



## THE HISTORY OF WALLBY

Wallby is an old manor, beautifully situated in the village of Skirö, often called the "Garden of Småland." The estate has alternately been known as Ballaby, Wallaby, Wahlby, and, for a long time now, Wallby. According to one story, in the late 17th century, the owner Mårten Brenner decided to rename the estate from the somewhat cumbersome "Ballaby" to "Wallby." To make it official, he hosted a large party on Fröjdabacke, the slope above the estate. A large barrel of beer was brought up to add to the festivities. However, after the beer ran out and the party ended, the guests sang, "The tap is out, and the barrel is dry, but the estate is still called Ballaby as before!" The name "Ballaby" continued to appear in documents as late as 1737.

Skirö, with its fertile soil and abundant fishing, has long attracted prominent estates like Wallby, alongside other manors. During Sweden's Great Power era in the 17th century, wealthy and influential families such as Bielke, de la Gardie, Horn, Posse, Sparre, Ulfsparre, Ulf sax, Gruys, Hierta, Roos, Liliehök, Brahe, and Banér owned estates in the area. By the 18th century, ownership shifted to officer families such as Lundman, Rothlieb, Nyman, Snoilsky, Lothigius, Fröberg, Oden crantz, Stålhammar, and Utterbom. However, estate ownership did not necessarily imply residency. From the 13th century until 1833, when Judge Johan Nyman permanently moved to Wallby, estate owners typically visited only temporarily. Permanent residents were more likely to be stewards, tenant farmers, blacksmiths, fishermen, and other workers who managed the day-to-day operations of the estate. Wallby has always been primarily a forested estate, with fertile lands and profitable woods. Historically, much of the land that is now covered with spruce trees was used as pasture and meadowland, with scattered oak groves until the 1880s. Remnants of this earlier landscape—stone walls and cairns—are still visible in the forest today. Over time, the spruce trees were planted in phases, transforming the landscape into the forest it is today.

During the late 19th century, under the ownership of General Gustaf (1870s-1915), significant expansions were made to the estate's arable land. Large boulders were blasted and hauled onto the ice of Skirösjön (the nearby lake) in the winter, where they sank, clearing the fields for farming. Many stones were also crushed and used to gravel the estate's roads. In the 1940s and 1950s, Per Bråkenhielm managed Wallby as a traditional farm, focusing on modern techniques such as crop rotation, fertilization, and soil analysis. Over the years, the estate shifted from manual labor to mechanization. Horses were replaced by tractors, and new machinery, like hay loaders, made the farming process more efficient.

One notable event during Mårten Brenner's ownership was an inspection of the estate on September 24, 1672. The inspection confirmed that Wallby met the standards required to retain its status as a manor, as manors were required to maintain buildings of a certain quality. Later, Cornet Johan Nyman, who owned Wallby from 1731 to 1781, undertook extensive renovations. One of his significant projects was constructing a large main building perpendicular to the current manor house. Remnants of this structure can still be seen today in a wall by the driveway, marked by a row of trees. This building was demolished in the 1840s under the ownership of Judge Johan Nyman Bråkenhielm, and the current manor house was built between 1848 and 1851.

Today, the Nyman family lives on the estate. The estate manages forestry, mostly spruce, but also some deciduous trees. The pastures are kept open with the help of sheep, cows, and horses. The fields produce hay, which becomes silage, i.e., food for the cows and horses. There is also a veterinary clinic on the estate, specializing in horses, along with courses for veterinarians. Additionally, there is a hotel and restaurant business, with many conferences and guests from all over the world, ending with traditional Christmas celebrations at the end of the year.