

Chapter 78 : Crown Prince (II) (1908-1932) – World War I Before|during|after.

This chapter about the first part of Gusty's Crown Prince's term extends somewhat arbitrarily until 1932 - the year when he turned 50 and his eldest son married the daughter of a German Nazi. However, it has been difficult to associate this event with any ideological conviction either in the son or in Gusty. Various authors' attempts are described in a later chapter 88. During the period Gusty came to take a stand for England against Germany. This is usually described as a parental rebellion fuelled by his uncle Prince Eugen, his wife Margaret of Connaught and/or his second wife Louise Mountbatten. The arguments for and against are presented in connection with their biographies. Gusty's life in 1908/32 was a direct continuation of his previous life. I start with his military career and continue with his official assignments for the Royal House, the Swedish Sports Confederation and the Swedish Trade Association. I then describe his activities as an archaeologist and collector.

May 1, 1920, his wife Margaret died and he did not remarry until November 3, 1923. He seems to have filled the period of mourning with work. The little that is known about his personal feelings is recorded in the chapter about his eldest son heir prince Gustaf Adolf, "Edmund". In November and December 1920 Gusty was in Greece & Italy together with Prince Eugen and others. Life continued, but the family was to fragment.

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After completing his education at the war college, Gusty was January 22, 1909 appointed captain of Svea Livgarde (the royal guard) & sergeant in the Crown Prince's Hussar Regiment. He then served with short breaks in the Guards until the end of the First World War and was June 14, 1918, appointed colonel (=titular head) of the Guards. This ended his active service, but he received additional honorary positions: Major General & Lieutenant General. November 11, 1932, he was appointed full general - Sweden's highest military post in peacetime.

Gusty's active service 1909-1918 covered 37 months = 1/3 of the time: Half as company & Battalion commander, half on different staffs. From 1923 onwards he also led or participated in the larger field exercises. Apparently, he was a good officer. "The qualities that characterized the Crown Prince during his service in the army were primarily duty, thoroughness, efficiency in the service and lack of conceit. Through his unostentatious and friendly nature he was considered the best comrade among comrades and greatly appreciated by both foremen and subordinates. He was a good leader even in the sense that he sought to awaken the soldiers' interest and understanding of the exercises. So he often gathered the battalion's staff - not just the command - and reviewed the intended course of the battalion exercises and explained why some manoeuvres would be carried out, i.e. he motivated the soldiers, considered import today, but not common at the time." - "As a staff officer [during the First World War], the Crown Prince received many important tasks - including the organization of the militia or *Landstorm* & the voluntary defence and organizing field exercises. On the initiative of the Crown Prince, two 14-day courses were also conducted for training regimental officers and older captains for postings as battalion commanders."¹

Gusty was not very technically interested, he had no driver's license, but he kept up to date. November 3, 1910, he made an ascent in a so called dragon balloon for reconnaissance. At the

¹ Ljungqvist 1976.

time, there was an idea to form a voluntary balloon corps that could be deployed during war, but this did not happen.

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As Crown Prince, Gusty attended cabinet meetings, followed his father on trips within the kingdom, filled in when he was abroad, was expected to support him received assignments. What he accomplished during the period 1908-1932 is unclear. In foreign policy he was most involved in the Åland question and in the League of Nations. He had a reputation as a liberal. He was very committed to the issue of national pensions, was thoroughly conversant with the details, attended meetings of the Social Security Board and in 1913 attended courses and lectures held by the economist Gustav Cassel.² Scattered statements can be interpreted as meaning that Gusty, like Cassel, feared that a "welfare mentality" would spread where the state was expected to bear all costs. He is said to have practised in the departments during his first period as Crown Prince to understand how matters were prepared for the cabinet.

