

## Chapter 29 : The Duchess of Dalarna (1836-1914).

According to several sources, Augustus had "a combustible heart" but it is unclear whether this led to anything. Like the brothers, he courted his mother's ladies-in-waiting, in his case "Miss W", but she got tired of a relationship without any future & married someone else. Close in time was the m:lle Helene de Pury in Neuchâtel that Dardel mentions. Nothing is known of her however.

His mother made several attempts to get August married. In 1861, the youngest daughter of Duke Bernhard II of Saxony-Meinigen is mentioned, but she married another.<sup>1</sup> The same year there was a rumour about Princess Anna Murat, but she also married another.<sup>2</sup> However, there was yet another princess in the Murat family, Amalia of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (1815-1841) married to Prince Eduard of Saxony-Altenburg (1804-1852), both of whom were now dead, but with a surviving unmarried daughter Therese (1836-1914) who lived with her uncle Prince Karl-Anton of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen (1811-1885).

In 1863, Augustus on his way to Switzerland visited several German courts to introduce himself. He spent Christmas and New Year in Neuchâtel and Geneva. He then received a telegram from home to visit Prince Karl-Anton. August and his entourage (chamberlain Gösta Ehrenborg, adjutant Ennes & aide-de-camp Thestrup) took the train to Düsseldorf where on January 3 they took in at the hotel "Breidenbacher Hof". The next day they were received by the Prince and his family. After two days he & Therese got engaged. This seems rather fast but they had met earlier, and were at least superficially acquainted. Therese's younger sister Antoinette, at the time the mother of five and Duchess of Anhalt, was said to have been the driving force.<sup>3</sup> On January 20, the legation secretary Henrik Åkerman arrived to arrange the marriage contract. No difficulty: Therese was well off, with an interest on the capital of 28 thousand Rdr annually, and Lutheran. She was granted the castle of Haga as jointure. Later, her Swedish teacher Professor Emanuel Olde (1802-1885) arrived. August stayed until the wedding on April 16. No one in the family was present, apparently because of the German-Danish War. The wedding ceremony lasted the entire day and was not finished until 9 in the evening. The guests were regaled with Swedish punch, by August christened "Vallhalla mead".

The first leg on trip to Sweden was with the steamship Svea. "The Duchess is supposed to have been very depressed while on 'Svea' and several times wept. ... only a young lady from the duchess's homeland, a childhood friend, accompanied her here but well will stay some time at least, which somewhat cheered her up."<sup>4</sup> On April 27 at ½ 8 in the evening, Therese arrived in Stockholm aboard the steam corvette Valkyria. She was received with salutes, landed at the Logård staircase and was welcomed with cheers from a curious crowd. Therese was dressed in a yellow silk dress with trimmings of swan's-down, an ermine-lined white moiré coat & white crêpe hat with white plumes. The Royal guard formed a hedge up to her carriage, the castle's balustrades were covered with blue fabric & crowns, young girls threw flowers for her feet, she waved and seemed somewhat stunned by it all. There is an interview from 1911:

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<sup>1</sup> Göteborgs Allehanda, 1861-04-11, s. 3

<sup>2</sup> Blekingeposten, 1861-08-30, s. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Lewenhapt 1942: s. 9.

<sup>4</sup> Göteborgsposten, 1864-05-04, s. 1.

The Duchess tells us that she was motherless at five and fatherless at sixteen, married at twenty-eight. "It was the Hohenzollern family, who decided it," she says, "and they only informed me that a Swedish prince would come to visit and that the intention was marriage. And so it was. We met at my uncle's house in Düsseldorf, the engagement lasted three months, and then my wedding in Altenburg. It was fun and magnificent. And then the journey here - I had never seen the sea before and thought it was so beautiful. We came here in April. The weather was beautiful. I had a dress in rose with edges of the swan, and the royals met me out on the lake in a little boat. ... There were great crowds of people moving about, and they greeted me with enthusiasm. Yes, that was then."<sup>5</sup>

