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## A Handwriting Example

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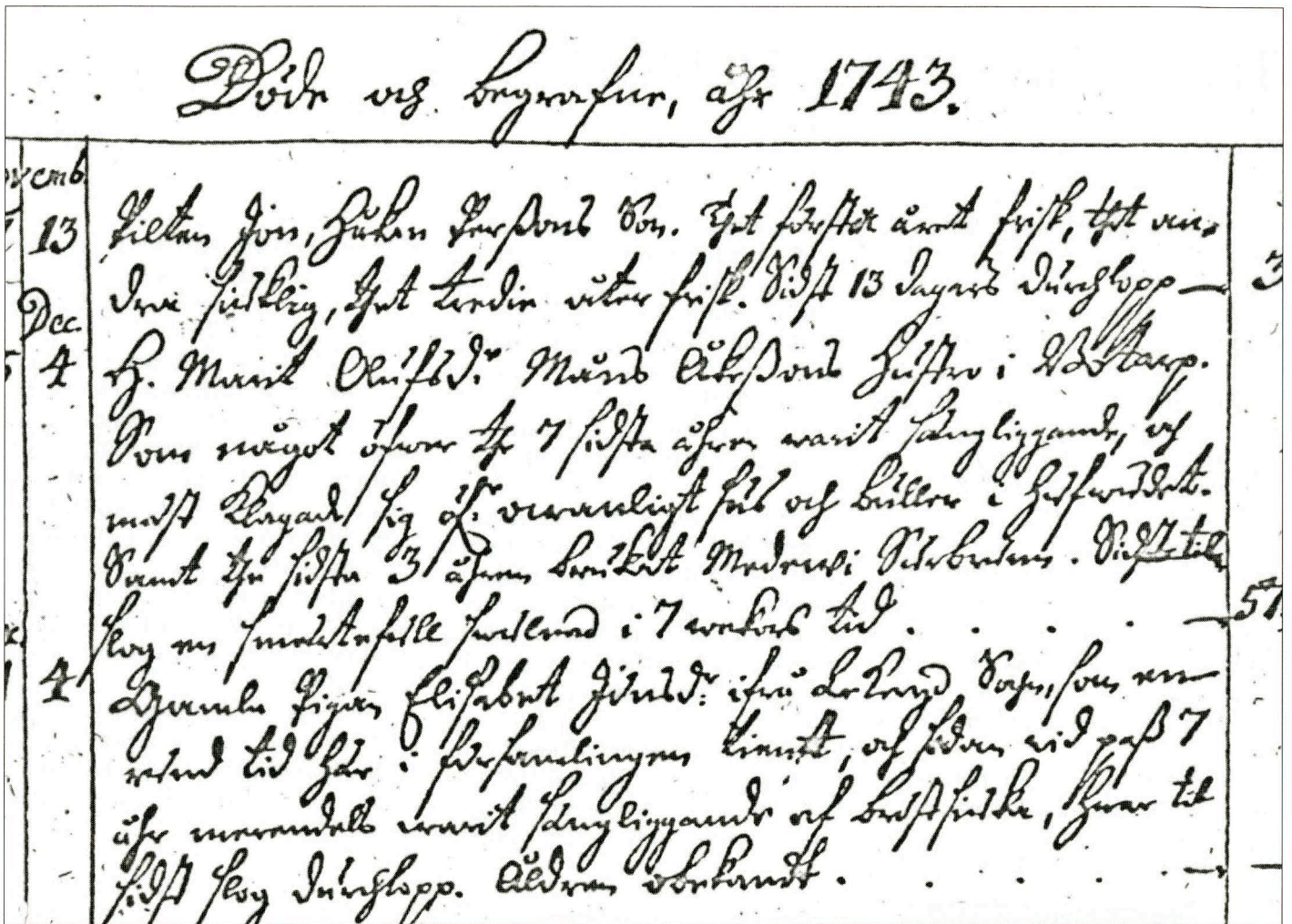
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# A Handwriting Example



This half page is from the Death records of *Skärstad* parish in Småland, north of the city of Jönköping.

It shows how lucky you can be and find records that tells a little more than just that somebody died.

Now get an ordinary big notebook and start reading and writing as well as you go. If a letter looks like nothing, just leave it, but also leave an open space so you can add it when you have figured out the whole word.

In a *Death record* you can expect to find the name of the person who died, his or her marital status, the place where he or she lived and how old he or she was. You may also find the cause of death and how long the deceased had been ill. As the medi-

cal knowledge was very limited in the old days, the causes of death are mostly guesses, unless there was an accident, or something very obvious, like a death in childbirth.

This page has been cropped in the left-hand margin, so the date you see is the burial date. The actual date of death should be further left.

In the death records for *Västerås stift* (diocese), which covers the provinces of Dalarna and Västmanland, it often happens that the death records can be very long and tell several details about a person's life. In those texts, called *Personalier* (sometimes kept in separate books) you may find names of parents, details about education and service

on other farms, marriage and number of children, and finally what hymns the deceased preferred and the last words. Often this text can be very stereotypic, and very seldom mentions any bad things about the deceased, like having been a drunkard or a scolding woman.

You can find a transcription and translation of this text on page 23.