

Summary
Place-names on Visingsö
By Staffan Fridell

This paper is an attempt to interpret the oldest settlement names on the island of Visingsö, on Lake Vättern in Småland. The very oldest of them include a number that were originally nature names: *Ed* ‘isthmus, portage’, *Näs* ‘spit, foreland’ and *Ströja* (OSw. *Strø*, a stream name). A few names in *-løsa* and *-inge* also belong to the earliest stratum: *Avlösa* (OSw. **Aghurløsa*, with the first element **aghur* ‘point, tip’), *Vrixlösa* (with the first element **vrigh* ‘curve, bend’) and *Rökinge* (perhaps referring to settlers from Rök in Östergötland). A large number of names in *-by* and *-stad* are also pre-Christian, but probably refer to secondary settlement units divided off from even older ones. *Asby* (‘village by the ridge’) and *Stigby* (‘village by the road’) may be assumed to have *Näs* as their parent settlement, while *Säby* (‘village by the lake’) was probably formed from part of *Kumlaby*. *Erstad* (with the first element OSw. **ælre* ‘(stand of) alder’ or **Æltre-edh* ‘the alder isthmus’) and *Ostad* (OSw. *Odhestadhir*, possibly with an OSw. **odhe* ‘ford’ as its first element) are both secondary settlements from *Ed*. *Hagaby* (‘village by the enclosure’), *Lundby* (‘village by the sacred grove’), *Vallby* (‘village by the level grassland’), *Grönstad* (with the first element OSw. **græni* ‘(stand of) spruce’) and *Kängstad* (probably with the first element OSw. **thiæghn* ‘freeman, warrior’, as an appellative or a man’s name) are also probably secondary settlement units.

The large village of *Kumlaby* may be assumed to have originally had the name **Kumla*, the plural of *kummel* ‘monument’, referring to barrows, cairns or other ancient monuments. The same word is also found in *Gottekumla* (the first element of which could be a man’s name *Gute* or the word *gute* ‘Gotlander’), although the latter is likely to be a medieval settlement unit.

Tunnerstad is a difficult name to interpret. The author suggests two main possibilities: (1) OSw. *Tunnastadhir*, with a man’s name **Tunne* as its first element; (2) the place-name element *Tuna*, indicative of a central place, as the first element of either **Tunastadher* ‘place of a *tuna*’ or **Tunastadhir*, a settlement secondary to a **Tuna* that has now disappeared.

Names from the Viking period or the early Middle Ages include *Husaby* (from OSw. *husaby* ‘farm serving as a royal administrative centre’) and *Torp* (‘farm established from a larger settlement’), which is probably a secondary settlement from *Kumlaby*.

The presumably medieval name *Husgårde* (OSw. *Hofsgærdhe*) most likely means ‘the enclosed land belonging to the settlement of **Hof*’. **Hof*, with the sense ‘cultic building’, may be assumed to be the name of yet another now lost settlement unit. *Rönäs* (OSw. **Ryniuos* ‘headwater’ or ‘stream by the **Rynia* spring’), too, is probably a medieval settlement.