

# WOMEN WRITERS IN THE ROMANTIC AGE



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Cover image: the Brontë sisters (Anne, Emily and Charlotte) by Patrick Branwell Brontë, oil on canvas, ca. 1834. ©National Portrait Gallery, London

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## 8. Writers from Scandinavia

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Scandinavia was a relatively stable region in the period 1776–1848, marked however by the assassination of Sweden’s King Gustav III in 1792, by Sweden’s loss of Finland to Russia in 1809 after the Finnish War, and by Sweden’s acquisition of Norway from Denmark in 1814 under Bernadotte, a consequence of the Danish alliance with Napoleon. Denmark kept Iceland (until 1944), Greenland, and the Faroe Islands. This entire region has also done work to reclaim women writers in the period: my English-language sources identify seventeen Danish women writers, eight Finnish (writing mostly in Swedish), one Icelandic, five Norwegian, and seventeen Swedish.

### Denmark (17 writers)

**Clara Elisabeth Andersen** [or **Paul Winter**] (13 May 1826–28 August 1895), born in Copenhagen, sent her play *En Evadatter* to the poet Henrik Hertz in 1848, who encouraged her. It was published and then staged by Frederik Høedt in 1855. Her 1862 play *Rosa og Rosita* was staged in Copenhagen, Vienna, Berlin, Breslau, and Christiania (now Oslo). However, Andersen left her plays unsigned, while her short stories—*Noveller*, 1855—and her novel—*Kastaniebaandet* [The Chestnut Band], 1861—appeared under the pen name ‘Paul Winter.’ She died still unknown as a playwright.<sup>1</sup>

**Charlotte Baden** (21 November 1740–6 June 1824) was raised by her relative Anna Susanne von der Osten, head lady-in-waiting to Princess Charlotte Amalie of Denmark. In 1763, she married a Copenhagen professor, Jacob Baden. She published a novel, *Den fortsatte Grandison*

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1 Jytte Larsen, Grethe Ilsøe, and Hanne Rimmen Nielsen, eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon*, 4 vols (Copenhagen: Rosinante, 2000).

[The Continued Grandison], after Richardson's 1753 novel, in 1784. Baden also left correspondence.<sup>2</sup>

**Charlotta Dorothea Biehl** (2 June 1731–17 May 1788), born in Copenhagen, learned to read and write in German and Danish from her grandfather, after whose death her parents forbade her to read, making her a maid in 1747. In 1755, her father joined the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. In 1761, Biehl began translating plays from French, German, and Italian for the Royal Danish Theater. In 1762, her *Poète campagnard* had its first performance; she continued as a comedic playwright until 1783. *Den kjerlige Mand* [The Loving Man] in 1764 was a success; *Den listige Optrækkerske* [The Cunning Winding Machine] in 1765, about sexuality, caused a scandal. In 1771, Biehl met Johan Bülow, who inspired her to write historical letters about Danish kings. Their correspondence was published in 1783. She also translated *Don Quixote* into Danish in 1776–1777.<sup>3</sup>

**Friederike Brun**, née **Münther** (3 June 1765–25 March 1835), born in Gräfontonna (now Germany), soon moved to Copenhagen where her father became pastor. Visitors included Klopstock, Cramer, and Johannes Ewald. Brun's father published her first verses and a travel memoir in 1782; poems followed in 1795, 1812, and 1820, travel memoirs in 1799–1801, 1818, and 1833. In 1783, she married Constantin Brun, traveling in Europe from 1789–1810, hosting salons and meeting Goethe, Schiller, A.W. Schlegel, Herder, Wilhelm Grimm, and Germaine de Staël. With the poet Matthisson and the historian Johannes von Müller, she spent time in the Bern home of Charles Victor de Bonstetten, with whom she corresponded thereafter. After a long stay in Italy, she returned to Denmark. Her poem "Chamouny at Sunrise" inspired Coleridge.<sup>4</sup>

**Baroness Thomasine Christine Gyllembourg-Ehrensvärd** (9 November 1773–2 July 1856), born in Copenhagen, married the writer Peter Andreas Heiberg in 1789. In 1800, he was exiled for political activity, and she obtained a divorce, marrying the Swedish Baron Carl Fredrik Ehrensvärd in 1801. The baron was himself a fugitive, implicated in the

2 Carl Frederik Bricka, *Dansk biografisk Leksikon*, 27 vols (Copenhagen: J.H. Schulz, 1933–1944); Jytte Larsen et al, eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000).

3 Jytte Larsen et al, eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000); Katharina M. Wilson, ed. *An Encyclopedia of Continental Women Writers* (1991).

4 Jytte Larsen et al, eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000); Katharina M. Wilson, ed. *An Encyclopedia of Continental Women Writers* (1991).

1792 assassination of King Gustav III. He died in 1815. From 1822–1825, Gyllembourg joined her son in Kiel, returning then to Copenhagen. In 1827, she published the romance *Familien Polonius* [The Polonius Family] anonymously in her son's newspaper. In 1828 appeared her *Den Magiske Nøgle* [The Magic Key] and *En Hverdags-Historie* [An Everyday Story], then *Old and New Novels* in 1833–1834, *New Stories* in 1835–1836, and so forth. In 1849–1851, she brought out a library edition of her collected works. Her authorship became known only after her death.<sup>5</sup>

**Marie Kirstine Henriette Hanck** (19 July 1807–1846), born in Odense, was a childhood friend of Hans Christian Andersen, corresponding with him from 1830 until her death. She spent her life in her childhood home. Hanck's first published poem appeared in her grandfather's local newspaper in 1830. Other poetry followed, some posthumous, and two novels: *Tante Anna* in 1838 and *En Skribentindes Datter* [A Writer's Daughter] in 1842. Hanck translated both novels into German; they appeared in 1845–1846 with a foreword by Andersen.<sup>6</sup>

**Mette Louise Christiane Frederikke Hegermann-Lindencrone** (4 December 1778–18 June 1853), born in Copenhagen, was the only one of six siblings to reach adulthood. She married Johan Hendrik Hegermann-Lindencrone in 1797, with whom she had nine children. Hegermann-Lindencrone first published poetry at fifteen. Her three main works, all with strong female leads, appeared under her own name: the two dramas *Eleonora* *Christa Uhlfeldt*, 1817, and *Troubadouren*, 1820, and *Danske Fortællinger*, 1825, a collection of short stories. The playwright Adam Oehlenschläger attended the couple's Copenhagen salon.<sup>7</sup>

**Johanne Luise Heiberg, née Pätges** (22 November 1812–21 December 1890), was born to German emigrants: a Catholic father and a Jewish mother. She entered ballet school in 1820, making her acting debut in 1827. In 1831, she married the playwright Johan Ludvig Heiberg; their home became a cultural center. He died in 1860, and in 1864 she retired from the theater. Heiberg starred at Copenhagen in plays by Shakespeare, Holberg, Oehlenschläger, Henrik Hertz, and her husband, writing some vaudevilles herself, notably *En Søndag paa Amager* [A

5 Elisabeth Hude, *Thomasine Gyllembourg og Hverdagshistorierne* (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde og Bagger, 1951).