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Princess Theresa Amalia Karolina Josefina Antoinetta of Saxony-Altenburg, was born on December 21, 1836, at the castle of Triesdorf, Bavaria, Germany. 1836-1852, she lived in Ansbach, Bamberg & Munich. 1852-1856 with her cousin Queen Marie of Hanover and then with her uncle in Düsseldorf. She spent the summers at Weinbug Castle (St. Gellen) or Sigmaringen.<sup>6</sup> Apart from this, nothing is known about her life before marriage. There are seven short biographies (Almén 1893: ss. 282-284; SBHL 1906b; Jaya 1913: ss. 84-94; NFB 1919; Knagg 1932: ss. 121-143; Elgklou 1978: Page 127; Ohlmarks 1979: ss. 108-109; Skott 1996: ss. 207-209; Hallgren 2015) and like August she appears as a secondary character in biographies & memorial literature (Dardel 1911; De Geer 1929; Lewenhaupt 1942). An energetic genealogist has shown that Therese was a direct descendant of Magnus Ladulås.

The marriage with August was childless. Therese kept house and devoted herself to princess life: Opera, theatre, balls, dinners, reading, coffee parties, excursions, music clubs, a little representation, study visits & charity - both private and as patron of Pauvre Honteux. In her first year she was elected honorary member of the Academy of Music. The verdict on her was positive though not overwhelmingly so: "Princess Thérèse looks modest and is small and weak in stature; the facial expression appears mild and sympathetic."<sup>7</sup> - "As to her disposition, the Duchess is simple and straightforward."<sup>8</sup> However, she had mental problems, recurring outbursts of aggression once or twice a month, "paroxysms", they seem to have been triggered by anxiety. However, this never reached the public or even the rest of the royal family.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to her Swedish education, Therese, who had never moved in large company, was supervised by Queen Josephine in how to behave as a hostess. "For example: If possible, please address some kind words to each person present in a company. It doesn't have to be much, but would in everyone leave the feeling of personal contact, to have been observed and not just be air."<sup>10</sup>

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After August's death, Therese seems to have completely lost her way. Charles XV's confidant, the Egyptian Ohan Demirgian, offered to find her a new husband, but nothing

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<sup>5</sup> Jaya 1913: ss. 91-92.

<sup>6</sup> Almén 1893: ss. 282-283.

<sup>7</sup> Dardel 1911b: del 2, s. 92.

<sup>8</sup> Almén 1893: s. 283.

<sup>9</sup> De Geer 1929: ss. 72-73.

<sup>10</sup> Lewenhaupt 1942: ss. 18-19.

came of it.<sup>11</sup> Oscar managed on unclear grounds to have her declared incapacitated. She probably signed in good faith because there is no record of a trial. As a good man, she got the politician Louis De Geer. Therese had never had a sense of economy, and De Geer forced her 1873/74 to change her steward & reduce the number of employees. Therese spent the summer of 1875 with her German relatives, who found her so unbalanced that they made her spend the winter in a hotel in Neuchâtel under medical supervision. Improvement was slow in coming. In the autumn of 1876, she attacked her chamber maid and clawed her in the face. The reason is unclear, perhaps it was some impertinent comment about Therese's seriously ill lady-in-waiting<sup>12</sup> Since Therese between relapses behaved quite normally, there was some confusion about what was going on.

It is alleged that Therese in her youth suffered "from some nervous condition, which hindered her education and eventually made her seem somewhat retarded."<sup>13</sup> The problems - possibly difficulties in dealing with the harassment of the surroundings - would have taken place at the court of Hanover after her father's death in 1852, and to be resolved by the move in 1856 to her uncle. Since Therese's problems became acute again after Augustus' death, they were probably related to her powerlessness or her inability to handle her situation. She was in the same situation as crown princess Lovisa (see chapter 34) & reacted in the same way through "hysterical" outbursts.

