

## The place of Stugun's early history

The first historically known inhabitant of the remote place, which much later was named "Stugun" is Gjurd Bodakarl, who seems to have been the first man getting disposition of "the soul hostel" själastugan or shuttle station with benefits that was organized by the Uppsala archbishop Jacob Israelsson between 1277-1280 at Ragunda Forest in the present day Stugubyn, next to the trails and waterways that at that time went from the Ragunda church site, partly up to the parish of Lit and partly over the forests to the parishes of Sundsjö and Revsund.

The owner of the hostel at Ragundaskogen had the obligation to provide the wayfarers with food and lodging, as well as transport where they were requested, and as compensation therefore enjoyed partly the right of use to all the forests which surrounded Själastugan, such as fields, fish, hunting grounds, etc., partly freedom from certain taxes to the church, partly also the offspring of some of the homesteads assigned to it.

Several documents of this are still in possession and are taken into custody in Swedish and Norwegian Diplomataries. which roads branched off at Stugun's ferry sound. This ferry strait was located approximately 200 meters north of Stugun's old church, next to the so-called »Per Persgarden».

The »själastugan», or traveler's shelter, had its place on the north side of the same church, below an existing slope. Thus, on 2 January 1290, the above-mentioned Giurd Bodakarl received from Archbishop Johannes a charter whereby he was freed from all taxes to the church against it. that he provided food while traveling in the Ragunda forest and shelter in the cabin.

Thorer Giurdsson, (the former cottager's son), 'Owner of the Stugan year 1297-1330, received on 15 Feb. 1297 protection [given by] Archbishop Nils Allesson with freedom from all taxes to the church.

On March 7, 1308, the same archbishop left to Thorer and his descendants», a homestead in Hölje in the parish of Lit, from which they were to enjoy the income as long as they kept the shelter in "Stugun" by power.

Lodin Thoresson (son of Thorer Gjurdsson) held the position of lodger from around that time 1330 to probably the 1360s.

On January 27, 1388, the governor Guttorm Helgesson handed over the estate Ansjö in Hällesjö parish to »the chapel at Ragunda Forest, that of the cottager Lodin Thoresson and his descendants they are possessed as long as they served the chapel.

Erik Harvardsson, (was apparently the son of Harvard and wife Gunnildh. Could be born around 1465. In 1494 became owner of the "soul house" on the basis of Archbishop Jön's letter of protection. According to the wording of this letter, it would be up to him "to keep the houses in power and unspoiled with roofs, as they are now built, and improve in future both the farm and the fishing waters and everything else.

He was married to Birgitta. Their children appear to have been Bengt, born around 1496, Ivar, 1500, Olaf, 1504. These three brothers were assured on 19 January 1510 by King Christian (III) Fredriksson of freedom of speech against the fact that they each acquired the king's people "promotion." (Erik Harvardson and son Bengt are the first reasonably well-documented ancestors of my grandfather and grandmother Nils and Katarina's branches of the cottage family tree.)

Stugun's small congregation seems to have become its own parish in 1565, according to a bailiff's account of 1567, and was counted then as an annex under Ragunda.

In the Trondhjem Reformation of 1589, Stugun was included as its own church community, but still had only five farmers. (It is quite reasonable to count this time as the start of a first more formal church building, even if A J Hansson did not find documents about this until the beginning of the 17th century at the earliest.)

In 1732, on October 19, a man was born in Östgard in Stugun in Jämtland, who during his lifetime would perform great works in the field of church building. His name was Paul Persson. The parents were Per Pålsson and Barbro Månsdotter, and in the correct descending line(?) he comes from Stugun's first known settlement boy, Gjurd Bodakarl, who lived in Stugun at the end of the 13th century, and whose name is found in a still-preserved parchment letter from 1290, issued by Archbishop Johannes in Uppsala.

Father Per died already in 1737, and when mother Barbro remarried in 1745 and moved to Lit's parish, the then 13-year-old son naturally followed. The son's aptitude for carpentry and blacksmithing was in every way cherished and encouraged by the stepfather, and it was undoubtedly happy and of great importance to the emerging plant.

(The size of the community and the various obligations one had to fulfill in the mid-18th century can be seen from the following court records):

Since the District Court has more closely examined this matter it found itself able to certify the following circumstances: "that this annex parish, which consists only of good farmers, is located in a mountain area where perfectly good grain is rarely found, but some are left because of the sandy soil dryness and some grain are damaged by the cold; that they alone had to keep the church at great expense, and from that no less than others gave printing grain and Probstetunna and more, so that the evil would be gone for wine and building, for which they had to make several expensive buildings with their own funds and for their repairs, with several other expenses for the clergy's transport and payment on different occasions if they go here to come; that the farmers in Stugun, who live in a strong sledge way, could not alone maintain the transporting there and had to shuttle 30 miles, 15 miles and 10 miles to reach the nearest guest houses. (english miles).