6 Carl Frederik Bricka, *Dansk biografisk Leksikon* (1933–1944).

7 Ibid.

Sunday at Amager]. Søren Kierkegaard wrote a tribute to her in 1847; her autobiography appeared in 1891–1892.<sup>8</sup>

**Anna Christiane Lauterup Ludvigsen** (14 June 1794–28 June 1884), born in Aabenraa, was blessed in her cradle by Johann Kaspar Lavater and felt it her vocation to write poetry. The family moved to Brede in 1796, where her father taught her French, German, and Latin. In 1819, she married Jürgen Simon Jessen, who died in 1842; with him, she spent some years in southern Jutland. In 1844, she married the farmer Laurenz Paulsen Lauterup, settling in Vllum. Lauterup died in 1864, and in 1867 Ludvigsen returned to southern Jutland, now under German rule. In 1840, she published several poems in the local newspaper. After corresponding with Oehlenschläger and Ingemann, in 1852 she published *Markblomster af Anna* [Wildflowers by Anna]. Her poems had special significance in Jutland under German rule.<sup>9</sup>

**Birgitte Dorothea Henriette Nielsen** [or **Theodora**] (23 January 1815–17 January 1900) was born in Strandgården in northern Jutland. Her vaudevillean *Slægtingene* [The Relatives] was staged at Copenhagen's Royal Danish Theater, featuring local costumes from Fanø and songs she had composed herself. It ran to seventy-eight performances in 1849. Her 1862 novel *Esberhs Skolehistorier* [Esberh's School Stories] calls for female emancipation.<sup>10</sup>

**Elise Charlotte Otté** (30 September 1818–20 December 1903), born in Copenhagen, moved with her parents in 1820 to Saint Croix in the Danish West Indies, returning when her father died, first to Denmark, then England when her English mother remarried an Englishman, the philologist Benjamin Thorpe. Thorpe taught Otté several languages, old and new, to assist his grammatical work. In 1840, she escaped to study physiology at Harvard University, returning to assist in translating the *Elder Edda*. In 1849, she left again for Scotland, translating for George Edward Day, with whom she remained until 1872. Her monograph *Scandinavian History* appeared in 1874, to lasting impact. She translated Alexander von Humboldt and Quatrefages de Bréau and published grammars of Danish and of Swedish in 1883–1884.<sup>11</sup>

8 Ibid.; Jytte Larsen et al., eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000).

9 Carl Frederik Bricka, *Dansk biografisk Leksikon* (1933–1944).

10 Ibid.

11 *Dictionary of National Biography* [DNB].

**Louise Scheel von Plessen, née Countess Louise von Berckentin** (26 April 1725–14 September 1799), born in Vienna to the Danish Ambassador, spent her childhood in that town. From 1740–1744, she was maid of honor to Christian VI's queen consort. In 1744, she married Major Christian Sigfred Scheel von Plessen, becoming a childless widow in 1755 and retiring to the countryside. In 1766, she became head lady-in-waiting at the court of the new queen. The queen grew very attached to her, but she was blamed for separating the royal couple; in 1768, von Plessen was exiled with six hours' notice, first to her home, then Germany. There, von Plessen wrote her *Mémoires de la cour de Danemark*, which were later published.<sup>12</sup>

**Julie Reventlow, née Schimmelmänn** (16 February 1763–28 December 1816), married Count Frederik Reventlow in 1779. Reventlow hosted a literary salon at the couple's Holstein estate and published two works in German about education: *Sonntagsfreuden des Landmannes* [Sunday Joys of the Countryman], 1791, and *Kinderfreuden oder Unterricht in Gesprächen* [Children's Joys or Teaching in Conversations], 1793.<sup>13</sup>

**Sophie Frederikke Louise Charlotte Reventlow, née von Beulwitz or von Beulwiz** (1 June 1747–26 July 1822), was born in Oldenburg and raised in Sorø, receiving a German education. In 1774, she married Lengreve Christian Ditlev Frederik Reventlow; they had twelve children, nine reaching adulthood. The family spent summers in Pederstrup and winters in Copenhagen. In the late 1770s and early 1780s, Frederikke Charlotte kept a diary about their children, translated from German to Danish and published in 1990. Her manuscript correspondence survives.<sup>14</sup>

**Maria Engelbrecht Stokkenbech** [also **E.M. Stokkenbeck**] (1759–after 1806), born in Hamburg, lost her father aged one; her mother raised her on the island of Ærø. From age twelve, she worked as a waitress, then a maid. Married to a drunk, she left but could not find work; she had a tailor sew her a man's suit, calling herself Gotfried Jacob Eichstedt, and found work as a tailor's apprentice. She smoked, drank, and played cards with her coworkers, urinating with the help

12 August Fjelstrup, *Damerne ved Karoline Mathildes Hof* (Copenhagen: Hermann-Petersens Forlag, 1909); Jytte Larsen et al, eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000).

13 Jytte Larsen et al., eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000).

14 *The History of Nordic Women's Literature* (<https://www.kau.se/en/node/37172>).

of a horn, working in Poland, then Germany, then Spain. In 1784, returning to Copenhagen, she was recognized as a woman and arrested. Stokkenbech explained herself in court and was released on condition she wear women's clothes, but with permission to practice her trade. Her short autobiography appeared in German in Copenhagen in 1784; Danish editions followed in 1787 and 1806.<sup>15</sup>

**Anna Magdalene Thoresen**, née **Kragh** (3 June 1819–28 March 1903), born in Fredericia, had an illegitimate child who was put out to nurse. In 1842, she married Hans Conrad Thoresen and moved with him to Bergen. Their home became a meeting place for writers and actors; in 1850, Ole Bull founded a theater in Bergen, *Det Norske Theater*, for which Thoresen wrote four anonymous plays. Her stepdaughter was married to Henrik Ibsen. A volume of her poems appeared in 1860; her novels include *Studenten*, 1862, *Signes Historie*, 1864, and *Solen i Siljedalen* [The Sun in Siljedalen] in 1868. After her husband's death in 1858, Thoresen moved to Copenhagen. Her play *Et rigt Parti* [A Rich Party] was staged at the Royal Danish Theater in 1870, then in Stockholm and Christiania (now Oslo); *Inden Døre* [Indoors] followed in 1877. She also published travel memoirs in 1872 and 1882.<sup>16</sup>