Historian Sten Carlsson³ enumerates a number of statements and incidents that all point to Gusty never entrusting his political views to anyone, advocated a parliamentary system of government according to the English model and was loyal to his oath. This is hard to reconcile, but was Gusty in a nutshell. He had a hard time taking a stand. In 1911, Prime Minister Arvid Lindman perceived him as a compromise politician. In 1912, his mother believed the same thing. In 1913, he supported the shipowner Dan Broström: liberal, pro-defense & Western oriented. In 1914, he supported his uncles Carl & Eugen not to seek a conflict with the Staaff-government. February 6, 1914, he was still present in the courtyard, repeated his father's speech out at Slottsbacken and present when the peasant train paraded through the castle. Afterwards, he believed that the speech should never have been made. In April he hoped for a reconciliation between Staaff and the royal house. In 1915, he publicly criticized his father that "the king should be king for all the Swedish people" and that it was unwise of the royals to "commit themselves to a single party".⁴ In 1916, he was perceived by the politician Hugo Hamilton as neutral as to foreign policy. In 1917 he was considered an entente-friend. During the government crises of 1917, he supported his father's candidates but had good relations with both Nils Edén and Hjalmar Branting. In 1918, Hamilton claimed that Gusty was hypnotised by the Social Democrats in the manner of "the rat of the viper". Gusty seems to have seen the right to vote as an ongoing process. The country had always had an independent peasantry. Now it also had an independent working class. Had they accepted A, they also had to accept B.⁵ Almeberg claims that Gustav's good relations with Hjalmar Branting saved the country from becoming a republic in 1917/18, but that is impossible to verify. The same claims are made about his good relations with Tage Erlander.

During the 1920s, Gusty had an increasingly important role in government affairs:

In general, his activities have been as a mediator, and it is probably this role that he ascribes to the regent of a modern parliamentary-ruled country. This does not, however, prevent the Crown Prince from asserting his own, strongly personal views and also trying to enforce them, if one is allowed to believe men who have sat at the

² Swahn 1930: s. 129.

³ Carlsson 1971.

⁴ Westman 1983: ss. 126-127; Torbacke 1990: s. 66.

⁵ Gustaf Adolf 1930.

King's Council or been otherwise involved. A constitutional ruler may be forced to support decisions that do not conform to his own opinion. The Crown Prince knows that, but he argues for his own convictions until the end. As a rule, he only gives in when clearly stronger arguments are put forward on the other side. A former minister confirms that a Council under the Crown Prince's leadership is considerably more demanding than under the King's. At each Council, as a rule, half a thousand cases are dealt with, and the Sovereign, whether it is the King or the Crown Prince who heads the Council, cannot of course familiarize himself with all or even half of them. Most of them are only formally treated and confirmed without further discussion. But when the Crown Prince is in charge of the gavel, the heads of department must always be prepared to give an account for one or more matters, which otherwise escape notice.

In recent years, the crown prince's duties have increased. The King has increasingly entrusted him purely representative tasks, and he now follows the affairs of state with the same care as the King. It can be taken as a rule that no major legislative issue is to be dealt with without the prime minister or the relevant minister being called up to the crown prince to explain themselves. A several hour long discussion may then take place. The Crown Prince argues at times such as an ordinary person argues about important things and undoubtedly brings both sympathies and antipathies to light, however, when it comes to antipathies with some caution. He is very interested in the general situation at home and abroad and often makes it the subject of long consultations with the members of the State Council at afternoon gatherings at home on the Crown Prince's floor. It can be said that no major labour conflict occurs in the country without the Crown Prince "being involved". He wants immediate information and precise details of the situation and of the settlement proposals put forward by the state's conciliators, and is always concerned that there should be a settlement and that conflicts should be settled as soon as possible. He often asks his interlocutor whether he could not intervene himself by addressing one or other of the influential people in the warring camps. A very admirable feature of the Crown Prince is that he likes to pardon. When requests for pardon are submitted to the Council, properly dissuaded by most everybody, the Crown Prince still ends the discussion with: "Don't you think that we should pardon him anyway?" This proves his good heart, but do not confuse heart and head. As to matters of state he is firm. The Crown Prince is reluctant to intervene in personal matters. When he, for example, knows that a promotion is properly prepared, he does not try to influence the outcome. Anyone who has had dealings with the Crown Prince has the firm feeling that for him the matter at hand is always more important than the person concerned and that he always strives to fulfil his task with fairness.⁶

There have been isolated attempts to portray Gusty as a religious person. For example, he represented his father - the head of the Swedish Church - at the World Ecumenical Congress Life and Work in Stockholm in 1925. The initiator was Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, who is considered to have influenced Gusty. Gusty is also considered to have been influenced by the preacher Natanael Beskow. In what way Gusty was influenced is unclear but Söderblom was known for his position that religion was a social psychological rather than a theological phenomenon and both were socially involved. Gusty opened the Congress, joined in the hymns and listened to the representatives as one participant among many.

