

## Chapter 84 : Princess Ingrid of Sweden (1910-2000).

Princess Ingrid Victoria Sofia Louise Margareta of Sweden was born March 28, 1910, at Stockholm Castle and died November 7, 2000, at Fredensborg Palace, Denmark. Her father was Crown Prince Gustaf (VI) Adolf (1882-1973). Her mother was the English Princess Margaret of Connaught (1882-1920). On May 24, 1935, she married Crown Prince Frederick of Denmark-Iceland (1899-1972), with whom she had three daughters.

The literature on Ingrid is mainly about her time in Denmark. There are six longer biographies & pictorial chronicles (Mentze & Friis red. 1955; Sabroe 1970; Poulsen Precht red. 1995; Thomas 1995; Bistrup 1997; Herman 1997; Østlund 2000; Buchwaldt & Rosvall 2010; Lundgren 2010), she appears in the chronicles (Elgklou 1978: ss. 195-198; DBL 1979; Ohlmarks 1979: ss. 130-131; Ravnbøl m.fl. 1993; Skott 1996: ss. 268-276; Sundberg 2004: ss. 262-263; Lindqvist 2010: ss. 121-122; Norlin 2015: ss. 251-254) & there are two interview books (Wolden-Ræthinge 1996: ss. 12-38; Wolden-Ræthinge 1999).

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Ingrid's childhood was initially like that of her brothers. She had the same English nanny Agnes Wiltshire, "Nana", and a French governess Mlle Pierrette. She spoke Swedish to the servants. English with the family. In 1917, she entered the Royal Castle School in a parallel all girls class. The classmates were chosen from the parents' circle of acquaintances: Half were noble, half bourgeois. Her mother Margaret made the final selection. Auda Alm-Eriksson, who was to have been her teacher, contracted the Spanish flu, so brother Bertil's kindergarten teacher Elsa Stenquist took over. Just as well because a couple of the girls were only five years old & had to switch to Bertil's kindergarten. In addition to learning to read and write, the girls were taught rhythmic dance for Anna Behle, piano and theatre. There is a renown photograph of Ingrid from this time dressed in Isadora Duncan style - antique tunic & flowers in the hair.<sup>1</sup> Classmate & friend Eva Hallin (m. Dyrssen) tells of how it was:

We were 6-7 students in the class, the number varied over the years, but there were only girls in our class. The teaching followed the normal curriculum in Sweden except for foreign languages, where German or English was a requirement. The royal children already mastered English as their mother tongue, as their mother was born English princess, and German was not very popular in 1917. In our class we therefore read French. During World War I it could be interpreted as a political statement and did not improve the relationship between the English-born Crown Princess and her German-born mother-in-law, Queen Victoria. Unlike the princes' school time at Slottsskolan, which lasted 4 years and then continued at Lundsberg or Beskowska until they graduated, we spent 9 years in it. It was not considered at this time that the baccalaureate was necessary for girls. ...

At school we had a lot of fun. I myself [Eva Hallin] started at the Castle School only the second semester of the first year and then the class consisted of Princess Ingrid (Sessan, as we schoolmates called her), Marie-Louise af Petersens, Monica Frisk, Stina-Brita Wachtmeister, Astrid von Rosen, Maud Helling, Kerstin Svenilsson and me. Maud and Kerstin quit after a while and Brita Laurin started shortly after. [Cecilia von Horn is also mentioned.]

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<sup>1</sup> Alm-Eriksson 1932; Lidbeck 1989; Hauffman 2000.

The teachers were Ingrid Bolin, Gertrud Engström called Engan and Sigrid Hjorth called Hjortan. Our teacher in French was Jeanne Rouiller and was the principal of the French School. ... [Ingeborg Wollin is also mentioned.]

The lunch break was an entire hour and a half and usually we had lunch at each others'. Most often, however, it was at Monica Frisk on Strandvägen or at Marie-Louise af Petersens at Blasieholmstorg, because they were the closest. The mothers waited with beautifully laid tables with silver, napkins and everything that belonged. The Princess, on the other hand, went to the dining room downstairs in the Castle and ate. Sometimes we felt a little sorry for her who didn't get to do the town with the rest of us. ...

