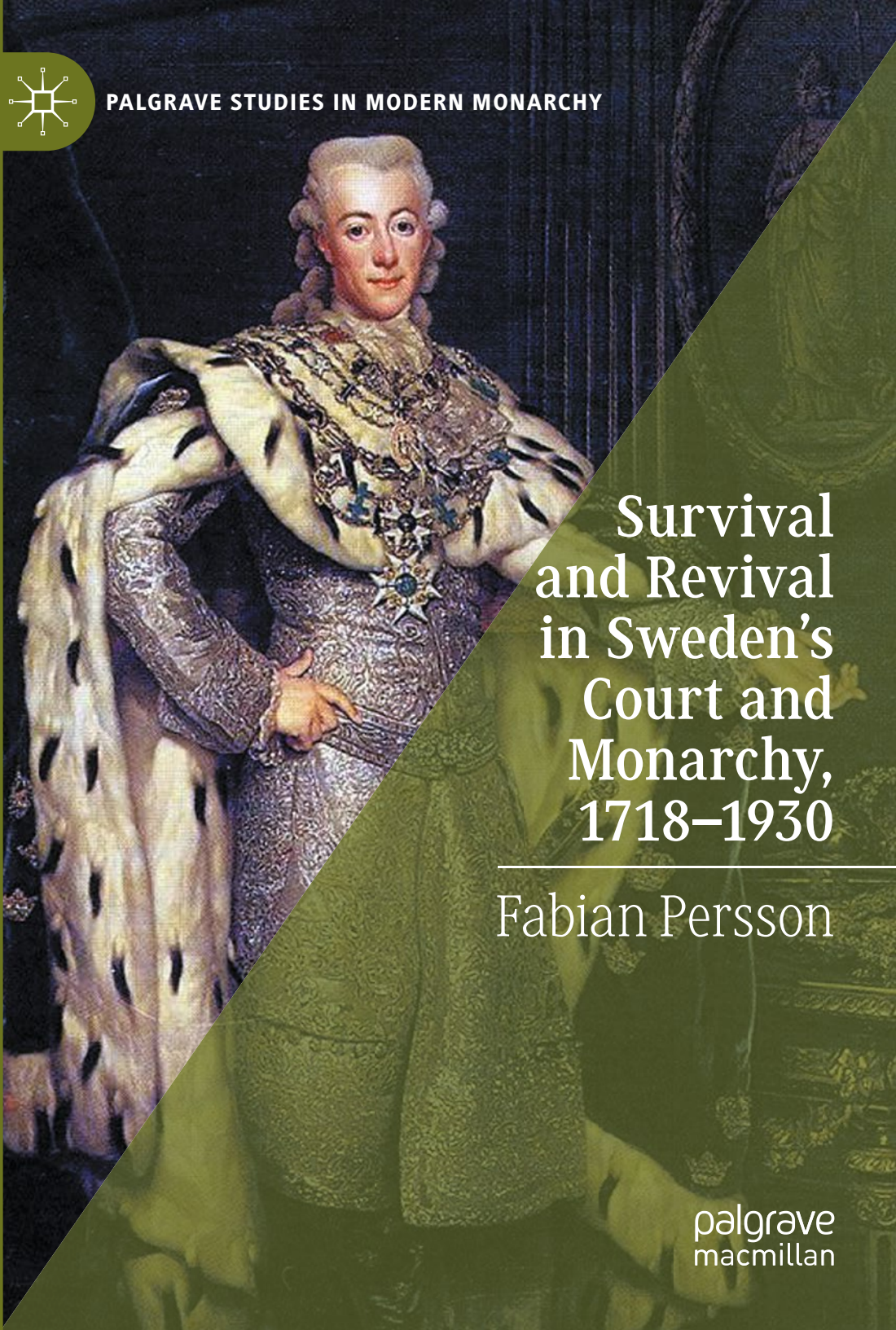




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# Survival and Revival in Sweden's Court and Monarchy, 1718–1930

Fabian Persson

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There are books which are your companions through life, comforting and sustaining, bringing joy and light. Then there are the unfinished books which clamour for attention and test your love to the limits. *Survival and Revival* has emerged from my copious notes, copies, and photographs to take on a life of its own, and with luck to become a less needy companion. Many people have been important to the research and writing of this book, and without them I would not be ready to launch *Survival and Revival*.

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Oxford, June 2020



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## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

*Erik Reinhold Adelswärd* (1778–1840). Courtier and diarist. Successful but still felt that he got the short end.

*Georg Adlersparre* (1760–1835). Officer and leading rebel in 1809.

*Lorentz Jacob Adlerstedt* (1699–1756). Witty courtier who was outwitted by Carl Gustaf Cederhielm. Humiliated by taunts of rancid butter from farms for which he was tenant.

*Adolf Frederick* (1710–71). King of Sweden 1751–71. Married to Queen Lovisa Ulrika. Unhappy with diminished royal power but lacked the skills to remedy the situation. Instead enjoyed turning wood and building the maison de plaisance China for his wife. Died of a stroke after a meal of lobster, caviar, sauerkraut, kippers, and champagne with a pudding of numerous servings of buns in hot milk.

*Samuel Åkerhielm* (1684–1768). Chief Marshal of the court from 1741 to 1747.

*Carl Gustaf Eickstedt d'Albedyhll* (1800–56). Chief Master of Ceremonies.

*Alcmène* (fl.1758). Dog of Crown Prince Gustaf.