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⁶ R.J. [Robert Josephsson.] "Kronprinsen som människa och yrkesman." *Vecko Journalen* 1932:46, ss. 26-27, 35.

As previously mentioned, Gustaf V was the protector of the Swedish Sports Confederation (RF) and January 26, 1904, he took over as chairman. The vice chairman was the initiator Victor Balck. It was he who in the beginning did most of the work. In the early years, RF had no cabinet and no permanent staff. The meetings were often held at the Royal Palace. Gusty was most active between 1910 and 1914 in connection with the Stockholm Olympics. At the time, he was honorary chairman of the Olympic Organizing Committee and presided over 56 of its 90 meetings. During the Gusty era, RF grew from 81 to over 3,000 local associations. The annual "sports days" were lively business. He was chairman of RF 1904-1933 & of the Swedish Olympic Committee (SOK) 1913-1933 when his son Edmund took over.

The reason for electing a royal president was to make sport respectable. The RF's general strategy was to provide it with an ideological superstructure without forgetting the sport itself. This took different forms: The Nordic Games were about national struggle. The Olympic Games about International Brotherhood. In 1913, Gusty initiated the Gymnastics and Sport Committee (the Crown Prince Committee) with the task of defending the legitimacy of sport. This succeeded in so far that RF from 1913 received government funding. The details are unclear. It seems to have happened by him during a royal dinner winning Branting for the cause; Gusty obtaining permission for a combined workers feast with a sports competition at the Stadium area. Gusty later triumphantly stated for the record that sport no longer was a private matter but a matter for the whole people. In 1931, a meeting was held between representatives of sport, church and popular education. Gusty opened the meeting which resulted in a cooperative committee with the aim of opposing those who considered sport for the culturally retarded. At the 50th anniversary of the RF, he summarized the future of the sporting business as a combination of popular education and the Olympic ideals:

- Sport must never become an end in itself.
- Maintain the amateur character of sport for the many, but at the same time remember that no one becomes a worse person because he chooses sport for a profession.
- Greed is the opposite of good - not least in sports.
- Without competition, there is no sport.
- Competitions pioneer sports and stir the imagination.
- Even athletes must practice moderation. Ego and ruthlessness are never good.
- Fair play & chivalry are the essence of sport. This applies to both participants, judges, spectators & journalists.
- Learn to receive your laurels with dignity & your defeats.
- Let no athlete lose his self-restraint, because dignity is the hallmark of culture.
- Chauvinism in sports is no better than any other chauvinism, and never lose sight of proportions.
- Sport organizations exist for the good of the sport, not the other way round.
- Don't interfere (to much) in the sports movement, but imbue it with joy of life & good manners.

1907-1932, the RF established a number of performance marks in various sports. Gusty with some difficulty managed two marks in general sports: 1910 the silver mark & 1915 the gold mark. He had the most difficulties with the high jump. In 1889, there was talk of operating him for skewed foot and knee joints but it is unclear whether this happened or

whether it affected his performance.⁷ Later he participated in manifestations like the March of the Realm in 1941.

Gusty made himself known as an advocate of a healthy lifestyle: Absolutist, non-smoker, home cooking & exercise. His reputation as a teetotaler appears to have been from Monday July 29, 1907, when he opened the XIth International Anti-Alcohol Congress in Stockholm. At the time, he gave a speech: "The sober man's home should be and often is an image of health and happiness. Children get a healthy diet and enjoy good care and the whole home makes a stylish and appealing impression. From such homes good citizens go out into the world to do their best for the fatherland. ... May it be considered an honour among the various nations to be at the forefront of the fight against alcoholism. May they proudly show one another the results of each of their efforts." Afterwards he was poster name for IOGT. Gusty's interest in the issue was explained in the newspapers by the fact that his wife was a known absolutist and patron of the female sobriety and morality organization "The White Ribbon".⁸ In the early 1910s he gave a sobriety speech for IOGT in Hässleholm. Afterwards, he had the feeling that he would have to lead by example if the message were to have any impact and became absolutist "of both principle and inclination". No other commitment to sobriety has been found. Gusty never belonged to any public health organisation, but his image was one of clean living. In 1936, he appeared in a radio series about "famous men who espouse absolutism of ideality, of principle, of habit or because it is "natural". The discussion revolved around the ideals of the popular movements. Gusty summed up his own position as "Ideals are necessary for us humans, and enough optimism to strive for them, even if it is part of the tragedy of life, that we never will achieve them."⁹