In addition, the inconvenience and cost of driving up the roads during storms and slippery in summer, let larger and smaller ships continue to assist the travellers going thru by the waterways; that these few parishioners are all rotated and must keep five dragoons (riding soldiers) at the Jämtland regiment;

that due to circumstances not mentioned above, they had to keep more horses than other homesteaders: and finally, that these homesteaders could not possibly be able to live on their weak farms if they did not get enough forest and hay and fishing water for help and support, because they shall have their sustenance from the cattle. (It can be stated that the entire parish's five farms at the time, in addition to the long horse-drawn carriages in several different directions, also had to keep their own equipped foot soldiers, who, if necessary, had to go out to long-term military services and training camps. In my opinion, the climate problems were probably a little exaggerated because Stugun in reality probably has warmer summer weather than, for example, the fertile settled country of Rödön by Storsjön, but there was undoubtedly a great need for forest mowing land and arable production from more cultivated areas such as the confiscated priest's property in Hölje on the border between Lit and Kyrkås, which was after all incorporated into Själastugan's provision of horses and hospitality at a very early stage in the beginning of the thirteenth century. Even then, the return from a property in Ansjö, Kälarne was disposed of. ) [Stugun's old church, built by the village's own son Pål Persson. It was on April 1, 1786, that the authorities approved the drawing and the inauguration took place in 1794 or 1795. On September 13, 1896, the new church was inaugurated.



Stuguns gamla kyrka, byggd av bygdens egen son Pål Persson. Det var den 1 april 1786, som myndigheterna godkände ritningen och invigningen skedde 1794 eller 1795. Den 13 september 1896 invigdes nya kyrkan. Den gamla kom därefter att stå tom och oanvänd och det är nog ingenting annat än en slump, att den inte revs som ju tidens sed var. Kyrkoherde Nils Hamberg har noterat att detta Pål Perssons övergivna tempel dock tillfälligt upplåtits för gudstjänst den 3 september 1916 "efter att i 20 års tid stått övergiven".

Foto: Selim Sundin

[Stugun's old church, built by the village's own son Pål Persson. It was on April 1, 1786, that the authorities approved the drawing and the inauguration took place in 1794 or 1795. On September 13, 1896, the new church was inaugurated. The old one then came to stand empty and untouched and it is probably nothing more than a coincidence that it was not torn down as was the custom of the time. Pastor Nils Hamberg has noted that this Pål Person's abandoned temple has however been temporarily rented out for worship on September 3, 1916 "after being abandoned for 20 years".

Photo: Selim Sundin]

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The current old church was built in 1786 by Pal Persson in Stugubyn, who also built fourteen church buildings in other places, as well as some other public buildings, among them the famous Håsjö bell tower, after which a faithful representation is built at Skansen in Stockholm.

In 1846 the population had increased to 719 people, who were distributed among the following villages:

In Stugubyn 300

In Strömsnäs 60

In Borglunda 24

In Höglunda 53

In Fisksjölandet 23

In Näverede 37

In Brynjegård 35

In Mårdsjön 128

In Öravattnet 41

In Digerberget 5

In Socknen 13 (Socknen is "The Parish")

At the present moment in 1926 - the population figure in Stugun's parish is over 2,500 people and the tax assessment of all immovable property amounts to a sum of 7,525,600 kronor.

Stugun's parish, which in the past was considered a poor place, can now in due time display well-built and stately farms with good agriculture and considerable livestock herds.

This magnificent development in material terms can be entirely attributed to the local population's abundant monetary income from the parish's vast forests, especially in the last 60 years.

These abundant incomes from the forests have also led to a more lavish way of life, so that the population in Stugun's parish behaved more lordly and grand compared to the rural population in other places in Jämtland County.

The consequence of this has finally been that the economic situation of the local population in Stugun has deteriorated a lot in recent times, since the income from the forest, away from away, reduced.

(A J Hansson's description of Stugun's financial condition around 1926 is interesting for several reasons. In part, he talks about a region that almost exploded in development during the last hundred years thanks to the growth of forestry, which gave the cottagers a higher standard than the rest of Jämtland.

In the hindsight perspective of reality, it was probably the same here, as above all else, that it was the so-called possessed, i.e. those who kept their homes, who could take advantage of the abundance in the forestry economy. The big profits and the entire money flow arose and were controlled at the big forest companies down by the river mouth in Sundsvall.

After all, the companies had also bought up large parts of the best-situated forest areas during the so-called Baggböleriet (named from a exporting saw at a place Baggböle on the Ume river), and there you could certainly offer decently paid work to many when there was a boom, which was especially the case at the end of and shortly after the First World War, in the years around 1920.

Towards the middle of the 1920s, there were much tougher times with bank and company bankruptcies, the stock market crash in New York in 1929 and the Kreuger crash in 1932, and then of course the demand for timber also disappeared and with them the job opportunities, which is behind grandfather A J Hansson's last gloomy sentences above.

He himself had major economic problems at home in Bringåsen in 1925-26, because he mortgaged his homestead against a guarantee commitment for the bank's loan to a forest company on the coast which was now bankrupt.

A J Hansson's sentences about the Stugun people's "luxurious way of life" surely refer to the stately wooden castles that were built at this time on farms in e.g. Strånäset and Borgvattnet and the improbably exclusive automobiles that appeared here and were in almost roadless country, when some of them fairly few the larger forest home owners who had resisted the corporate buyouts, now tried to invest their profits during the good times and protect them against the prevailing deflation fall in monetary value.)