**Pauline Frederikke Worm** (29 November 1825–13 December 1883), born in Hyllested, tried aged nine to persuade her uncle (a politician) to give women the vote. In 1838, Worm was sent to a girls' school in Randers, staying on to become a teacher before working as a private tutor from 1847. Her poem for the 1848 coronation of Frederick VII appeared in the press. In *Præstø*, she wrote the poetry volume *En Krands af ni Blade* [A Wreath of Nine Leaves] in 1850 and a novel, *De Fornuftige* [The Sensible], first published in 1857. In 1853, after a year studying in Copenhagen, she opened a girls' school in Randers as headmistress. It failed and she resumed tutoring, also speaking in public after 1864 about women's emancipation and Danish patriotism. She moved to Copenhagen in 1881.<sup>17</sup>

15 Inger Wiene, *En historie om kvindelige håndværkere i 200 år* (Copenhagen: SFAH, 1991).

16 Knut Helle, ed. *Norsk biografisk leksikon*, 10 vols (Oslo: Kunnskapsforlaget, 1999–2005).

17 Jytte Larsen et al., eds. *Dansk Kvindebiografisk Leksikon* (2000).



## Finland (8 writers)

Fredrika Wilhelmina Carstens

*Murgrönan* (1840)

N. 28. Maji 18..

Ännu en hälsning! En så kär så varm.  
 Jag dig, o hulda Fosterbygd! vill sända;  
 Tag den emot, den går ur trofast barm;  
 Och huru än mitt öde sig må vända.  
 Är du den tanke först och sist likväl,  
 Som smyger sig utur min sorgsna själ.

Jag har uppvaknat, älskade Emilia, ifrån en ganska god sömn; mina själs-såväl som kroppskrafter äro styrkte af den hvila jag erfarit. Vid mitt lilla kammarfönster har jag njutit af den milda vårluften, hvilken fritt spelar in genom det öppnade fönstret, O! hvilken herrlig morgon, detta ställe är långt trefligare än jag i går vid min ankomst fann det, skymningen såväl som tröttheten hindrade mig att då urskilja dess högst trefliga läge; ån som löper alldeles under mitt fönster kröker sig i behagliga bugter framåt, och på dess stränder resa sig björkar, så vackra, så raka, som voro de af den vårdsammaste mästareshand ditplanterade. Men, hvad säger jag, som voro de? Hvilken hand kunde i förmåga öfverträffa *dens*, som dit sat dem? Ack, Emilia! hvilkens kunde mera vårdande hvila öfver och beskydda sitt verk? Hvad den är vacker, denna vårens färg; denna unga, friska, gröna; jag fruktar att förtrampa ett enda grässtrå, så obeskrifligen skön och ljuflig förefaller mig naturen.

Denna dag förer mig åter längre ifrån dig, och likväl tycker jag mig aldrig varit dig närmare än just nu; mina tårar blanda sig med dem på bladen af den daggfriska syrenqvist jag nyss brutit ur den lilla häcken under mitt fönster. Det skall följa mig, detta minne ifrån mitt hemlands nejder, och ännu der borta, ehuru vissnadt, för mig utgöra ett vanligt fridens budskap.

Min glada men något nyfikna värdinna har redan bestyrsamt inburit min varma morgondryck; hon står ännu med frågande blick, och tyckes afbida något uppdrag. Lef väl, Emilia! lef väl!<sup>18</sup>

18 Fredrika Wilhelmina Carstens, *Murgrönan* (Helsingfors: G. O. Wasenius, 1840), pp. 4–5.

*The Ivy*

N. 28 May 18..

*Another greeting! One so dear so warm,  
O esteemed Foster town! I want to send you;  
Receive it, it proceeds from faithful bosom;  
And however my fate may turn,  
You are that thought, first and last anyway,  
That sneaks out of my sad soul.*

*I have awakened, dear Emilia, from a rather good sleep; my mental and physical powers are strengthened by the rest I have experienced. At my little chamber window, I have enjoyed the mild spring air, which freely enters through the open window. O! what a glorious morning, this place is far more beautiful than I found it yesterday on my arrival, the twilight as well as fatigue prevented me from then distinguishing its most beautiful situation; the river that runs right below my windows curves forward in pleasant bays, and on its banks rise birches, as beautiful, as straight, as if they had been planted there by the hand of the most careful master. But what do I say, who were they? What hand could surpass in ability that which set them there? Alas, Emilia! whose hand could more care rest on and protect his work? How beautiful it is, this color of spring; this young, healthy, green; I fear to step on a single blade of grass, so indescribably beautiful and lovely does nature seem to me.*

*This day brings me further away from you again, and yet I think I have never been closer to you than right now; my tears mix with those on the leaves of the dewy lilac I have just plucked from the little hedge under my window. This memory will follow me from the depths of my homeland, and still over there, although withered, constitute a common message of peace for me.*

*My cheerful but somewhat curious hostess has already bewilderingly brought in my warm morning drink; she still stands with a questioning look and seems to refuse some mission. Live well, Emilia! live well!*

Russia took Finland from Sweden following the Finnish War of 1808–1809 and held it as a grand duchy until Finnish independence in 1918. In Helsinki today, Swedish is much spoken, but in 1840, writing in Swedish was a political act: it partakes of the *polis*, not the *oikos*, in contrast to the resolutely domestic and female tone of this opening extract.

What we have here is a letter, dated “May 18..,” that follows the introduction and opens an epistolary novel apparently about ivy. One might expect the chooser of such a title to be alert to the natural world, and that seems to be the case in this extract which speaks of a chamber

window, mild spring air, a river, birches, grass blades, dewy lilac, a hedge, and a warm morning drink. The scene invites illustration, and that is worthy of remark: the nineteenth century was the great age of the illustrated novel, a project dependent on the sort of novelistic description that a Voltaire or a Fielding, with their emphasis on swiftly moving plot, essentially bypass. Can this then be called a Romantic urge? I believe it can. First, the world is full of books on the Romantics and nature. Second, description matters to Romantic writers, as we saw already in the opening to Sand's *Indiana*, or indeed in Gorriti's *La Quena*. It matters because to a Romantic mind, the self is fundamentally integrated within the context it inhabits. This may be traced back to Kant, who argues that we cannot distinguish *Phainomena* inside and outside our brain: all we have is the matter of our senses, since *Noumena* or things in themselves are forever unknowable. If Fichte argues that all is mind, or Schelling argues that all is nature, both inhabit a post-Kantian space, as does European society by 1840 when this book appeared. What to Voltaire is brute and undynamic matter can thus take on for Carstens a vibrant and interdependent life; her speaker reflects her surroundings as was almost impossible for writers prior to perhaps Rousseau with his periwinkle—"je pousse un cri de joie: *ah! voilà de la pervenche!*", he writes in his posthumous *Confessions*, 1782–1789.<sup>19</sup> Two other strands here seem worth teasing out: first, Linnaeus, the father of botanic taxonomy, had died in Sweden in 1778; and second, the role of electricity in living organisms had been increasingly evident since Galvani published his work on frogs in 1791. Carstens's attention to nature is thus rooted in contemporary philosophy and science; it is rather typically Romantic. "I fear to step on a single blade of grass," she writes.