When after nine years the castle school was over, five of us went to Afzelius' school for girls at Floragatan to obtain grades in all subjects and get valid school certificates according to the normal curriculum. What was missing was grades in German or English. Two more school years.<sup>2</sup>

[Ingrid allegedly suffered from dyslexia: her reading speed was low and she had problems with mathematics. However, I have not been able to verify the data. She enjoyed history & read historical biographies, especially about her ancestor Queen Victoria.<sup>3</sup>]

Her cousin Lennart has described her during a summer holiday at Sofiero: "She defended [her little brother Bertil], when her older brothers became too difficult, and we had great respect for her. She was a single girl against all us boys, but she managed most of the time through determined behaviour and an ability to exude an all-disarming motherhood, which made her invulnerable to our jibes. She liked to play with us, even wild and combative games, if we were in that mood, and trailed us as a ghost when we played in the attic. Most of the time though, she spent in her large playhouse with a well-furnished kitchen, where you could cook real food."<sup>4</sup>

Ingrid appears to have quit the Royal Castle School in connection with the confirmation April 1, 1926. She then read art history, general history (Charles XII is said to have been her favourite), a course in political science, continued her French studies (probably conversational exercises) and spent the summer of 1929 with a French family in Tours. Ingrid was very grateful for the work her French teacher Rouiller had put in and used to attend the French school's end of term. In 1935, she learned Danish. Later in life Italian. In the summer of 1928, she took her driving license. The following year, some aviation lessons. In the spring of 1930, she was in Rome for walking the museums. In the autumn of the same year she attended a medical course at the Red Cross, the following spring a course in childcare (?) & in the autumn Jenny Åkerström's cooking school. Leisure time she rode, skated, skied cross country, walked her dogs, played golf & tennis. Like her mother, she was interested in handicraft and floral arrangements. She spent the summer seasons in London, where she lived with her grandfather, was invited to proms & dinners and attended horse races, polo tournaments & societal events, always supervised by some lady-in-waiting.

Ingrid is said to have taken offence when her father married Louise Mountbatten in 1923. In 1920-1923, she had actually been Sweden's first lady while Queen Victoria was abroad, her father's favourite and constant cover girl of the weekly papers. Now she had to toe the line. Sigvard and Carl Johan claim in their memoirs that she did not do so voluntarily, but there are few details. After 1923, she was reported to have

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<sup>2</sup> Dyrssen 2006: ss. 55-67.

<sup>3</sup> Bistrup 1997: s. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Bernadotte, 1966: ss. 83-85.

referred to Princess Ingeborg (1878-1958) as a maternal substitute. Not this Anglo-German intruder. Very appropriate in this case because Ingeborg was her future father-in-law Christian X's sister.

Ingrid had "inherited" the collecting society "the Margaret Club" after her mother. It was divided into active and passive members. Those active managed the organizational. Those passive contributed money. In 1931, Ingrid and her friends Margaretha d'Otrante & Eva Hallin founded a sewing club, the Ingrid Club. Initially, the members were a girl from each parish appointed by the deacons, who gathered on Mondays 18-20 at the castle. The club eventually grew out of the house and moved to its own premises on Norrlandsgatan 17. The production was sold on bazaars for the benefit of the deaf and other organizations.