*John James Appleton* (1792–1864). American Chargé d'affaires in Stockholm.

*Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt* (1757–1814). The great favourite of Gustaf III. Charming, playful, and entertaining with a reckless streak. Also referred to by enemies as The Elephant because his increasing bulk made that joke apposite for a holder of the Order of the Elephant.



**Badin** (ca.1747–1822). Of African descent and born in the West Indies. A present to the Queen when about ten in 1757. Serving the royal family for decades he became a trusted retainer.

**Johan Christopher Georg Barfod** (1753–1829). Scribbler who also worked as a police informer.

**Corfitz Beck-Friis** (1824–97). Courtier.

**Lars Benzelstierna** (1719–1800). Bishop and obsequious to a ridiculous degree. Duchess Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotte described how she asked about a tomb she admired: ‘If Your Royal Highness commands it is Count Brahe’s tomb, but if Your Royal Highness commands it is the tomb of the Posse family. It is as Your Royal Highness commands’.

**Johan Georg von Beutman** (fl.1751). Lieutenant Colonel and adventurous physician. Invented golden drops that appear to have been mainly opium.

**Nils Adam Bielke** (1724–92). Courtier and served Crown Prince Gustaf as his dearly loved ‘Becka’.

**Jacob Biörnstedt** (–1726). Wardrobe Clerk 1683–1691, then Furnishings Master 1692–1726, and ‘lived and died among old clothes, worn out tapestry, dust, and vermin’. Ennobled 1719.

**Benjamin Bloomfield, 1st Baron Bloomfield** (1768–1846). British Minister in Stockholm. Before that a rather hapless Secretary to George IV. Late in life embraced Methodism which may seem an overly severe punishment for previous missteps.

**Johan Bollman** (fl.1719). Kitchen Boy who served without salary. Presumably related to the Kitchen Boy Peter Bollman.

**Carl Borgenstierna** (1755–1816). Mother and grandfather served at court. Began as Page and then went on to other positions. Enthusiastic Freemason.

**François Claude Amour Bouillé** (1739–1800). French Marquis and General in the ancien régime. Given a nominal military rank in Sweden. Mentioned as an evil royalist in the Marseillaise.

**Magnus Brahe** (1790–1844). Passionately loyal favourite of Charles XIV John. Crucial in the distribution of patronage.

**Countess Ulrika Catharina Brahe née Koskull** (1759–1805). Striking beauty who bagged the first count in the Swedish aristocracy.

**Carl Braunjohan** (1680–1759). Courtier who excelled at tennis.

**Erland Broman** (1704–57). Favourite of Frederick I.

**Louis de Camps** (1767–1844). From Pau and childhood friend of Charles XIV John. ADC to Charles John.



*Carl von Cardell* (1764–1821). Ennobled artillery officer from Pomerania.

*Pehr Cederfelt* (1751–41). From a poor noble family and then Page. Married a Chamberer of the Duchess.

*Carl Gustaf Cederhielm* (1693–1740). Courtier and famous wit. Lived his last sixteen years in the debtor's prison Le Châtelet in Paris where he became a celebrity visited by Swedes passing by.

*Bror Cederström* (1754–1816). Favourite. Managed to survive the regime change in 1792. Called Little Bror because of his tiny stature and probably his small mind.

*Bror Cederström* (1780–1877). In 1788, he was given the 'survivance' of his father as Court Marshal. When he was twelve in 1793, he succeeded formally to the office of Court Marshal.

*Fredrik Cederström* (1731–74). Officer in the Guards.

*Charles XIII* (1748–1818). King of Sweden 1809–18. Married to Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta. Freemason.

*Charles XIV* (1763–1844). King of Sweden 1818–44. Married to Desirée. Rose from humble beginnings in French Pau to Napoleonic Marshal to Swedish King. Remarkably adaptable to his new dignity and with considerable charm.

*Charles XV* (1826–72). King of Sweden 1759–72. Married to Lovisa. Liked to strike poses in military uniform and to paint. In his short reign, royal power dissipated fast.

*Charles August* (1768–1810). Danish prince who was chosen as Swedish crown prince after the coup d'état in 1809. Died of a stroke in 1810.

*Charles Frederick of Holstein* (1700–39). Duke of Holstein, nephew of Queen Ulrika Eleonora, and raised at the Swedish court. Married the daughter of Tsar Peter the Great. The spectre of him succeeding to the crown hung over his resentful aunt.

*Christian IV of (Birkenfeld-) Zweibrücken* (1722–75). Duke of Pfalz-Zweibrücken 1740–75. Queen Ulrika Eleonora's favoured candidate for the Swedish throne and was given a Swedish governor to direct his education. He ruled his little German principality well and had an interest in the arts.

*Eleonora Clauson Kaas* (1778–1823). Lady of the Palace in Norway as the wife of a professor of surgery that would have been impossible in Sweden.

*Henrik Julius Coyet* (1773–1828). Page.

*Ernst Johan Creutz* (1675–1742). Courtier and later Royal Councillor.



*Gustaf Philip Creutz* (1731–85). Courtier, diplomat, and poet.

*Christina Cronhielm (née Rålamb)* (1748–1824). Daughter of the courtier Hans Gustaf Rålamb. As a poor widow she was appointed Lady of the Palace by the Queen Dowager which outraged the King.

*Carl Olof Cronstedt* (1756–1820). Secretary of State. Later surrendered the fortress Sveaborg to the Russians, thereby gaining a reputation as an arch traitor.