Therese's affairs in Neuchâtel were first managed by Fritz von Dardel's brother Alexander, later by a "homme d'affaire". Alexander got her a three-story villa where she, the suite & occasional guests with some interruptions - she was for example each summer invited to Fridhem - lived until 1890 when she moved back to Sweden. Before moving, Fritz von Dardel visited her:

In Neuchatel I visited princess Therese, who has become fat and is starting to grow old. She had a lady-in-waiting von Essen, a neat young lady. The conversation concerned the impending transfer to Haga Castle, which seems to be keenly desired. Dr. Chatelain, with whom I then talked on this subject, told me that King Oscar asked him whether he considered the royal patient so well that she could attend the court parties in Stockholm. If she cannot, he said, I will not have her in Haga. "J'ai assez de princesses malades. (I have enough with sick princesses)" The Queen, who was present at the conversation, looked embarrassed. Chatelain considered an attempt appropriate, so the princess's house in Neucharel will not at this point be sold. Thanks to a strict regime, she is now calm. Her day is divided into fixed times: at 8 a.m. coffee, then an hour's walk, so two hours of lessons in English and Italian, at 12 lunch, then two hours' sleep, at 3 a.m. An outing in a carriage, at 6 a.m. supper, at 7 a.m. piano, at 8 a.m. tea and at 9 a.m. bedtime. From time to time, the princess announces herself for dinner or tea at Vigner with my brother. [The Marshal of the Court] Ennes complains about her sister, the Princess of Anhalt, and her uncle, the Prince of Hohenzollern, who evaded her visits but blame our royal family for not wanting her in Stockholm.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ohan Demirgian. <sv.wikipedia.org> (2016-01-01). [Källhänvisning saknas.]

<sup>12</sup> De Geer 1929: s. 150; Elgklou 1978: s. 127.

<sup>13</sup> Knagg 1932: s. 127; Elgklou 1978: s. 87.

<sup>14</sup> Dardel 1911b: del 5, ss. 109-110.

Therese's life in Sweden after her return continued as before her time abroad. She gathered art, enjoyed music, gave dinners & used her free time for archipelago excursions with the steam sloop *Thérèse*, handworks, charity, dinners, music, reading, etc. She was extremely high church, preferred to invite Gustaf Beskow & Fredrik Hammarsten, but also – to honour Princess Eugénie - invited Bernhard Wadström. "The Duchess had a simple faith in the good and the right, that could not be shaken and it never occurred to her to doubt the strict truth of an opinion or a personal judgment. One had to be extremely careful not to muddy her soul with a premature and really not at all meant unfavourable opinion on living or dead."<sup>15</sup> I.e. Therese completely lacked humour, self-knowledge & detachment.

In 1892 and 1899, she visited her home county of Dalarna, and spoke kindly to as many people as she could. In the autumn of 1914, her health declined and on November 9 she died from internal bleeding. There is a continuation of the interview from 1911. She thought she had already lived too long & experienced too much:

It is the third king's time I live in now and I see that much has changed. It is good that there is more freedom than before, but it is bad that there is more self-indulgence. The new era probably has its good sides - the people can better choose what they want and everything has been simplified. I do not like women's political suffrage, but I do like the women's movement, because I think it will develop into something. The position of the royal family has rather changed. There has been a great deal of withdrawal from the etiquette of the past. It does not fit the spirit of the times. I'm most interested in music and reading now. Church history, fiction and biography. I like Selma Lagerlöf and Pelle Ödman very much. I wrote and thanked him last year for his funny book. That was just before he died.

At the moment I am reading Nordenskiöld's and Hedin's books. And by the way, a lot of French novels. Hagalund is nearest to my heart. The organized work out there will probably be of great importance for the Hagalund society and poorcare agency. I have been member of the congregation for so long, that I have really become part of it."<sup>16</sup>

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There is a quote in Knagg (1932: s. 127), in which August speaks of his wife: "They say I'm stupid, but you should here my *Thérèse*!" This has been passed on by Elgklou (1978: s. 87). The origin has not been located. There is a similar quote in an anonymous submission in *Svenska Dagbladet* 1986-04-07, but there it reads: "You say I'm stupid, but you should meet August!" August is also supposed in a letter to have called Therese his little *Hoppetossa* (spitfire or vixen) (Skott 1996: s. 207; Sundberg 2004: s. 219). This expression is, however, taken from Erik af Edholm's diary (af Edholm 1944: del 2, s. 171). In fact, there is no information at all about what the spouses thought of each other. Since Knagg (pseudonym of Paul Meijer-Granqvist) was a person who did not hesitate to invent facts & biased quotes, his contributions to Therese's biography are suspect.

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<sup>15</sup> Lewenhaupt 1942: s. 18.

<sup>16</sup> Jaya 1913: ss. 92-93.