Is there more to be said? One might add that Carstens opens the letter with six rhymed lines of iambic pentameter, the meter of Shakespeare, that romantic bard; she also sees in nature "the hand of the most careful master," a natural theology akin to that popularized by William Paley's book of that title in 1802. There is, in short, a considerable amount going on in this domestic letter with its description of the bucolic scene outside the speaker's window; the letter shares in the great European debates of the age, it is not isolated from them. One awaits with interest the ivy the novel will present.

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19 *Les Confessions de J.-J. Rousseau*. Nouvelle édition précédée d'une notice par George Sand (Paris: Charpentier, 1841), p. 236.

**Fredrika Wilhelmina Carstens**, née **Stichaeus** [or **R**] (5 June 1808–13 April 1888), was born in Naantali during the Finnish War. In 1829, she married Carl Adolf Otto Carstens; the couple had seven children. In the 1830s, Carstens began writing for newspapers about women's education under the pen name 'R.' She published the Swedish-language novel *Murgrönan* [The Ivy] anonymously in 1840. It was criticized for its "female" sprawling language, and Carstens published only a few poems in the press thereafter. After her husband's death in 1842, the estate briefly went bankrupt. In the 1850s, she announced her charity work under her own name, which was disapproved of.<sup>20</sup>

**Gustafva Sofia Hjärne**, née **Rosenborg** (4 July 1780–6 March 1860), born in Kloster (Sweden), married Captain Gustaf Hjärne in 1801. Hjärne held one of Finland's earliest salons. During the Finnish War, Hjärne may have averted a battle by arranging the peaceful handover of Sveaborg to the Russians in 1808. She translated two plays and wrote poems for the press anonymously. In 1831, she published the Swedish-language novel *Tavastehus slott* [Tavastehus Castle], about the medieval Häme Castle.<sup>21</sup>

**Agatha Lovisa de la Myle**, née **Brumengeber** or **Brunnengräber** (30 August 1724–1 September 1787), born in Courland (now Latvia), married her nephew Carl Johan de la Myle in 1750, moving to Finland with him in 1762. She wrote poetry in German and Latvian and corresponded with Christian Furchegott Gellert in Leipzig. She composed the poem "Lofqväden" in 1771 for Gustav III of Sweden's coronation. She died on her estate outside Åbo (now Turku).<sup>22</sup>

**Fredrika Lovisa Lindqvist** (22 February 1786–14 April 1841), born in Åbo (now Turku), moved to Sweden after the Great Fire of Turku in 1827. In 1838, she published *Poems in Prose* in Swedish. *Thoughts on Several Subjects*, also in Swedish, followed in 1842.<sup>23</sup>

**Barbara Catharina Mjödth** (8 November 1738–1776), born to the politician Abraham Mjödth and Magdalena Ross, wrote occasional

20 Päivi Lappalainen and Lea Rojola, *Women's Voices. Female Authors and Feminist Criticism in the Finnish Literary Tradition* (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2007).

21 *The History of Nordic Women's Literature*.

22 P.G. Berg and Wilhelmina Stålberg, eds. *Anteckningar om svenska qvinnor* (Stockholm: P.G. Berg, 1864).

23 *Suomen kansallisbiografia* [National Biography of Finland] ([https://openlibrary.org/books/OL16394345M/Suomen\\_kansallisbiografia](https://openlibrary.org/books/OL16394345M/Suomen_kansallisbiografia)).

poems for weddings and funerals. In 1754, she published a funeral poem for Anna Gerdzlovja. Her marriage severely restricted her career.<sup>24</sup>

**Fredrika Charlotta Runeberg**, née **Tengström** (2 September 1807–27 May 1879), born in Jakobstad, spent her youth in Turku, then capital of Finland. In 1828, she moved to Helsinki, marrying the national poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg in 1831. The couple settled in Porvoo. Runeberg wrote two Swedish-language historical novels about the status of women: *Fru Catharina Boije och hennes döttrar* [Mrs Catharina Boije and Her Daughters], 1858, set in Finland during the Great Northern War, and *Sigrid Liljeholm*, 1862, set in the Cudgel War. She also wrote for the press and translated from French, German, and English into Swedish. She may have created the Runeberg torte.<sup>25</sup>

**Catharina Charlotta Swedenmarck** (29 January 1744–1813), born in Stockholm, first married Lieutenant Carl Johan Hastfer, who died in 1771. In 1773, she married Major Carl Fredrik Toll, a Finnish landowner. She published Swedish-language poems for Gustav III's 1771 coronation, and the play *Dianas fest* [The Feast of Diana] in 1775.<sup>26</sup>

**Sara Elizabeth Wacklin** (26 May 1790–28 January 1846), born in Uleåborg, lost her father early and her three brothers emigrated. Wacklin worked as a schoolteacher until the Finnish War. In 1813, Wacklin moved to Turku to work as a governess, notably for Gustafva Hjärne. In 1819, she studied in Sweden, opening a girls' school in Uleåborg which burned down in the fire of 1822. From 1823–1827, Wacklin ran a school in Turku; it burned in the fire of 1827, and she opened a school in Helsinki, then Uleåborg again after 1830. Wacklin also taught French and traveled in Denmark, Germany, and Sweden. In 1835, she left for the Sorbonne, becoming the first female university graduate in Finland. She returned to Helsinki to found her sixth girls' school. In 1843, Wacklin retired to Stockholm, publishing *Hundrade minnen från Österbotten* [A Hundred Memories of Ostrobothnia] in 1844–1845.<sup>27</sup>

24 *Suomen kansallisbiografia* [National Biography of Finland].

25 *Svenska Litteratursällskapet i Finland* (<https://www.sls.fi/sv/>); *Suomen kansallisbiografia* [National Biography of Finland].

26 Carina Burman, *Den finländska Sapfo. Catharina Charlotta Swedenmarcks liv och verk* (Uppsala: Lunne böcker, 2004).

27 Henrik Knif et al., eds. *Biografiskt lexikon för Finland*, 4 vols (Helsingfors and Stockholm: Adantis, 2008–2011).

## Iceland (1 writer)

**Rósa Guðmundsdóttir** [or **Vatnsenda-Rósa**] (23 December 1795–28 September 1855), born in Ásgerðarstaðir in Hörgárdal, lost her mother aged twelve. A farmer's daughter, she received no formal schooling, though there were books in the house. In 1818, she married Olaf Ásmundason; they had five children before divorcing in 1837. Guðmundsdóttir (a patronymic) then married the sailor Gísli Gíslason, twenty years her junior. Both marriages were unhappy; she was also involved with a man named Natan Ketilsson, who was murdered in 1828. As far as is known, none of Guðmundsdóttir's works were published prior to her death in 1855, and some attributions may be apocryphal. Singers including Björk have set her songs and poems to music. Her most famous poem is likely "Augað mitt og augað sítt" [My eye and your eye].<sup>28</sup>

## Norway (5 writers)

Gustava Kielland (1800–1889)

"O Jul Med Din Glede"

1. O jul med din glede og barnlige lyst  
vi ønsker deg alle velkommen;  
vi hilser deg alle med jublende røst  
titusinde gange velkommen!