*Isac Cronström* (1661–1751). Most of his career was as a Dutch officer.

*Magnus Jacob Crusenstolpe* (1795–1865). Indomitable writer and hell raiser.

*Georg Johan De Besche* (1754–1818). Page and later Court Marshal. Great favourite of Gustaf III, he was renowned for his greed in peddling patronage.

*Carl De Geer* (1781–1861). Courtier and prominent politician.

*Charles De Geer* (1747–1805). Chamber Gentleman to Lovisa Ulrika. Later politician in opposition to Gustaf III.

*Magnus Julius De la Gardie* (166(9?)–1741). Chief Marshal and head of the court. Renowned for his aristocratic lifestyle which included being attended on by noble pages.

*Jacob Gustaf De la Gardie* (1768–1842). Courtier.

*Desirée* (1777–1860). Queen and Married to Charles XIV John. Daughter of a silk merchant in Marseilles. Always intended to return to her beloved Paris and never did. Increasingly nocturnal.

*Dunder, Ander Andersson* (1809–1906). Visited Stockholm as a nine-year-old boy at the time of the 1818 coronation. Later soldier.

*Madame d'Egmont* (1740–73). French aristocrat who kept a salon. Corresponded with Gustaf III.

*Gustaf Ehrenborg* (1824–83). Courtier and great admirer of Queen Josephine.

*Magnus Gabriel Ehrenstam* (1721–57). Vice Master of Ceremonies 1748–57. Heavily in debt which caused his credit worthiness to collapse.

*Gustaf Johan Ehrensvärd* (1746–83). Diarist and courtier.

*Claes Ekeblad* (1708–71). Chief Marshal and leading Hat politician.

*Claes Julius Ekeblad* (1742–1808). Diarist and courtier. Son of Claes Ekeblad.

*Cathinka Falbe* (1813–93). Norwegian Maid of Honour serving Queen Desirée together with her sister Christiana (Jana) Falbe.

*Christoffer Falkengrén* (1722–89). Officer in the navy and Councillor.



*Axel von Fersen* (1719–94). Leading Hat politician before the 1772 coup.

His family became a pre-eminent court family. Son of Hans von Fersen.

*Axel von Fersen* (1755–1810). Courtier with a dazzling career. One of the organisers of the failed attempt to free the French royal family in 1791. Lynched at the funeral of Charles August in 1810. Son of Axel von Fersen.

*Fabian von Fersen* (1762–1818). Courtier. Son of Axel von Fersen.

*Hans von Fersen* (1683–1736). Born in Reval and had a distinguished career.

*Lovisa von Fersen née Piper* (1777–1849). Chief Court Mistress.

*Sophie Fersen* (1757–1816). Married the courtier Adolf Ludvig Piper. Was a close friend of Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta at whose she also served for some time. Daughter of Axel von Fersen.

*Johan Fischerström* (1736–96). Writer angling for a job.

*Carl Fleetwood* (1859–92). Reluctant courtier and diarist.

*Claes Fleming* (1771–1831). Courtier. Favourite of Gustaf IV but very cautious.

*Magnus Flinck* (1758–1814). Law man and tutor to the page Werner von Schwerin. Made an excellent career and did not hesitate using his connections. Married into a landed estate.

*Louis Flichtet* (1772–). Under Stable Master. French and arrived on the coat tails of Charles XIV John.

*Samuel af Forselles* (1757–1814). Page and favourite of Gustaf III.

*Alphonse Toussaint Joseph André Marie Marseille de Fortia de Piles* (1758–1826) and *Pierre Marie de Boisgelin de Kerdu* (1758–1816). French noblemen and émigrés writing descriptions of their travels.

*Carl Franc* (1693–1740). Courtier. Married to Maid of Honour Josepha Pflugk.

*Carl Fredrik Fredenheim* (1748–1803). Master of Ceremonies and Chief Intendent. Caring for the King's art collection.

*Frederica* (1781–1826). Queen and married to Gustaf IV. Princess of Baden. Struggled to adapt to her role in Sweden, but after the 1809 coup displayed fortitude in exile.

*Frederick I* (1676–1751) King of Sweden, 1720–51. Married to Queen Ulrika Eleonora, he was a German Prince who never learned any Swedish and was later seen as lacking interest in government. In reality, he tried to strengthen royal power at the beginning of his reign and took an active part in government for many years until incapacitated by



