



Karum in the 19th century

The carts rattled along the stony road just like any other day in Karum. The men were walking to work in the fields and their sons came along to learn. One day the sons would take over. But the future was not as bright for everyone in the village: not the poor who owned no land and lived at Svältan.

IN THE VILLAGE AND IN SVÄLTAN

Today only a few people live in Karum, but when the village was at its biggest in 1870 it had 102 inhabitants. Most of them, 70 people, lived in Östergården, Mellangården and Västergården – the East, Middle and West farms. You can see the East farm close by. The households were very big. Apart from the 23 people in the owners' families there were 47 farmhands, maids and other roomers. The remaining 32 inhabitants in the village were the poor who lived at Svältan, 300 metres to the south. They worked among other places on the farms: the women in the households and the men with farming.

THREE FARMS WITH SEVERAL PART-OWNERS

In 1870, Östergården, Mellangården and Västergården had five part-owners. This was among other things because the land had been divided through inheritance. Families could have many children. In the East farm one of the families had 11 children and the other had five. In the West farm only one child was born, a daughter. The daughter in the West farm came to take over the farm when she married and her husband became the owner.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE VILLAGE

In many villages on Öland the houses stand close together in a row, but not in Karum. Östergården, Mellangården and Västergården farms are at some distance from each other. This may be because the locations of the farms are very old, perhaps from the Iron Age (500 BC–AD 1050).

The three farmhouses were built in the middle of the village land. To the south lay the vast grazing lands, where the animals could be taken direct to and from the cattle sheds. To the north, the arable land with fields and meadows took over – continue across the stream to get there and to find out more.

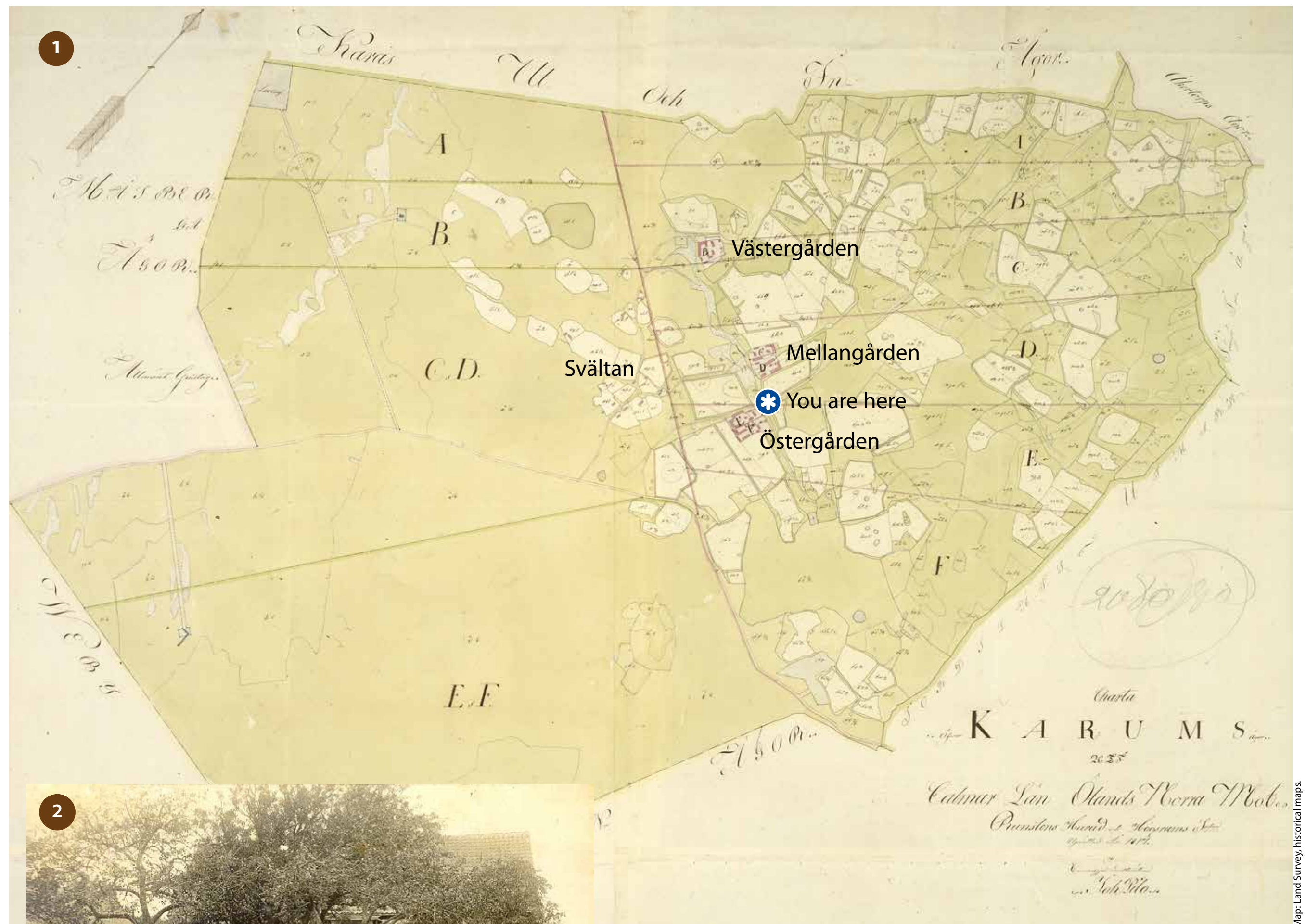


Photo: Högsrum Heritage Association.

1) The map shows Karum in 1817. To the right, the arable land of the village with fields and meadows can be seen. The grazing lands extend to the left. NB – the map is not drawn in a north-south orientation.

2) Several generations stand assembled in front of the East farm in the 1920s.



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