*Refreng*

Vi klapper i hendene,  
vi synger og vi ler,  
så gladerlig, så gladerlig.  
Vi svinger oss i kretsen og neier og bukker.

2. I Østerlands vise, I tre vise menn,  
vi vide hvorhen I vil drage;  
thi vi ville også så gjerne derhen  
og eder på reisen ledsage. *Refreng*

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28 *The History of Nordic Women's Literature* (<https://www.kau.se/en/node/37172>).

3. Så rekker jeg deg nå med glede min hånd,  
kom skynd deg og gi meg den annen,  
så knytter vi kjærlighets hellige bånd  
og lover at elske hinannen. *Refreng*
4. Om stormen den tuter og sneen vi ser  
det kan oss dog slet ikke skade  
thi våren og julen oss alltid er nær  
blot vi ere fromme og glade. *Refreng*
5. Når en gang vi samles i himlenes sal  
og synger om jul med sin glede  
vi takker og jubler i tusinde tal  
for tronen i himlen at trede. *Refreng*<sup>29</sup>

1. *O Christmas with your joy and childlike desire  
we all wish you welcome;  
we all greet you with cheering voices  
ten thousand times welcome!*  
  
*Chorus*  
*We clap hands,  
we sing and we laugh,  
so happy, so happy.  
We swing in circles and curtsey and bow.*
2. *You sages of the East, you three wise men,  
we know where you want to go;  
because we wanted to go there too  
and accompany you on your journey. Chorus*
3. *So now I gladly extend my hand to you,  
come hurry give me the other,  
then we tie the sacred bond of love  
and promise to love each other. Chorus*

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29 Gustava Kielland, "O Jul Med Din Glede," in Tove Valmot, ed. *Julens stemninger. Dikt, sanger og fortellinger* (Oslo: Bestselgerforlaget, 2012), p. 133. Words and music in [http://www.julesanger.no/o\\_jul\\_med\\_din\\_glede\\_tekst.shtml](http://www.julesanger.no/o_jul_med_din_glede_tekst.shtml).

4. *As for the storm that blows and the snow we see  
it still can't hurt us at all  
because spring and Christmas are always close to us  
when we are pious and happy. Chorus*
  
5. *When once we gather in heaven's hall  
and sing of Christmas with its joy  
we give thanks and rejoice in a thousand ways  
to tread the throne in heaven. Chorus*

This is a well-known Norwegian Christmas carol. The present anthology of 650 women authors features several hymn writers; certain genres lent themselves relatively unproblematically to female writers prior to 1848, and religious verse is an example of that. The text seems fairly simple, but it bears review. For instance, it opens with the word “barnlige,” childlike. Childhood, as Dickens or the Grimm brothers or Andersen bear witness, is one of the nineteenth century’s great discoveries; if child protagonists are rare prior to 1800, they are common thereafter, from Philip Pirrip to Hansel and Gretel. And just as the text names childhood, so it speaks to childhood in its performative chorus: we clap hands, we sing, we laugh, we swing in circles and bow and curtsy. Verse three adds that all hold hands—this is uncommon in hymns, but common enough in children’s song. I have seen it in Sweden. The other verses celebrate Christmas in somewhat unsurprising fashion—“You sages of the East”—except for verse four, which focuses on the storm and snow, powerless to hurt. One thinks, as perhaps Kielland did, of children bundled against the cold. The verses’ song meter is four alternating eleven-syllable and nine-syllable lines with an ABAB rhyme scheme. It takes skill to make such a format sing across five verses as Kielland has done. The chorus is in essence free verse.

What then are we to make of such a text? It is both unpretentious and very successful; indeed, few women composers of the period have had more success. And one reason for this success is certainly its limpidity. It does not clutter the mind; it is well-suited to being sung in Yuletide gatherings in unproblematic fashion by people of all ages. It does presume belief—we are, it says, “pious and happy”—but this is Christmas after all, and Norway is a Catholic country. Few texts in this anthology have a clearer function or fulfill that function more ably.



**Magdalene Sophie Buchholm** (15 March 1758–12 August 1825), born in Skien, lost her father in 1770 and was raised by a cousin. In 1777, she married Peter Leganger Castberg; in 1781, the couple moved to Flekkefjord, where he died in 1784. She then married Joachim Frederik Buchholm in 1785, moving to Stavanger in 1798 and Kragerø in 1806 and being the center of social life there. Buchholm made frequent long trips to Copenhagen; in 1778, she became the first female member of the academic society Det Norske Selskab, receiving a prize for her poetry in 1783. She published her collected works in 1793.<sup>30</sup>

**Jacobine Camilla Collett**, née **Wergeland** (23 January 1813–6 March 1895), born in Kristiansand, was the daughter of Nicolai Wergeland and the sister of Henrik Wergeland. In 1816, the family moved to Eidsvoll; as a teen, Collett was sent to finishing school in Denmark. In Christiania (now Oslo), she fell in love with the poet Johan Sebastian Welhaven, her brother's nemesis; in any event, in 1841, she married the politician Peter Jonas Collett and began writing for publication. He died in 1851 and Collett was left with four young sons; she struggled financially thereafter. In 1854–1855, she published *Amtmandens Døtre* [The District Governor's Daughters], among the first realist novels in Norway. Collett grew more radical with age, publishing anonymous articles on women's rights which appeared in collected volumes between 1868–1885. Her diary appeared in 1862.<sup>31</sup>

**Conradine Birgitte Dunker**, née **Hansteen** (25 August 1780–11 September 1866), born in Christiania (now Oslo), married Captain Ulrik Anton Nicolai Blix Aamodt in 1796 and in 1807, the businessman Johan Friedrich Wilhelm Dunker. In Christiania, Dunker served in the Dramatic Society from 1796–1831 as both translator and actress. From 1814–1831, she ran a fashionable finishing school in her home; the family moved to Trondheim in 1831. Dunker was widowed (again) in 1844 and taught in her daughter's girls' school from 1849–1857 before moving back to Christiania. Dunker's posthumous memoirs *Gamle Dage: Erindringer og Tidsbilleder* [Old Days: Memories and Time Pictures] appeared in 1871.<sup>32</sup>

30 *Store norske leksikon* (<https://snl.no/>); Knut Helle, ed. *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (2005).

31 Katharina M. Wilson, ed. *An Encyclopedia of Continental Women Writers* (1991).

32 *Store norske leksikon*; Knut Helle, ed. *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (2005).