- illness, when a dry stamp was used as his signature. His devotion to hunting and young women was never in doubt.
- Frederick Adolph* (1750–1803). Younger son of Adolf Frederick. A handsome cipher who easily fell in love.
- Count Carl Gustaf Frölich* (1637–1714). Royal Councillor.
- David Gustaf Frölich* (1757–1825). Court Master of the Stables and speaker of atrocious French.
- Ernest de Cadoine, Marquis de Gabriac* (1792–1865). French aristocrat and Page of Napoleon.
- Jakob Gadolin* (1719–1802). Bishop in Åbo.
- Niklas Peter von Gedda* (1675–1758). Diplomat and politician with wide ranging interests.
- Fredrik Gram* (1735–90). Circuit Judge in the southern province of Scania.
- Claes Wilhelm Grönbagen* (1732–77). Courtier and politician.
- Gustaf III* (1746–92). King of Sweden 1771–92. Married to Sophia Magdalena. Increased royal power through coups in 1772 and 1789. Eloquent and imaginative, but not always realistic.
- Gustaf IV* (1778–1837). King of Sweden 1792–1809. Unlike his father, Gustaf III not a talented politician. Died in exile in Switzerland.
- Gustaf V* (1858–1950). King of Sweden 1907–50. Married to Victoria. Liked silver, embroidery, moose hunt, and lawn tennis and ceased most of his political interventions after 1917.
- Anton Gylденstolpe* (1801–57). Conservative courtier.
- Nils Philip Gylденstolpe* (1734–1810). Smooth long-time courtier who was fond of the bottle.
- Carl Gyllenborg* (1679–1746). Founder of the Hat party.
- Carl Gyllenstierna* (1649–1723). Lifelong courtier and in the 1720s, a relic of the old days at court.
- Carl Adolf Gyllenstierna* (1699–1733). The Queen’s second cousin and Chamber Gentleman. Stabbed to death.
- Carl Gustaf Güntherfelt* (1672–1738). Court Master of the Stables. Hands shot off by a cannon ball and had mechanic hands made in Paris. A long time in Russian captivity.
- Henrik Häckel* (fl.1707–30s). Captain and part of introducing stricter limits to access to the royals in the 1730s.
- Adolf Ludvig Hamilton* (1747–1802). Courtier who wrote malicious anecdotes on the court of Gustaf III.



*Countess Johanna Maria Hamilton née af Petersen* (1760–1838). Lady of the Palace. Born in the new mercantile nobility and maltreated by the Queen.

*John Hugo Hamilton* (1752–1805). Long-time courtier serving Duchess Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta. Raised in Geneva and France and extremely Francophile.

*Carl Hårleman* (1700–53). Courtier and architect. Married the Queen's favourite Henrika von Liewen.

*Leonhard von Hauswolff* (1746–1826). A sharp observer and a master of etiquette.

*Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta* (1759–1818). Married Duke Charles, eventually Charles XIII, and thus Queen of Sweden. Wrote a valuable diary.

*Fredrik Vilhelm von Hessenstein* (1735–1808). Son of Frederick I and Hedvig Taube. Eventually made Prince by Gustaf III.

*Gustaf Adolf Hjärne* (1715–1805). Royal Councillor. Suffered from order envy.

*Anders Johan von Höpken* (1712–89). Father of Eleonore and Anders Johan. Hat politician of many talents and much admired.

*Anders Johan von Höpken* (1765–1826). Unlike his many relatives, his career was lacklustre and he left service as a mere Ensign.

*Eleonore von Höpken* (1755–93). Married the wealthy magnate Charles De Geer.

*Count Adam Horn* (1717–78). Chief Marshal and chief of the court. Son of Arvid Horn. Managed to lose his fortune.

*Baroness Anna Margareta Horn née Plomgren* (1734–82). Daughter of wealthy merchant Plomgren. Eloped with Baron Fredrik Horn who had a keen eye for her inheritance.

*Countess Anna Catharina Horn née Meijerfeldt* (1722–79). Married to Adam Horn and daughter to Johan August Meijerfeldt. Impressed through grand courtly manners and jewellery. Was mentally unstable for many years.

*Arvid Horn* (1664–1742). Dominant politician in Sweden from 1720 to 1738. His adherents were eventually called the Cap party.

*Fredrik Horn* (1725–96). Served in the military part of the court for many years.

*Count Gustaf Adolf Horn* (1754–1816). Colonel without a decoration. Deeply frustrated.



*Josephine* (1807–76). Queen of Sweden and daughter of Napoleon's stepson Eugène de Beauharnais. Married to Oscar I. Admired both for beauty and for her adherence to duty.

*Johann Friedrich Friedolin von Kagenack* (1741–1800). Austrian minister in Sweden embroiled in the conflict about hand kissing. Uncle to Metternich.

*Pebr Kalling* (1700–95). Royal Councillor and Cap politician. Got entangled in problems with his Russian chivalric order.

*Samuel Klingenstierna* (1698–1765). Tutor of the Crown Prince Gustaf. His lackey hoped to get on in life.

*Ernst Traugott von Kortum* (1742–1811). Polish-German masonic mystic as well as Austrian official and anti-Semitic scribbler. Presented at court in 1770, but complained about not being invited to meals.

*Gustaf Koskull* (1782–1842). Flourished as an ADC to Charles XIV and brother to Mariana Koskull.

*Mariana Koskull* (1785–1841). Maid of Honour and later Lady of Honour. Influential mistress of Charles XIII and Charles XIV. When Queen Desirée finally came to Sweden, she retired from court to the house she had been given at the royal deer park of Djurgården.

*Axel Johan Kurck* (1719–73). Chamber Gentleman.

*Knut Kurck* (1761–1831). Son of Axel Johan Kurck. In opposition to the King but later courtier.

*Elise La Flotte* (–1815). Frenchwoman serving Crown Princess Desirée. Generally disliked in Sweden.

*Magnus Lagerberg* (1844–1920). Deeply royalist courtier. Had an insatiable hunger for chivalric orders without doing much to deserve them.

*Gustaf Lagerbielke* (1777–37). Courtier and later Minister. Nursed his grievances against Gustaf IV and Queen Frederica.

*Jean-Baptiste Landé* (–1748). Arranged theatre and ballets. After a stint in Dresden, he was active in Sweden 1721–28. Later, he worked at the Russian court which included giving lessons to the future Catherine the Great. A famous trick in Stockholm was Landé jumping from one of the boxes down to the scene.

