmen, for here are coopers, cobblers, tailors, carpenters, wheelwrights, smiths for all kinds of iron, gun smiths, engravers, belt makers, brass smiths, workers in steel, copper and silver, furriers, master bricklayers, weaver's reed makers, glaziers, gilders, turners, comb makers, cartwrights, painters, watchmakers, brush makers, jewelers"

- Johan Fovelin's Descriptions of Barkeryd and Nässjö Parishes - 1785

Number of Emigrants from Barkeryd to America⁵

Year	Number of Emigrants
1865	1
1866	13
1867	37
1868	39
1869	31
1870	37
1871	26

Throughout the 18th and early 19th Centuries, the population of Barkeryd rose along with the rest of Sweden. The rising population meant fewer opportunities for people to own land. Hence, a larger percent of the population became landless. On April 20 1865, Håkan Svensson became the first person to emigrate from Barkeryd to the United States. Over the next five years, over 150 parishioners subsequently left Barkeryd for a better life in America. By the early 20th Century, around 900 people from Barkeryd had immigrated to America.

Swante Magnus Swensson – The First Swedish Immigrant to Texas (1816-1896)



Swante Magnus Swensson was born at Lättarp, Barkeryd Parish on February 24, 1816. In 1836, Swensson immigrated to America, and arrived in Texas in 1838. Throughout the 1840s, Swensson prospered as he acquired a number of plantations in the South. Swensson foresaw the imminent downfall of slavery and favoured employing immigrant labor. He encouraged several hundred Swedes to come to the New Land and work for him. In 1850, Swensson moved to Austin, Texas, where he established a mercantile business. In 1854, he founded SMS ranches and became one of the largest landowners in Texas. Today, the SMS ranch is still owned by Swensson’s direct descendants.

Barkeryd Parish was part of Tveta District until 1971, when it became part of Nässjö Municipality. In 2000, there were 1112 inhabitants living in Barkeryd. Barkeryd Hembygdsgård, Barkeryd’s local historical society, is located a kilometer south of Barkeryd Church. Barkeryd Hembygdsgård contains a museum and hosts a Midsummer’s Day Festival on June 24 and the Folklore Festival on the first Sunday of August.⁶



Barkeryd Hembygdsgård

⁵ Barkeryd Moving In/Out Vol. BI:2, (1861-1894)

⁶ *Sverige från A till Ö: geografisk-historisk uppslagsbok*