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# What happened in Sweden in the 1600s?

BY ELISABETH THORSELL

- **1604** Duke Charles, youngest son of King Gustaf I (Gustaf Wasa), is crowned King of Sweden with the name *Karl IX*.
- **1611** war with Denmark, Poland, and Russia. King Karl IX dies, and is succeeded by his son *Gustaf II Adolf* (*Gustavus Adolphus*).
- **1613** Peace treaty of Knäred, where Sweden did not lose any land, but had to pay a huge ransom to get back the fortress of Älvsborg, near present Göteborg (*2<sup>nd</sup> Älvsborg's lösen*), which caused one of the first listings of the Swedish population, as everyone had to contribute.
- **1622** Bishop Johannes Rudbeckius of Västerås started the first Birth records in Sweden.
- **1624** King Gustaf II Adolf donated 300 farms to reconstruct Uppsala University.
- **1630** Sweden enters the Thirty Years' War on the Protestant side.
- **1632** King Gustaf II Adolf is killed in the battle of Lützen in Germany, and is succeeded by his young daughter *Kristina* (born in 1626), whose guardians rule the country.
- **1638** The first Swedish ships, *Kalmar Nyckel* and *Fågel Grip*, arrive in Delaware in America to establish a Swedish colony there.
- **1644** Queen Kristina is declared to be of age and takes over the government of Sweden, with the help of the Chancellor of the realm, Axel Oxenstierna.
- **1648** The Peace Treaty of Westfalia in which Sweden gained several provinces in northern Germany along the Baltic coast.
- **1654** Queen Kristina abdicated, converted to the Catholic faith, and moved to Rome. She was succeeded by her cousin Karl Gustaf, who was crowned as *Karl X Gustaf*. He led Sweden during the Second Nordic War, enlarging the Swedish Empire. The Danish army was defeated and in 1659, in the Peace Treaty of Roskilde, Sweden gained Skåne, Halland, Blekinge, and Bohuslän provinces.
- **1655** The New Sweden Colony in Delaware was taken over by the Dutch, and later by the English.
- **1660** King Karl X Gustaf died suddenly in Göteborg, and was succeeded by his young son Karl (born in 1655), while the country was ruled by his guardians.
- **1661** The first bank notes in the world, printed on paper, were issued in Stockholm, with a value that could be exchanged for metal coins – a venture that failed in a few years.
- **1677** The young king was crowned as *Karl XI*, and immediately had to take charge in a new war with Denmark. After again defeating the Danes his reign was peaceful. Changes in finance, commerce, national maritime and land armaments, judicial procedure, church government, and education emerged during this period.
- **1686** A new set of laws for the Church of Sweden was instituted, and the keeping of church records became mandatory.
- **1697** Karl XI died from stomach cancer and was succeeded by his young son Karl, who was declared to be of age (15 years), and were crowned as *Karl XII*.

Before the burial of Karl XI the Stockholm Royal Palace burnt mostly to the ground, but the king's body was saved. Most medieval records were destroyed, as the *Riksarkivet* (National Archives) were also housed in the palace.



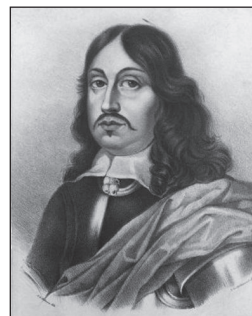
*Karl IX*  
(1550 – 1611).



*Gustaf II Adolf*  
(1594 – 1632).



*Kristina*  
(1626 – 1689).



*Karl X Gustaf*  
(1622 – 1660).



*Karl XI*  
(1655 – 1697).