*Johanna von Lantingshausen née von Stockenström* (1754–1809). Born into the new mercantile nobility. Married into older aristocracy. Close friend of Hedvig Elisabeth Charlotta and enemy of Gustaf III.

*Axel Gabriel Leijonhufvud* (1717–89). Courtier and later County Governor.

*Carl August Leijonhufvud* (1760–1841). Page in the 1770s.



- Adolf Lewenhaupt* (1745–91). Chief Court Master of the Stables.
- Casimir Lewenhaupt* (1827–1905). Got in troubles when he declined an order.
- Gustaf Lewenhaupt* (1780–1844). Chief Court Master of the Stables after his father, 1791.
- Carolina Lewenhaupt* (1754–1826). Witty, cultured, and utterly aristocratic Chief Court Mistress. At her death, a courtier said she for the last time displayed her tact by making room for someone the royal family preferred in her place.
- Carl Gustaf Liewen* (1722–70). From a prominent court family. Long suffering Cavalier in attendance on the young Prince Charles. Later County Governor.
- Johan Liljencrantz* (1730–1815). Born a commoner but ennobled and made a baron. Capable Minister of Finance and ridiculed as an upstart.
- Carl Wilhelm Lilliecrona* (1794–1856). Aristocratic hack.
- Lillia* (fl.1723). Life Guard in trouble 1723.
- Joakim Vilhelm Lilliestråle* (1721–1807). Ennobled climber.
- Jacob Lindblom* (1746–1819). Ruthless manager of patronage and contacts. Swedish Archbishop.
- Sara Andrée'tta Linderstedt née Adlerberg* (1741–96). Made a faux pax at court in 1765.
- Axel Lindhielm* (1683–1758). Favourite of Frederick I. Go-between for the ailing old King and the Council.
- Carl Gustaf Löwenhielm* (1701–68). Persuaded the King to give him an office in 1729 and rose to become Councillor. A member of the Hat party but later switched to the Caps.
- Lovisa* (1828–71). Queen of Sweden and Dutch Princess. Married to the habitual philanderer Charles XV which was not easy for this shy, socially awkward woman.
- Lovisa Ulrika* (1720–82). Queen and married Adolf Frederick. Prussian Princess and sister to Frederick the Great. Dazzling but more admired than liked. She had both a strong sense of duty and a rather vicious streak.
- Johan August Meijerfelt* (1664–1749). General and Councillor with estates in Swedish Pomerania.
- Johan August Meijerfeldt* (1725–1800). Field Marshal. Son of Johan August Meijerfeldt.
- Jacob Moell* (1714–64). Valet of Crown Prince Gustaf until 1760. Son of a curate and married a noblewoman. Persecuted by his young master. Died insane.



*Count Nicolas Alexis Gabriel Montrichard* (1759–). French émigré serving at the Swedish court.

*Adolf Fredrik Munck* (1749–1831). Highly favoured courtier who helped Gustaf III and Sophia Magdalena consummate their marriage. Later in disgrace and exile for counterfeiting currency. A bit of a chancer.

*Baron Münster* (fl.1770s). Geheimerat in Cologne and acted for the impoverished last member of the Wasaborg family (illegitimate cadet branch of the Vasa dynasty). Then tried to become a courtier, but had to escape Stockholm because of mounting debts.

*Fredrik von Nackreij* (1806–59). Groom of the Chamber and an embarrassment as a tobacconist.

*Olof von Nackreij* (1728–83). Career-minded love rat. Managed to become County Governor.

*Johan Otto Nauckhoff* (1788–1849). Courtier who later wrote unflattering memoirs of his time serving Charles XIV John.

*Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld* (1832–1901). Explorer.

*Ulrik Nordenskiöld* (1750–1810). Court Gentleman.

*Karl Friedrich Ludwig von Nostitz-Rieneck* (1752–). Prussian Minister in Sweden.

*Paul Athanase Fouché, Duc d'Otrante* (1801–86). Son of Napoleon's Minister of Police, Fouché. Chamber Gentleman at the Swedish court.

*Oscar I* (1799–1859). King of Sweden 1844–59. Married to Josephine. Conscientious but awkward and lacking his father Charles XIV John's easy manner and charm. Changed from liberal to conservative.

*Oscar II* (1829–1907). King of Sweden 1844–59. Son of Oscar I. Married to Sophia. Saw power slip through his fingers and had to accept reality. Great, though somewhat pompous, speaker and could act the monarch to perfection in public.

*Johan Gabriel Oxenstierna* (1750–1818). Long-time courtier and poet in constant need of money. Wrote endless lyrical poetry as well as witty short epigrams and diaries.

*Carl Otto Palmstierna* (1790–1878). Arch conservative courtier.

*Nils Fredrik Palmstierna* (1788–1865). Arch conservative courtier.

*Lorens Pasch the younger* (1733–1805). Painter.

*Carl Adrian Peyron* (1757–84). Favourite of Gustaf III. Killed in a duel in Paris.

