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Handwriting example 14

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Handwriting Example XIV

Husgerädsaker			
1. Säng	25,00	1. Klädd soffla	20,00
			45,00
1. Komod	3,00	1 d: mindre Söndrig	1,00
			4,00
1. Skänk gammal	5,00	1. Rund bord	3,00
			8,00
1. fjällbord	3,00	1 skänk gammal & söndrig	1,00
			4,00
2 Klädskaft	12,00	4. Karmstolar	2,00
			14,00
1. Soikenskrin	3,00	1. Toiletspegel	1,00
			4,00
1. söndrig väggspiegel	0,50	9 st tallar med samans	3 50
			3 50
1. Väggar med foder	10,00	1. Kåftöl med tillbehör	20,00
			30,00
1. Coffert	1,00	1. Skrubbetöl med skrubblor	1,75
			2 75
1. Spinnstol	1. Härfvel	1. Nystöf	
			2,00
1. Lå	1,00	1. Låstickerstige	0,50
		1. Spau	0,25
			1 75
2. Rothorger	0,75	Caffe-garn	1,00
			1 75
			110 75

This document is part of the estate inventory (*bouppteckning*) made after the death of the bricklayer Carl Gustaf Sandberg, who died in 1878 in Oppboga, Fellingsbro parish in Västmanland. The inventory was recorded in the court records of the Fellingsbro *Häradsrätt* at the Winter Meeting (*Vintertinget*) 1879 as #1.

The most important part of an estate inventory is usually the first page, where the family of the deceased person is listed: wife, children of the present marriage, children of former marriages, etc. Then comes a listing of all the assets in the estate: real estate, monies, gold, silver, plate, pewter, furniture, and household goods. Next comes tools, cattle (cows are often named! i.e., *Majros*, *Gullstjärna*), and at the end debts and money owing.

The listing of all these household items can give a vivid picture of the home of the ancestor, when you see for instance that he had 48 pairs of linen sheets, which indicates a rich

farmer. Or maybe the houses on the farm were in bad shape and mostly destroyed by dry rot, which indicates a less wealthy person.

In a richer family you may find the furniture described room by room, and you may imagine what it looked like, with paintings, wall-hangings, and curtains also listed and the colors mentioned.

The list of people whom the deceased owed money can also give information on that person's connections, like if it was mostly relatives or neighbors. Once a merchant of Malmö, who died in the early 1600s, had a very long list of people that he owed money attached to his estate inventory. A researcher plotted the places these people lived on a map, and the results showed that this merchant had connections not only in Skåne, but also in northern Germany and Småland, places far away in his time.

Another time a man, also in Skåne, died in the 1770s, and his moth-

er was listed as having borrowed money from him. This told the researcher that his mother was still alive then, and also where she lived at that time, knowledge that is not always easy to find, when there are no *husförhörslängder* (clerical surveys).

The estate inventories exist in the big cities already in the early 1600s, but became mandatory in the law of 1734. They were then necessary, as 1/8 percent of the assets of the estate was to be given to the parish poor, and to be able to calculate that, everything had to be inventoried. The *bouppteckningar* are kept in the archives of the *Häradsrätt* (legal district court) and have been microfilmed up to around 1835. There are usually modern indexes, also microfilmed, and easy to work with. But to transcribe the original estate inventory can be a challenge, as the handwriting might be bad, but it is always rewarding, because of the information found.