**Susanne Sophie Catharina Gustava Kielland**, née **Blom**, known as **Gustava Kielland** (6 March 1800–28 February 1889), born in Kongsberg, married the minister Gabriel Kirsebom Kielland in 1824; the couple had eight children. In 1840, Kielland attended a lecture in Stavanger which spurred her to missionary work: back in Lyngdal, she founded a Christian-social women's association, considered Norway's first women's association. Kielland's songs include "O, Jul med din Glæde" and the children's song "Liden Ekorn" [Suffering Squirrel]. Later, she dictated memoirs, *Erindringer fra mitt liv* [Reminiscence from my Life], which appeared in 1882.<sup>33</sup>

**Christiane Koren** (27 July 1764–28 January 1815), born in Kastrup (Denmark), frequented the academic society Det Norske Selskab in Copenhagen and grew close to the Swede Carl Frederik Dichmann. In 1787, she married the Norwegian Johan Randulf Clausen Koren, leaving Denmark for Østfold, Norway, where her husband was appointed judge. The couple had eight children. Koren published a volume of poetry in 1803; she also wrote plays. Her manuscript diaries were published in 1915, her manuscript description of an 1802 trip to Denmark in 1945.<sup>34</sup>

## Sweden (17 writers)

### Emilie Flygare-Carlén

*Rosen på Tistelön. Berättelse från skärgården* (1842)

#### Första Kapitlet.

I oron, som beständigt väckes  
Och sjelf sitt gift begärligt när,  
Vår tanke ut på hafvet sträcket  
Och skeppen ser, som krossas der.

Gyllenborg.  
Min son, tag läran af min mun!  
Leopold.

33 Knut Helle, ed. *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (2005).

34 *Store norske leksikon*; Knut Helle, ed. *Norsk biografisk leksikon* (2005).

Omkring en half mil inom de i nordvest från Marstrand belägna Pater-Noster-skären, hvilka—än i dag ryktbara för de ofta der inträffande skepps-brott—troligen fått sitt namn af de många pater-noster, forntida sjöfarare der uppsändt för sina lifs räddning, ligger en liten grupp af ofruktbara öar, hvaribland dock en är bebodd och den vi i vår berättelse vilja kalla Tistelön. All vegetation på denna fläck af jorden är nästan utdöd, ocla de buskar och andra växter, som här och der visa sig, hafva ett tvinande utseende, liksom för öfrigt hela naturen på dessa klippmassor bär pregeln af en ödslig tomhet.

Vestra kusten af ön består endast af rödaktiga berg, emellan hvilkas öppningar hafvet, nästan ständigt i raseri, vräker sina fradgande vågor. Stenarne, som betäcka stranden, under årtusenden rullade fram och tillbaka af de rastlösa böljorna, hafva alla erhållit en nästan klotrund form. I sjelfva bergen äro bildade runda, genombrutna hål, der hafsvattnet oupphörligt rusar in och åter fradgande utströmmar, så att dess klagande, entoniga ljud sammansmälter med de hemska skri, sjöfoglarne låta höra, antingen de uppstämman sina liksånger öfver de ovigda menniskoben, hvilka, jemte spillror af vrak, ligga spridda omkring kusten, eller de för strandbons vanda öra förkunna sin väntan på ett nytt skeppsbrott.<sup>35</sup>

### Chapter I.

*[In the worries, which are constantly awakened  
And greedily eat themselves,  
Our thought is stretched out to sea  
And we see the ships that are broken there.*

Gyllenborg.

*My son, learn from my mouth!*

Leopold.]

*On the western coast of Sweden, to the north of Marstrand, and about three miles from the Paternoster rocks [which probably got their name from the many paternosters ancient sailors sent there for saving their lives], well known as the scene of many a fatal shipwreck, lies a little group of barren islands; one only is inhabited, which, in the following narration, we shall call Tistelön. This desolate spot is nearly bare of vegetation, and the few shrubs and plants here and there visible look dry and withered; all nature among those masses of stone presenting only one uniform aspect of dreary sterility.*

35 Emilie Flygare-Carlén, *Rosen på Tistelön. Berättelse från skärgården* [The Rose on Thistle Island. Story from the Archipelago] (Stockholm: N.H. Thomson, 1842), pp. 5–6.

*The western shore of the island consists entirely of a range of gray rocks, between the openings of which the ocean, in an almost constant agitation, dashes its foaming waters; the stones that cover the beach, rolled for centuries to and fro by the restless billows, are for the most part rounded; even in the rocks, themselves, circular holes have been formed, through which the waters for ever pour, and then, rushing back, unite their sullen monotonous sound with the dismal scream of the sea-birds, when they uplift their death-cry over the human bones which, mingled with pieces of wreck, lie scattered on the shore, or announce to the experienced ear of the solitary fisherman their anticipation of an approaching shipwreck.*<sup>36</sup>

Sweden, though largely mainland, has 984 inhabited islands, mostly in the Baltic, out of some 267,000 total; Stockholm for instance is on an archipelago. Emilie Carlén grew up a sea captain's daughter in the archipelago of Bohuslän, and the sea recurs in her novels, though she moved from there to Stockholm and remarried in 1841. This extract opens 1842's *Rosen på Tistelön* [The Rose on Thistle Island], set on a desolate island lost in a shipwreck-prone Baltic archipelago.

The extract opens with two epigraphs, from the recent Swedish poets Gustaf Fredrik Gyllenborg and Carl Gustaf af Leopold (both missing in the 1844 translation). The two subsequent paragraphs of text contain no human protagonist: they are somewhat akin to a landscape painting with no human figure, such as Caspar David Friedrich began to paint after about 1820 (earlier Dutch landscapes, by comparison, generally feature people). This is not to say the human element is entirely absent in these opening pages: beyond the poetry, sailors named the shoals; someone named the island of Marstrand, a few leagues away; human bones and debris dot the shore; finally, the island is inhabited. And yet, it is so desolate that the narrator feels compelled to coin a name for it as they begin the tale. There is, in short, a curious sort of waltz here from pristine nature to the human and back again, from what is hidden to what lies in plain sight just off the coast of Sweden. A Freud might call the result *uncanny*.

While a significant Romantic preoccupation, the uncanny is relatively uncommon in European literature before the late eighteenth century. One thinks of Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, 1764, and the Gothic tradition he helped launch across Europe. It is hard for the uncanny to

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36 *The Rose of Tistelön. A Tale of the Swedish Coast* (New York: William H. Colyer, 1844), p. 3. Text in square brackets is omitted in the published translation.

exist without a human element, which makes this opening extract all the more interesting: screaming seabirds and crashing waves are not *per se* uncanny, they become so when combined with unconsecrated human bones—the exposure of what is hidden, indeed we might say the return of the repressed. Nevertheless, and despite her play with what is human, Carlén is unique in this anthology in not putting a living human protagonist in her opening pages. She thereby builds suspense: this *mondo senza gente* or world without people is a strange place for anyone to live, and we await the eventual protagonist with interest.