*Charles Adolph Peyron* (1781–1807). At the age of three made Court Gentleman at his father's death but never served. Lived with English



- relatives and died as a Captain of the East India Company in the Bengal Cavalry in 1807.
- Countess Elisabeth Charlotta Piper née Ruuth* (1787–1860). Chief Court Mistress for Crown Princess Josephine.
- Constans af Pontin* (1819–52). Chamber Gentleman outranking his professors as a student.
- Arvid Posse* (1792–1850). Head of the court and Prime Minister 1840 and 1846–48.
- Claes Fredrik Posse* (1785–1839). Courtier and Court Marshal for Crown Prince Oscar. Mentally fragile.
- Nils Posse* (1739–1818). Veteran courtier and Chief Chamber Gentleman.
- Count Georg Potocki* (fl.1790s). Polish diplomat to Stockholm. Stayed there after the end of Poland in 1795.
- Claes Rålamb* (1705–65). Chamber Gentleman banned from court after being found in Hedvig Taube's chamber.
- Hans Gustaf Rålamb* (1716–90). Veteran courtier involved in royalist plots as well as author of what has been called the first more realist Swedish novel.
- Ulrika Eleonora Rålamb (née Düben)* (1769–1847). Maid of Honour. Married Claes Rålamb, a veteran courtier of a happy disposition but like Winnie the Pooh of limited brain. Countess Rålamb herself, however, had both brains and ambition.
- Carl Gustaf Rehnschiöld* (1651–1722). Field Marshal. In Russian captivity for a decade.
- Magnus Christian Retzius* (1795–1871). Physician.
- Carl Fredrik Reuterhielm* (1752–1830). Courtier.
- Axel Reuterholm* (1714–63). Young diarist and later courtier.
- Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm* (1756–1813). Courtier tickled by Gustaf III and later an enemy of the same. Very influential when his friend Duke Charles was regent.
- Vilhelmina Ribbing* (1728–65). Maid of Honour. Married to Anders Johan Höpken.
- Fredrik Ridderstolpe* (1730–1816). Courtier with expertise in etiquette.
- Johann Helmich Roman* (1694–1764). The father of Swedish music and member of the Court Chapel.
- Lars von Rökk* (1778–1867). Page and later Court Gentleman. Devoted himself to arts and antiquities.
- Count Mathias Rosenblad* (1758–1847). Loyal servant of kings and the equivalent of Prime Minister from 1829 to 1840. Nepotistic tendencies.



*Nils von Rosenstein* (1752–1824). Tutor to Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and Member of the Swedish Academy.

*Victor Rydberg* (1828–95). Writer.

*Johan Gabriel Sack* (1697–1751). Courtier and brother-in-law of Carl Gustaf Tessin.

*Princess Maria Teresa von Salm-Reifferscheid* (1757–1830). Married to Johann Friedrich Count von Kagenack.

*Joachim-Otto Schack-Rathlou* (1728–1800). Danish diplomat in Stockholm.

*Carl Fredrik Scheffer* (1715–86). Governor with the responsibility of the education of Crown Prince Gustaf.

*David Schinkel* (1743–1807). Successful merchant given the Order of the Vasa.

*Elis Schröderheim* (1747–95). Son to a bishop and ennobled. Witty and imaginative Secretary of State under Gustaf III. Known for corruption and simony.

*Hans Niclas Schwan* (1764–1829). Merchant and Director of the Swedish East India Company. The first commoner appointed to be a royal minister in 1828.

*Werner von Schwerin* (1772–1840). His good looks as Page were much admired and got him in favour with Gustaf Adolf Reuterholm.

*Anders Fredrik Skjöldebrand* (1757–1834). Author of funny but not completely reliable memoirs. Upstart and knew it.

*Sophia* (1836–1913). Queen of Sweden married to Oscar II. Suffered from health problems and low church. Efficient organiser.

*Sophia Magdalena* (1746–1813). Married to Gustaf III. Stately. One of many unsuited and unhappy royal marriages.

*Sophia Albertina* (1753–29). Swedish Princess daughter of Adolf Frederick and Lovisa Ulrika.

*Carl Gustaf Sparre* (1688–1741). Courtier who acted with Captain Häckel to bar people of lower rank from the King's table in 1733.

*Fredrik Sparre* (1731–1803). Nephew and protégé of Tessin. Thin-skinned, petty, and with little understanding of children, he was not well suited to look after either the future Gustaf III as a boy or later his son the future Gustaf IV. Wrote detailed diaries. Contemporaries noted his unusually big head and its lack of any commensurate intellectual abilities.

*Gabriel Sparre* (1726–1804). County Governor.

*Henrik Georg Sparre* (1756–1816). Captain of the Guards and favoured by Gustaf III. Had to leave court when suspected of a theft.



*Ulrika Sperling* (1735–1814). Maid of Honour.

*Jakob Magnus Sprengtporten* (1721–86). Born in Russian captivity. One of the main conspirators behind the royalist 1772 coup. Quick to see slights everywhere. Not an easy man.

*Wolter Reinhold Stackelberg* (1705–1801). Long-lived General.

*Arvid Stenbock* (1738–82). Courtier and confidant of Gustaf III. A free mason and a member of all kinds of occult and mystic societies.

*Gustaf Stenbock* (1764–1833). Court Master of the Stables to Princess Sophia Albertina. Involved in some skulduggery. Son of Arvid Stenbock.

*Adolf Ludvig Stierneld* (1755–1835). Chief Chamber Gentleman to Queen Dowager Sophia Magdalena. Fierce opponent of Gustaf III. Enthusiast of publishing historical documents and forged some himself.

*Countess Christina Charlotta Stierneld* (née Gyldenstolpe) (1766–1825). Chief Court Mistress.

*Jeanna Stockenström* *see* *Lantingshausen*.

