

## Queen Victoria : Rumours.

Victoria was rumoured to be associated with four different men: The children's tutor Carl Svedelius (1861-1951), Gustafs adjutant Gustaf von Blixen-Finecke (1857-1909), her doctor Axel Munthe (1857-1949). Another rumour was about an unknown German. All the rumours are placed in 1890/91.

- Svedelius was employed a tutor 1890-1896. In 1903 the political scientist Rudolf Kjellén protested the rumour of Svedelius & Victoria as anti-monarchic propaganda.<sup>1</sup>
- During the Egyptian Expedition of 1890/91, von Blixen assisted Victoria in her photography work. This included carrying the equipment and keeping her company during the darkroom work. The last, in particular, caused much gossip. Heribert Jansson<sup>2</sup> writes in his biography that Marshal of the court Malcolm Lilliehöök after the return told Gustaf of the gossip. Margit Fjellman<sup>3</sup> refers to two letters: One from Gustav to his father August 29, 1891, where he mentions the matter and that it would be best if von Blixen did not follow them on a second Egyptian trip. One from Gustaf to his mother December 20, 1892, which refers to everything "that passed during the autumn" between him and Victoria. Since von Blixen continued as Gustaf's adjutant until 1908, there are two interpretations: Either that von Blixen was innocent or that Gustaf left him behind because a dismissal would be an indirect admission that something had happened.
- Munthe was Victoria's doctor. The first meeting between the two was at Capri in May 1891. There seems to have been rumour of a relationship from the start. It was claimed that Victoria lived in a house on Capri for a long time, not far from Munthe's own. That said, there are no testimonies and Munthe's son thought afterwards that a relationship was unbelievable because, judging by their correspondence, Victoria and his mother were on good terms with each other.<sup>4</sup> Nor did Munthe's biographer Staffan Tjerneld<sup>5</sup> believe in any relationship. Victoria was too closely monitored for it to be feasible. In 2003, Bengt Jangfeldt<sup>6</sup> referenced a few letters from Munthe to Victoria that at least indicated a sympathy of souls even if it did not result in anything. Given Munthe's medical background - gynaecology & psychiatry - it is likely that he was hired as her "soul doctor", not her "lung doctor", which would explain much of the proximity between the two, and his reluctance to tell of his role.
- According to German rumours, her brother Ludwig (1865-1888) did not die of pneumonia, but actually in a duel defending Victoria's honour and reputation against allegations of adultery.<sup>7</sup>

As should be apparent at this point, during the Oscanian period, any informal socializing between the sexes was interpreted as a sexual relationship. I refer to the rumours about Karl XV, Oscar II, etc. & their fictional women's affairs. The only admissible evidence is that the parties themselves acknowledge it or they are caught in the act.

---

<sup>1</sup> Kjellén 1903.

<sup>2</sup> Jansson 1963: s. 92.

<sup>3</sup> Fjellman 1980: ss. 92-94.

<sup>4</sup> Fjellman 1980: ss. 176-179.

<sup>5</sup> Tjerneld 1973.

<sup>6</sup> Jangfeldt 2003: ss. 279-282.

<sup>7</sup> von Baudissin 1909; Jansson 1963: s. 85.

## Referenser

- Baudissin, Wolf von. (1909-01-06.) Aus meiner Dienstzeit. Kieler Neuste Nachrichten, nr 4.  
Tillgänglig på <[karlheinz-everts.de/Texte/Dienstzeit.htm](http://karlheinz-everts.de/Texte/Dienstzeit.htm)> (2015-01-01).
- Fjellman, Margit. (1980.) Victoria : Sveriges drottning. Stockholm: Bonniers.
- Jangfeldt, Bengt. (2003.) En osalig ande : berättelsen om Axel Munthe. Stockholm:  
Wahlström & Widstrand.
- Jansson, Heribert. (1963.) Drottning Victoria. Stockholm: Hökerbergs bokförlag.
- Kjellén, Rudolf. (1903.) Stockholmstidningen, okänt datum. I: Grönhammar, Ann &  
Nordström, Lena. (1986.) Kronprinsessan Victoria 1881-1907. (s. 15.) Stockholm:  
Livrustkammaren.
- Tjerneld, Staffan. (1973.) Den mystiske dr Munthe : en biografi om herren till San Michele.  
Stockholm: Bonnier.