The game Carlén is playing might well have been impossible a half-century earlier. I have argued that as late as the mid-eighteenth century, novels tend to begin *in medias res*, in the middle of things; in this anthology's extracts, an opening description is common, and in itself fairly new, but to eliminate a human protagonist altogether seems unique to Carlén. It brings a certain frisson of pleasure and excitement—oddly enough, because in terms of plot, nothing happens. There is a mastery to it all. It seems no surprise that Carlén sold well in her lifetime and did so beyond her Swedish ambit.

**Catharina Ahlgren** (1734–c. 1800), born in Östergötland, married Bengt Edvard Eckerman but divorced in 1770. She then married Anders Bark, moving to Finland c. 1775 and again divorcing. She settled in Linköping in 1796. Ahlgren became known as an unpublished translator from English, French, and German in the 1750s; she was a friend of Hedvig Charlotta Nordenflycht, and their letters survive. In 1764, Ahlgren published a poem on the queen's birthday. She later acquired a printing press, publishing Nordenflycht, a Wieland translation in 1772, and a 1772 periodical, *Brefväxling emellan twänne fruntimmer ...* [Correspondence between Two Ladies ...] arguing for gender equality. Ahlgren may also have published the periodical *De Nymodiga Fruntimren ...* [Modern Women ...], promoting women's education. She published the first periodical in Finland in 1782.<sup>37</sup>

**Christina Charlotta Ulrika Berger**, née **Cronhielm af Hakunge** (21 August 1784–25 May 1852), born in Linköping, married the composer

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37 Margareta Björkman, *Catharina Ahlgren: ett skrivande fruntimmer i 1700-talets Sverige* [Catharina Ahlgren: a writing woman in eighteenth-century Sweden] (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2006).

Johan Göran Berger in 1817. Berger began as a translator of French poetry; she then started publishing her own poems in the press, sometimes with music by her husband. "Korset på Idas grav" [The Cross on Ida's Grave] in 1816, a ballad with music, was popular. She also published several serial novels, in *Aftonbladet* and elsewhere, and poems in the *Magasin för konst, nyheter och moder*, 1823–1844. Berger's poems often described historical events and her novels, such as *Lustresan* [The Desire Trip] in 1841, echoed Richardson and Radcliffe. Her two plays, 1842, were not performed.<sup>38</sup>

**Sophie Christina Mathilda Bolander** (28 January 1807–2 June 1869), born in Gothenburg, lost her mother early and lived with her brother in Gothenburg after her father's death. She worked as a governess in 1838–1844, then as a music teacher from 1845–1855, publishing her anti-aristocratic novel *Trolldomstecknet* [The Magic Sign] in 1845, then serializing several historical romances in the press (*Aftonbladet*). Her novel *Qvinnan med förmyndare* [Woman with Guardian], in 1842, was a conservative and parodic response to the novel *Qvinnan utan förmyndare* [Woman without Guardian] by Amelie von Strussenfelt, part of the debate regarding female legal minority at the time. Bolander believed women's education should be improved; however, she viewed marriage and motherhood as woman's true goal, though herself unmarried and childless.<sup>39</sup>

**Fredrika Bremer** (17 August 1801–31 December 1865), born outside Åbo (now Turku) in Finland, moved to Stockholm aged three with her family, spending the next two decades in the area. Forbidden to exercise outside, she jumped up and down holding onto chairs. Bremer published *Sketches of Everyday Life* in 1828–1831 to an academy prize. *The President's Daughters* appeared in 1834; five years in Norway saw *The Neighbors* and *The Home*, 1837–1839, and the 1840 play *The Thrall*. In 1842, *Morning Watches* appeared under Bremer's name, winning another prize. Bremer then traveled, on the Rhine in 1846, then across the United States, Cuba, and Britain, meeting Emerson, Hawthorne, Irving, George Eliot. Returning in 1851, Bremer founded two charitable societies and published *Hertha*, 1856, the novel that ended Swedish women's legal minority. She traveled south to the Levant in 1856–1861.<sup>40</sup>

38 *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon* (SKBL) [Biographical Dictionary of Swedish Women] (<https://skbl.se/en>).

39 *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon* (SKBL) [Biographical Dictionary of Swedish Women].

40 Carina Burman, *Bremer—en biografi* [Bremer: A Biography] (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2001).

**Ulrica Charlotta Falkman** (18 March 1795–24 May 1882), born in Sweden, moved to Helsinki as a child. Speaking French, Swedish, and Finnish, Falkman worked as a governess until hearing loss led her to take up writing. Her Swedish-language novels appeared serialized in Finnish magazines and in book form, 1847–1864.<sup>41</sup>

**Emilie Flygare-Carlén**, née **Smith** (8 August 1807–5 February 1892), born in Strömstad, grew up in the Bohuslän archipelago. In 1827, she married Axel Flygare; he died in 1833, and she decided to write. Her first novel, *Waldemar Klein*, followed in 1838. Moving to Stockholm, she married Johan Gabriel Carlén in 1841. Their house became a meeting place for writers, and she published one or two novels a year until her son's death in 1853, followed by six years of silence. Flygare-Carlén then resumed writing until 1884. *Rosen på Tistelön* [The Rose of Thistle Island], 1842, or *Jungfrutornet* [The Maiden's Tower], 1848, feature life in the archipelago. Other novels—*Fosterbröderna* [The Foster Brothers], 1840, *Vindskuporna* [The Wind Domes], 1845—take place among the wealthy. Her collected works appeared in 1869–1875, an autobiography in 1878. She was translated into eleven languages.<sup>42</sup>

**Wilhelmina Carolina Gravallius**, née **Isaksson** (7 September 1807–22 November 1884), born in Mogata, supported herself as a governess until 1846. In 1844, her first novel *Högdals prostgård* [Högdal's Rectory] was a success, but she stopped writing after marrying the Thoresund vicar Christian Gravallius, 1846–1861. She then moved to Stockholm and resumed her career, publishing popular if somewhat simplistic serialized novels.<sup>43</sup>

**Abela Maria Gullbransson**, née **Berglund** (18 March 1775–1822), born in Varberg, married Laurentius Gulbransson in 1795. Some of her influential correspondence or "själavårdsbrev" [letters of spiritual welfare] survives, along with a collection of her songs, published posthumously in 1823 as *Några andeliga sånger jemte ett bref till ett barn* [Some Spiritual Songs together with a Letter to a Child] and often republished.<sup>44</sup>

41 Heidi Grönstrand, *Naiskirjailija, romaani ja kirjallisuuden merkitys 1840-luvulla* (Helsinki: SKS, 2005).

42 Herman Hofberg, Frithiof Heurlin, Viktor Millqvist, and Olof Rubenson, eds. *Svenskt Biografiskt Handlexikon...* [Swedish Biographical Dictionary], 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1906).

43 *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon* (SKBL) [Biographical Dictionary of Swedish Women], <https://www.skbl.se/en/article>

44 *Ibid.*; *The History of Nordic Women's Literature*.