*Per Adam Stromberg* (1751–1838). Page and later Master of the Stables. Son of Ulrik Alexander Stromberg.

*Ulrik Alexander Stromberg* (1691–1767). Chamber Gentleman with limited means but court connections.

*Countess Ulrika Catharina Stromberg née Lewenhaupt* (1710–77). Court Mistress.

*Countess Marcelle Tascher de la Pagerie née Clary* (1792–1866). In 1823 appointed Court Mistress by her aunt Queen Desirée. Later returned to France.

*Edvard Didrik Taube* (1681–1751). Admiral and Royal Councillor. Father of Hedvig Taube.

*Evert Taube* (1737–99). Courtier and favourite.

*Gustaf Adam Taube* (1673–1732). Field Marshal and Royal Councillor. Supporter of Frederick I and father of Hans Taube.

*Hans Taube* (1698–1766). Life-long courtier.

*Hedvig Taube* (1714–44). Maid of Honour and mistress of Frederick I.

*Countess Vilhelmina Taube née Pollett* (1779–1857). Lady of the Palace.

*Johan Henrik Tawast* (1763–1841). Successful courtier and military officer.

*Esaias Tegnér* (1782–1846). Poet, bishop, and supplicant. Mentally unstable at the end.

*Carl Gustaf Tessin* (1695–1770). Son of Nicodemus Tessin and a product of the court since childhood. The beloved *Tess* of the future Gustaf



- III whose education he directed. Brilliant impresario of court entertainments. Dramatic break with Queen Lovisa Ulrika.
- Nicodemus Tessin* (1654–1728). Distinguished architect and courtier. Became Chief Marshal and head of the court.
- Johan Wilhelm Thomson* (fl.1720s). Rank conscious Life Guard.
- Sir Edward Thornton* (1766–1852). British Minister Plenipotentiary to the court of Stockholm with lacking dress sense.
- Johan Christoffer Toll* (1743–1817). Participated in the royalist coup d'état 1772 and remained a political player ever after. Shrewd, hard-nosed and with a sardonic wit.
- Johan Gustaf Uggla* (1734–98). Courtier, favourite, and eventually County Governor.
- Samuel af Ugglas* (1750–1812). Ennobled and a prominent official and climber.
- Johan Fredrik Ulfspärre* (1723–1802). Vice corporal of the Life Guards.
- Ulrika Eleonora* (1688–1741). Swedish Queen Regnant 1718–20 and Queen Consort 1720–41. Long-suffering wife of Frederick I. Combined an earnest sense of duty with scant regard for the new restrictions on royal power. Emotionally dependent on her favourite Emerentia von Düben who had served her since childhood.
- Jacob Uttervall* (fl.1750s and 1760s). Lackey serving Crown Prince Gustaf.
- Baron Ferdinand Wedel-Jarlsberg* (1781–1857). Court Marshal of the Norwegian court.
- Countess Karen Wedel-Jarlsberg née Anker* (1789–1849). Married to Count Herman Wedel-Jarlsberg. Chief Court Mistress at the Norwegian court.
- Victoria* (1862–1930). Queen of Sweden. Married to Gustaf V. Princess of Baden. Impressive. Strong convictions.
- Christian Sigismund Wiebel* (1682–1749). Master of the Stables and favourite of Frederick I.
- Valentin Wilcke* (fl.1730s). Chamber Lackey of Frederick I. Too handsome.
- Carl Adam Wrangel* (1748–1829). Courtier later fondly remembering Adolf Frederick and Lovisa Ulrika.
- Erik Wrangel* (1721–60). Courtier. Lived in exile after the failed royal plot of 1756.
- Margareta Lovisa Wrangel* (1763–87). One of Prince Frederick Adolf's many romantic passions.
- Fabian Wrede* (1760–1824). Courtier with a glittering career.





## CHAPTER 1

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# Resilient European Courts: An Introduction

In 1791, two French travellers in Sweden, Fortia de Piles and Boisgelin, marvelled at finding themselves in what seemed to be the Versailles of the North—‘the etiquette of this court much resembles that of the court of Versailles formerly, and in many things is absolutely the same’.<sup>1</sup> What they saw was a ceremonial court, and at its centre an almost absolutist monarch. This was unlike both Britain, a largely parliamentary country, and the new France, which was in the grip of revolution. Sweden was different. It was managing to retain the trappings of an *ancien régime* court without succumbing to violent revolution.

Most European kingdoms, including Sweden, went through various degrees of absolutism and a range of constitutional models before finally arriving at democracy in the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Historians have found it easy to fall back on two archetypal monarchies as the epitomes of this process—the French and the British. The French monarchy, a strongly absolutist monarchy that rapidly imploded in 1789, failed to make a smooth transition from one form of government to another, and suffered repeated and bloody political upheavals until 1871. The British monarchy endured, but was obliged to accept the loss of some of its powers and prerogatives in the century that started in the 1680s.

<sup>1</sup>Fortia de Piles (1809, 393).



The Swedish model of a resilient European court was tested by several political upheavals, but it managed the transitions more smoothly. Royal authority persisted far longer than in Britain, and when the upheavals came, they were managed far more successfully than in France. A number of European monarchies also fit the pattern of this third model, but Britain and France have been much more influential as ways of interpreting monarchy on the verge of the modern age. In reality, it was not so much Swedish as pan-European, as varieties of the model were to be found in many German states, Denmark, and Russia. At the heart of this model of resilient European courts was a symbiosis of monarchy and nobility. The court provided numerous offices for nobles as well as a space where royalty and nobility could meet. This created not only strong bonds and loyalty between nobility and monarchy, but also a shared mental universe.