July 1909, Gusty became chairman of the newly formed Swedish Singers' Association. This had the task of promoting four-voice male singing and thereby raise the Swedish national consciousness. Gusty took the assignment seriously. He and his wife even took singing lessons for Thekla Falck-Hofer (1860-1910). The Associations concerts were very grand. Grandest was a gigantic concert at Ullevi in 1936 with 4,000 participants. There were also foreign branches under Gusty's protection.

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Upon accession to the throne, Gustav V became the protector of the Swedish Trade Association, while Gusty, as Crown Prince, became its honorary chairman. In this capacity, his trade promotion efforts seem to have been similar to his father's. Gusty inaugurated a number of industrial and art-industry exhibitions and/or sat on the organizing committee. Those I have found are the Baltic Exhibition 1914, the Gothenburg Exhibition 1923, the Halmstad Exhibition 1929 and the Stockholm Exhibition 1930. Gusty seems to have shared the responsibility with Prince Eugen. For example, he stepped in as honorary chairman of the Stockholm Exhibition in 1909 when Gusty was occupied with the military. During the trips abroad, Gusty gave lectures at the countries Chamber of Commerce and made study visits. On one occasion - October 1916 - he sent a personal letter to British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith defending Swedish trade policy with the Germans. From 1919, Gusty was honorary chairman of the Sweden-America Foundation with a similar objective to the Swedish Trade Association: Knowledge transfer & Personal contacts.

⁷ Göteborgs Aftonblad 1889-11-05.

⁸ Tidningen Kalmar 1907-07-31.

⁹ "Männen som låta glaset stå." Vecko Journalen 1936:16, ss. 18-19,52.

Gustav's three most important achievements appear to have been the long trips: Around-the-World 1926-1927, the East 1934-1935 & Delaware 1938. The intention was to "put Sweden on the map" and Gustav in the company of Crown Princess Louise had a concentrated program of events in that spirit. It was more about "the Sweden image" than selling anything. The round-the-world trip went to America, Hawaii, Japan, Korea, China, Indonesia and India. I concentrate on America in 1926. There are two books¹⁰ and a large number of American newspaper articles. The official motive for the visit was the unveiling of the John Eriksson Monument, which was attended by President Coolidge and 50,000 spectators.

Gustav arrived in New York on the evening of May 17, 1926. The interest was very great and he attended at least three impromptu press conferences. For nine weeks he gave speeches, made study visits, toured and met decision-makers. The American tour ended in San Francisco, where he and the Crown Princess August 4 continued their round-the-world trip. Gustav is often portrayed as an extremely reserved nerd & history buff, but he actually had a more public side, made a relaxed impression, adapted the speeches to the audience and shook hands. However, as far as acting familiar or patting children on their heads, that was a no-no. The opening interview started with a host of photographers, whereupon Gustav read from a prepared speech. The journalists were interested in other things and readers of Gustav's first interview ever learned that: He had been intensely seasick during the crossing but was "cured" by the ship's doctor with a subcutaneous injection of Belladonna. Regarding the doctrine of natural development - topical because of the trial in Tennessee the previous year - he had not noticed it in his archaeological work. He did not play any instrument - possibly concertina (a kind of accordion). He listened to jazz but preferred something more advanced. He could dance - if not Charleston - but was not amused by it. He didn't drink, he didn't smoke, but he played poker. He liked dramas but in theatre, not in film. In his second interview, he tried to steer the questions away from himself. In his third interview, he was asked what he would have become if he had not been born a Prince. The curator of an archaeological museum was the answer.¹¹ The closer you study these Gustav's interviews, the more dodgy they become, but in comparison with the English heir Edward (VIII) the year before he fared excellently. Edward was occasionally unresponsive to similar questions. It never happened Gustav. Gustav also gave a talk on press issues. It became clear that he believed that the press was a political weapon to influence the masses and this was easier to do in a small country like Sweden.