**Sophie Margareta von Knorring**, née **Zelow** (28 September 1797–13 February 1848), born in Gräfsnäs manor, learned German, English, French, and Italian as a child. She lived in Stockholm after 1810, debuting in the 1812 season and meeting Germaine de Staël. In 1814, her family was ruined; she married Baron Sebastian von Knorring in 1820, living after 1834 in Axevalla. Von Knorring contracted consumption in 1827; she was however able to visit Denmark in 1838 and Germany in 1846. Her first novel *Cousinerna* [The Cousins] appeared anonymously in 1834, opposing love to duty, as often in her work. *Torparen* [The Crofter], 1843, was set among the poor. Her novels were translated into four languages, though Fredrika Bremer and Emilie Flygare-Carlén, for instance, found her morals questionable.<sup>45</sup>

**Thekla Levinia Andrietta Knös** (17 July 1815–10 March 1880) was born in Uppsala, where her mother hosted a salon. Her friends included Fredrika Bremer and Pontus Wikner. Knös's poems combine descriptions of Uppsala, heroic pieces, and songs for children in the style of the late German Romantics; in 1846, the Swedish Academy read them aloud, and on their publication in 1851 as *Ragnar Lodbrok*, awarded them prizes. Knös also wrote children's books. Her mother died in 1855 and Knös was forced to support herself via translations and language lessons. In 1870, she contracted a mental illness and was placed in an asylum in Växjö, where she spent her remaining years.<sup>46</sup>

**Aurora Lovisa Ljungstedt**, née **Hjort** [or **Claude Gérard**] (2 September 1821–21 February 1908), born in Karlskrona, married Samuel Viktor Ljungstedt in 1846 and settled in Stockholm. Free to write after marriage, Ljungstedt debuted in the 1840s, publishing her sensational crime novels anonymously (often in serial form in the press) until her pen name was exposed in the 1870s. Inspired by Eugène Sue and Edward Bulwer-Lytton, her novels also often have supernatural elements.<sup>47</sup>

**Julia Kristina Nyberg**, née **Svärdström** [or **Euphrosyne**] (17 November 1784–16 April 1854), born in the parish of Skultuna, lost both parents as a child and was fostered. In 1809, she moved to Stockholm and was influenced by the Aurora League, a society led by

45 Bertil Boëthius, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* [Dictionary of Swedish Biography], 33 vols (Stockholm: Bonnier, 1918–).

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.



the Romantic Per Daniel Amadeus Atterbom, in whose journal *Poetisk kalender* she later published much of her poetry. Back in Skultuna in 1822, she married Anders Wilhelm Nyberg. Nyberg's songs for the Walpurgis Night holiday are still sung today: "Vårvindar friska" [Fresh Spring Winds], "Fruktmånglerskan med tapperhetsmedalj" [The Fruit Shopper with a Bravery Medal]. Nyberg avoided epic, preferring short lyric pieces inspired by nature. The Swedish Academy awarded her a prize.<sup>48</sup>

**Märta Helena Reenstierna** [married name **von Schnell**] (16 September 1753–12 January 1841), married Captain Christian Henrik von Schnell in 1775. The couple had eight children, though only one reached adulthood. In 1793, she began a diary; widowed in 1811, she lost her surviving son in a riding accident the following year. Reenstierna went blind in 1839 and ceased both writing and managing the Årsta estate. Her diary, published in 1946–1953, describes the daily life of the entire estate, 1793–1839, alongside Stockholm events such as the 1794 Armfelt Conspiracy.<sup>49</sup>

**Marie Sophie Schwartz**, née **Birath** [or **Fru M.S.S.**] (4 July 1819–7 May 1894), born in Borås, was the illegitimate daughter of a maidservant, though her own account differs. She was adopted by a Stockholm customs official but the family went bankrupt after his death. Schwartz was educated at a girls' school and by private tutors; from 1840–1858, she lived openly with Gustaf Magnus Schwartz, though he was still married to a Catholic and could not divorce. They had two sons. Schwartz wrote early but was not allowed to publish until her 1851 debut under the pen name 'Fru M.S.S.' She was employed by the newspaper *Svenska Tidningen Dagligt Allehanda* from 1851–1859. After her husband's death in 1858, Schwartz lived with her lady's companion, writing prolifically about social injustice, both books and serialized novels, until moving in with her married son in 1876. Her works were translated into eight languages.<sup>50</sup>

**Magdalena Sofia "Malla" Silfverstolpe**, née **Montgomery** (8 February 1782–17 January 1861), born in the county of Nyland and

48 *Svenskt kvinnobiografiskt lexikon* (SKBL) [Biographical Dictionary of Swedish Women].

49 Bertil Boëthius. *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* [Dictionary of Swedish Biography] (1918–).

50 Carin Österberg, Inga Lewenhaupt, and Anna Greta Wahlberg, *Svenska kvinnor: föregångare, nyskapare* (Lund: Signum, 1990).

Tavastehus (Finland), lost her mother after childbirth; father and daughter returned to Sweden. In 1789, he was sentenced to death after the Anjala Conspiracy but was released from prison in 1793. Silfverstolpe was raised by her grandmother in Edsberg. In 1807, she married Colonel David Gudmund Silfverstolpe, an unhappy union. Her husband suffered from "mjältsjuka," spleen or depression; they moved to Uppsala in 1812 and he died in 1819. In 1820, Silfverstolpe opened a salon that was for two decades a center for Sweden's Romantic movement, open to writers, scientists, and foreign visitors. She began writing memoirs in 1822, first published in 1908–1911. Almqvist, Tegnér, Atterbom and others appear in them.<sup>51</sup>

**Constantina Carolina Amalia "Amelie" von Strussenfelt** (16 May 1803–24 February 1847), born in Arrie parish, was the sister of the writer Ulrika von Strussenfelt. Her mother died in childbirth and her father remarried and left the country, leaving the two sisters with their different grandparents. The sisters did not get on. Amelie worked as a governess from 1831, then set up a school in 1845. She debuted as a poet in 1828 and as a novelist in 1829. In her 1841 novel *Qvinnan utan förmyndare* [Woman without Guardian], she joined the debate about female legal minority; Sophie Bolander published a parodic conservative reply in 1842.<sup>52</sup>

**Ulrika "Ulla" Sophia von Strussenfelt** (9 May 1801–16 January 1873), born in Hilleshög, was the older sister of Amelie von Strussenfelt, though raised separately. Like her sister, she never married, supporting herself first as a governess, then from 1834–1859 managing a girls' school. Active as a translator for periodicals, Ulla started publishing novels in the 1840s and 1850s, to popular if not critical success; they were translated into several languages. Her novels were mostly historical and nationalistic but progressive.<sup>53</sup>

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51 Carin Österberg et al. *Svenska kvinnor* (1990).

52 Bertil Boëthius, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* [Dictionary of Swedish Biography] (1918–).

53 Ibid.