Only after the nobility lost much of its power through societal shifts in the nineteenth century were court and monarchy forced to realign. In Sweden, this realignment was remarkably fast from the 1860s onwards. A constitutional monarchy took shape for which holding speeches at jubilees and academic conferences, cutting ribbons to open railways, and taking a keen interest in sporting events replaced the wielding of hard power with its traditional magnificent courtly framework. The refashioned monarchy meant the eventual acceptance of cooperation with the social democrats and liberals in 1917 was easier. The consensus in 1917, borne of necessity rather than choice, in all likelihood helped to preserve the monarchy as an institution. Socialists and liberals in many European principalities were implacably opposed to monarchy, but in Sweden, a *modus vivendi* was found.

This was not a given in a European context where numerous monarchies collapsed at the end of the Great War and the Second World War. Sweden too, over the course of two centuries, had gone through a series of fundamental political transitions. A coup in 1719 abolished royal absolutism; another coup in 1772 abolished parliamentary rule; a coup in 1789 reintroduced absolutism; a coup in 1809 abolished absolutism and introduced a constitutional monarchy with power shared between king and Diet; a change in the parliamentary system came in 1866; and a last rumblings of royal power in 1914 ended with the acceptance of full parliamentary rule in 1917: a long list to which can be added a messy attempted coup in 1756 and several minor forays into reform over the years. Unlike France, however, and despite the upheavals, Sweden managed all these transitions without prolonged violent crises, and unlike Britain, the



Swedish monarchy retained much of its authority until the 1860s and some royal prerogatives as late as the 1910s.

### MONARCH AND ARISTOCRACY IN SYMBIOSIS

The royal court was a key factor in Sweden's successful management of these repeated transitions. The court was an institution as old as the monarchy itself, and even in its heyday in the eighteenth century was dismissed as old-fashioned and sclerotic, not to mention contentious. Yet the truth was that the Swedish court was crucial in managing successive political transitions and preserving royal power. To achieve this, the court had to be flexible and use the politics of familiarity to create a context for both the monarch and the political elite. And the personal nature of the court meant that it provided an unsurpassed forum for aristocratic life. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the court served as a joint venture for monarch and nobility—to be denied the chance to be at court was to be 'buried alive' for many members of the aristocracy.

This character of a joint venture between monarchy and nobility does not mean they shared equal influence over the court. Clearly, the court was primarily run on the orders of the royal family, but in order to function well in Sweden, the court needed the broad support and participation of the nobility. As in Denmark and Prussia, the early modern Swedish monarchy was a centralized government with very limited resources, while the vast majority of the nobility were comparatively poor and dependent on government service. Unlike France, members of newly ennobled families had access to the court; unlike the Electorate of Hanover, most courtiers came from the indigenous nobility. For noble families, attending court could mean rewards in the form of offices, but also enhanced socio-political status. From 1718, court office could normally be combined with other military or civilian posts, and thus did not hamper a career pursued on several fronts. In some ways, the monarchy and nobility were bound together by their mutual weakness, with the court as their medium.

Even if the Swedish monarchy and nobility existed in symbiosis, the framework was not static, as the many coups suggest. Each coup was an attempt to readjust the political set-up of court society on the part of members of that society, all of whom subscribed to similar basic values and attitudes. In the fifty years after 1718, formal power drained away from the monarchy to the nobility, but at the same time, the monarchy was rebuilding its soft power through the court, until the successful coup in



1772 ushered in almost a century of strong royal authority. It was only after the Swedish nobility lost their formal social and political power in the 1860s that the monarchy dissolved its partnership with them and changed rapidly into an increasingly outward-looking constitutional monarchy. The court now began to refocus on a wider public, as well as including new elites in court functions. The court provided a framework made up of charitable, sporting, and other public events, designed to emphasize the bond not between monarch and nobility, but between monarch and people, while simultaneously retaining many traditional aspects of court life in the shape of ceremony.

The Swedish court, then, was a key element in upholding royal power and managing the many transitions. The flexibility of court recruitment and court life was integral to this success: its culture offered not just potential influence, but a lifestyle that the aristocracy considered appropriate. That was one aspect of the court's nature as a personal institution, very different on paper from Sweden's otherwise notably bureaucratic administration. It was at court that the politics of familiarity between ruler and elite, and between members of the elite, flourished until the mid-nineteenth century—irrespective of the succession of coups, all of which were led by the aristocracy. At the same time, the Swedish court was more magnificent and retained far more of its older ceremonial features than did many other European courts.

### THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ROYAL SERVICE

Since the 1970s, there has been a shift in the scholarly perception of royal courts. Today, courts can be the subject of study, rather than mere background in biographies of royalty or studies of political history. Particular parts of some courts were studied by art historians, literary historians, historians of science, and others, but as a whole, as an institution, courts were long overlooked. A few isolated historians did take an interest and thought courts per se as worthy of study. One such very early example was Joachim Lampe in his study of nobility and the Electoral court of Hanover.<sup>2</sup> Lampe died before the completion of his thesis, and sadly, his promising approach was not carried further. Gerald Aylmer did a de facto study of the English court as an institution in *The King's Servants*, a study of the civil service under Charles I, though it grew from the older tradition of

<sup>2</sup> Lampe (1963).