The Indian part of the trip is depicted by Anna Boberg¹², with photographs by Gustav. Gustav's interest in art, museums, and archaeological remains caused such groans from the rest of his following that he included a few horse races and a tiger hunt in the program.

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Gustav's archaeology and art interests fit badly into my periodization of his life. They were ongoing. After Gustav's death, a memorial medal with the sites of all his archaeological excavations was minted - whether he carried them out in person or through his initiative or assistance. The places were: Libtomta (1898), Håga (1902), Tinkarp (1905), Sofiero-Glumslöv (1920-21), Asine (1922-30), Korea (1926), Cyprus (1927-31), Gotland-Vallhagar (1946-50), Skåne-Ageröd (1947-48), Birka-Helgö (1954-?), Öland-Eketorp's fortification (1959-64), San Giovenale (1956-1959), Luni (1960-63) & Acqua Rossa (1966-?). Further

¹⁰ Henriksson 1926; Swenne 1926.

¹¹ New York Times 1926-05-28 & 1926-06-05.

¹² Boberg 1928.

minor excavations exist.¹³ Since Gusty's archaeology was a hobby, there was little systematics in the choice of objects. These included Swedish antiquity, the Mycenaean culture and the Etruscans. He was most interested in the artistic aspects of the finds.

The old Swedish finds are now in the Historical Museum (opened in 1934). Gusty's initiatives in Greece & Italy led to that there was significantly greater Swedish activity there than had otherwise been the case and two Swedish cultural institutes were created: Rome (opened 1925) & Athens (opened 1948). The Cyprus collections are now part of the Mediterranean Museum (opened in 1954). Archaeology became part of Gusty's public image and as such is much renown.¹⁴ In 1967 it rendered him the jocular incognito "The Gripsholm Digger" - originally a joke in the Student newspaper *Blandaren* (but here lost in translation).

Gusty collected East Asian art and crafts. As a rule, through others. The collections started in 1907 with a plate from the Chien Lung period (1736-1795) but most of the ceramics are from previous eras: Han (206 BC-220 CE), Tang (618-906) and Sung (960-1279). Further objects were bronzes, varnishes, jades, work in rhinoceros horns, enamels, precious metal, wood, bones, textiles & glass. There were about 2500 objects. A selection has been described by PhD Nils Palmgren.¹⁵ The collection is now at the East Asian Museum (opened in 1963). An extensive reference library is included, about 10 thousand books.

Gusty also collected Swedish art, graphics & drawings and was chairman of a number of committees and interest groups. Like his brother Wilhelm, Uncle Eugen and nephew Lennart, he - by exploiting his position and money - made a career as a cultural personality. Bo Gyllensvärd, Eva Myrdal and Fredrick Whitling - all associated with the East Asian Museum - have each written a positive summary of his achievements.¹⁶ Whitling: "During his almost 43 years as Crown Prince, Gustaf Adolf played an important organizational network role for humanistic research and cultural 'cultivation' in general through his multidisciplinary specialist position as the 'spider' in the networks that created economic, scientific and diplomatic conditions for field work and the collection of archaeological materials and art objects abroad." In his lifetime, Gusty was awarded with 17 honorary doctorates.

In 2003, the collections were criticized for being procured through dishonest methods, but this does not seem to be the case. I have not found any Chinese criticism. However, there is a scientific criticism of Gusty's collectors' criteria - that systematics is now more important than aesthetics. The art expert PhD Nils Palmgren tried to summarize Gusty's collectors criteria: "The basic prerequisite [for the collection] is the king's sense of the passing of time & culture. In that respect, he has certainly not got the strongest impressions from Swedish archaeology but what inspired him was Egypt. ... He collects such things that seem to be important objects in a certain time that throws a light on it and at the same time are pleasing to the eye."¹⁷

¹³ Almgren m.fl. 1932; kung Gustaf Adolf 1955; Isaakson red. 1972.

¹⁴ Tigram. [Margit Siwertz.] "Professor kronprinsen." *Vecko Journalen* 1942:43, ss. 24-25,33,38; Boëthius m.fl. 1960: ss. 312-334; Olsson 1967: ss. 22-25; Wetter m.fl. 1972; Mark 2004.

¹⁵ Palmgren 1948.

¹⁶ Gyllensvärd 1991; Myrdal red. 2013; Whitling 2013.

¹⁷ Olsson 1967: s. 81.