1931 Ingrid turned 21. She was asked what were her plans. "I am going to marry, because that is the only thing I am allowed to do", was the answer.<sup>5</sup> As luck would have it the Danish Crown Prince Frederick (IX) (1899-1972) was in need of a princess. His previous choice Princess Olga of Greece and Denmark having broken off the engagement and married another. Frederick & Ingrid knew each other since childhood, but it seems to have been a marriage of reason. Frederick's "requirements specification" is widely quoted:

No sentimental woman for me, but a prudent, modern human with general interests, a harmonious woman who is both modern and conservative. That's my wish list. For me as Crown Prince of Denmark, it goes without saying that I will choose a bride who is born a princess. It goes without saying that I follow the Constitution.<sup>6</sup>

October 1934 and five months ahead Ingrid, her father, mother-in-law and brother Bertil toured the Near East: Greece - Turkey - Syria - Iraq - Iran - Palestine - Egypt - Ethiopia. Her finishing school. Ingrid & Frederick exchanged letters. January 29, 1935, the party was back in Stockholm. March 15, the engagement was announced. May 24, the wedding took place.

Neither of the two were easy mixers. In official contexts, Ingrid had a reserved "royal" stance that attracted criticism. In private, however, she was a talker and know-it-all. A friend claimed that she had a "common sense approaching genius", which one should not believe in. Ingrid is actually the source of the two biggest scandals of the Swedish royal house ever: (1) It was through Ingrid's doings that her brother Prince Gustaf Adolf on 24 October 1931 was brought together with Princess Sibylla, whose father was one of Germany's leading Nazis. (2) Ingrid was present at the audience November 28, 1933, when Gustaf V received Kurt Haijby and it was she who persuaded her grandfather to treat him favourably, which obviously gave Haijby ideas.<sup>7</sup> Bad judgment is to weak a word.

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Ingrid's time 1935-1947 as Danish Crown Princess was similar to Princess Lovisa's time 1869-1906: She gave birth, did charity, had artistic interests (=horticulture) & visited Sweden when she needed breathing space. Times had changed. She did not as Lovisa butt herself bloody against the Danish court etiquette, but it took a long time before the people accepted her as "Danish". Where she belonged became something of a fix idea. After arrival, she took lessons three times a week for a year in order to learn Danish language & history. The teacher was Lecturer Ellen Hartmann (1895-1982), who had become known for teaching Danes Swedish. Ingrid was anxious not to sound too stilted but listened much to the radio, read

<sup>5</sup> Prinsessan Ingrid fyller 21. Vecko Journalen 1931:13, s. 28.

<sup>6</sup> Lundgren 2010: s. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Se bilaga 4.

newspapers, and spoke Danish to her surrounding as soon as she could. Her “Swedish” was an issue. Her inability to understand Danish humour was cited as proof. Not entirely correct. She wished she had been more English (see below).

Frederick's circle of acquaintances consisted mainly of the navy and boozing was a way of life. Ingrid allegedly managed to persuade Frederick to cut down on the liquor, but it took until a meeting in 1950 when Ingrid and other close relatives criticised his behaviour during official dinners.<sup>8</sup> Neither the women were in Ingrid's taste, and when possible she socialized with others. Her maids-of-honour, were Countess Sybille Reventlow (1912-1998; maid-of-honour 1936-1941; 1941 m. Bruun; 1952 private secretary) & Ebba Busky-Neergard (1916-2008; maid-of-honour 1942-1954). Neergard was a trained photographer and made herself known for her royal ”family pictures”. Ingrid took honorary duties, did charity, engaged in cultural life & represented:

- Ingrid's first involvement was as patron of the Girl Scouts. There were 10 different organizations. Ingrid's organizations were ”Det Danske Pigespejderkorps (the blue) and KFUK-spejderne i Danmark (YMCA; the green)”. She took the exams, and February 21, 1936, the oath. Princess Sibylla did the same in Sweden at the time. The message suited their position: Woman, youth, classlessness. 1939-1965, she was also chairman of the organization Pigespejdernes Fællesråd (The Danish Girl Scout Council). Scouting continued during World War II, but without uniforms. The Girl Scout Council was a challenge because the Blue & Green (according to what Ingrid told her daughters) were like dog & cat: Pagans vs. missionaries.
- The couple's summer castle Gråsten was located in southern Denmark on the border with Germany (in Sønderjylland ≈ Northern Schleswig). The area had been lost to Germany in 1864 but restored in 1920. It was poor and the Social Democratic MP Jens Peter Nielsen (1873-1952) had hoped to make the castle into an orphanage. Instead, Ingrid committed to protecting the orphanage business as a whole. In 1939, the ”Fund for Crown Princess Ingrid's Feriehjem for Sønderjyske børn” (”the Ingrid fund”) was established. Nielsen had a revolutionary past (Lenin had spent the night at his residence in 1917) and he became something of Ingrid's popular alibi.
- The castle was in decline and Ingrid invested a lot of energy & even her own money in putting it in order. The garden became very famous for its floral splendour in the style of the mother's garden at Sofiero. Ingrid also planted densely & ”painted” with flowers. She became involved in the renovation of the other castles. The renovation of Fredensborg Castle was much discussed, and it was there that Ingrid lived at the time of her death.
- Frederick's father was rarely abroad. He left that to his son and daughter-in-law. In 1937 they opened the Danish Pavilion at the Paris Exhibition, in 1938 they visited Iceland, in 1939 they opened the Danish Pavilion at the World Exhibition in New York, met Roosevelt, travelled the ”Danish diaspora” and each received an honorary doctorate at Southern California University.

April 9, 1940, the Germans occupied Denmark and Norway in order not to give the English a European bridgehead. Frederick & Ingrid remained in Denmark during the occupation, from time to time were seen taking bicycle rides in the vicinity of Copenhagen, refused to distance themselves from the resistance movement and were the last year of war put in something similar to house arrest. Ingrid gave birth to three daughters, but no son. As Denmark had an

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<sup>8</sup> Thomas 1995: s. 112.

agnatic succession, the line of succession was Crown Prince Frederick (IX) (1899-1972) and then his brother Prince Knud (1900-1976) who had two sons. In 1953, for reasons unknown, the succession was changed to cognatic, with Knud retroactively being excluded. The decision was made through a constitutional amendment & a referendum. Frederick reportedly refused to accept the decision, but gave in before Ingrid's persuasion. However, this has not been possible to verify. The daughter Margrethe has dismissed it as rumours.<sup>9</sup> What has been verified is that Prince Knud, his family & survivors were compensated financially for having abdicated.<sup>10</sup> That it was a topic of discussion in the family also seems certain.

Sabroe (1970: ss. 16-19) explains it as a political coup by the Prime Minister Erik Eriksson. He wanted to change the constitution - abolish the county councils and the Danish House of Lords - which required a referendum with a minimum of 45 percent participation. A first attempt in 1939 gained a majority but the participation was only 44.46 percent. In 1953 Eriksson made a new attempt with Ingrid's royal duties as an attraction. This time around it worked with a participation of 45.76 percent. "The royal duties", Ingrid's three daughters, were:

1. Margrethe (II) (1940-), Queen of Denmark 1972-, married in 1967 to Frenchman Henri-Marie-Jean André de Laborde de Monpezat (1934-2018). They have two children.
2. Bendedikte (1944-), 11<sup>th</sup> in line, married in 1968 to the German prince Richard of Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg (1934-). They have three children.
3. Anne-Marie (1946-), Queen of Greece (1964-1973), married to the now dethroned King Constantine II of Greece (1940-). They have five children.

In the winter of 1946/47, Ingrid's brother Sigvard wrote a flattering newspaper article about Ingrid's time as wife, mother & Danish crown princess:

In the most harmonious way, they complement each other, and when you see them you immediately feel that this is a marriage in its original sense. Crown Princess Ingrid's personality can best be characterized as Crown Prince Frederik's opposite. If his great merit is his masculinity, hers, on the other hand, is her genuine femininity. A femininity which, however, must not be associated with weakness, submissiveness and faltering courage, but on the contrary must rather be described as the opposite of these character traits. An indomitable will, an innate sense of justice and some healthy stubbornness - mixed with this feminine gentleness and charm. A combination as unusual as it is fascinating.

