

Josef August and Alma Kjällerström from Stackebo i Mossebo socken

Josef August Kjällerström was born in Stackebo, Mossebo parish in Västergötland in 1871 and died there 1945. Alma was born Andersdotter in Båraryd, Småland in 1871 and died already in 1934 (63 years old). These two persons were born in a very poor Sweden and died at the gate to a welfare Sweden. They lived on the farm Stackebo during the years from 1898 to 1945. To grow up on a farm and then cultivate it gave at that time a comparable good life. The threats at that time were failure of the crops and a group of at that time incurable deceases. One brother Sven and one daughter Linnea died very young.

During August's life as a young man people went to USA and the industrializing started. But the oldest son of a farmer could stay and have good life. The farmer could use more and more machines and the crops raised out of better product and fertilizing.

The father, Anders Joseph, became a farmer on Stackebo in the year of 1866, 38 years old. He could that year vote for a new established parliament because he was a farmer who paid a certain amount of tax. Crofters and other poor people were not allowed to vote. He could also go to the local parliament and vote by the force of several votes due to the amount of tax he paid. Also here the crofters and poor people had no votes. This uneven political system changed in the year of 1920. Then all grown up person, men and women, had one vote. August and his wife Alma could together go to the elections.

In the 1860 is the institutions for a modern society were established, but the right to participate was still uneven. Those who did not pay should not decide. The father Anders Joseph was the head of the local council from 1870 to 1887. The son August had the same position from 1927 to 1941. Father and son were churchwardens 1883-1898 resp. 1905 -1932.

The time before World War I was a time of optimism and farming was still a good way for life. Sweden had no war but those years and the years up to Word War II were an unsure time for both the individuals and for the nation. August had no debts for his

farm but people who had lent money could often not pay and lost the farm or the house because of deflation and unemployment. Sure it was not so easy to be the head of little countryside commune. But Josef August was a wise man. He took an active part in starting a local bank and a local electric power station, both of great importance for Mossebo at that time.

In older times the local courts had a broader role than nowadays. Most in the daily life was not so regulated by laws, rules and agreements. Therefore many conflicts between person were brought to court. Josef August was lay assessor in the local court's jury and a very important person to find the right decision from law and have knowledge about local structures of life and conditions. To get a position as a lay assessor was at August's time the highest position of confidence and you can see it on his gravestone (nämndeman in Swedish)

My telling above mentions mostly men. Alma, the wife of August, is told to be a wise woman. She was very interested in the garden, not so usual at her time. But most of her time was surely up to eight children and the work on the farm. But on the whole I am sure that she was one important part in the family's good reputation and being in the confidence of the surroundings.

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