What I admire most about my sister, however, is the consistency with which she has approached her task, namely being Crown Princess of Denmark, and her determined work to become Danish. Because this is a conscious and determined effort and implies hard work - I know that. At the beginning it was perhaps just a phrase when I heard her say: I am Danish and I feel like a Dane - but now you can hear that there is no longer any doubt that it comes from the heart when, during a visit in Sweden says: I am going home to Denmark.

And the daughters are three small thoroughly Danish girls who have been brought up to be just as Danish as their parents, and they are happy that they are allowed to grow up in a home that is really a home. Because a more harmonious home is hard to find. An atmosphere of happy and cosiness hits you already at the entrance. Here,

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<sup>9</sup> Kaarstedt 1977; Geoffrey Dodd. "Ending King Frederik's opposition to female succession." Times [London, England] 27 Aug. 1977: 16; "Queen Ingrid of Denmark." Times [London, England] 8 Nov. 2000: 25; Dyrssen 2006: s. 72.

<sup>10</sup> Bjørn, 2001: ss. 250-251.

Danish conviviality and Swedish stylishness have entered into a perfect union. You don't enter a castle - but a place where two people who care about each other have settled down, had children and created a home, imbued with joy and contentment. The three adorable little girls give it life. Without them it wouldn't be the same.

I remember one time during the winter when I visited Amalienborg Castle accompanied by the Crown Prince. Already far up the stairs, a cheer was heard: Father! - and through all the great halls little Margrethe came rushing and threw herself around her father's neck. It was so spontaneous and heartfelt - and indicative of the wonderful relationship between parent and child.<sup>11</sup>

Apparently, Ingrid was expected by her surroundings to square the circle: Mild but hard. Popular but queenly. Danish but faithful to her origin. Modern but conservative. It worked so-so. Ingrid redacted her life so that the absurdities would not become too obvious.

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*I am what I am,  
for what would I else be?  
Queen Ingrid of Denmark*

April 21, 1947, Ingrid became Queen of Denmark. Iceland had taken the opportunity to break away during the war, and declared itself a republic. Greenland was a colony until 1953, but was then accorded the same status as the Faroe Islands. The family initially made a national tour through the kingdom, which was well received. Ingrid continued her life as before. She represented. She worked with the Scout activities, the Sønderjylland-homes & the castle renovations. She protected worthy patriotic, religious & "medical" organizations: danske diakonissestiftelse, danske kvinders beredskap (dkb), hjerteforeningen, landsforeningen mot børnelammelse (polio), rigsforeningen til gigtens bekæmpelse, børneringen, landsforeningen bedre høreelse, landsforeningen evnessvages vel, ensomme gamles værn (egv), danske Røde Kors, Århus studenter-sangere, det grønlandske selskab, Vallø stift & Vemmetofte kloser. She created three new funds: Dronning Ingrid's romerske fond til humanitære og kulturelle formål, Kong Frederik og dronning Ingrid's Fond til humanitære og kulturelle formål & Det Kongelige Grønlandsfond.<sup>12</sup> She collected artwork, especially ceramics, which she exhibited.

As mentioned, Ingrid & Frederick were two very different people. The Daughter Margrethe described her mother as more analytical, her father as more spontaneous. Frederick is, however, so summarily described that it is difficult to pronounce on him. Until his marriage, he had lived a carefree bachelor's life. Then he tried to adapt to a royal role that he was fundamentally uninterested in. The most positive judgment is his great interest in music. The marriage seems to have failed over time, and Ingrid spent much time in Italy. There are no details, but a void in the depictions.

In conclusion, Ingrid, as "popular" queen, seems to have charmed both Denmark, the Faroe Islands & Greenland. The Greenland Minister A C Normann (old Republican) praised her sense of tact, charm, wisdom & warmth:

I myself witnessed these qualities on the royal couple's last trip to Greenland, when even late in the afternoon when all of us who made up the entourage, as well as the king, were tired, Queen Ingrid continued with a seemingly inexhaustible energy to

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<sup>11</sup> Sigvard Bernadotte. [Om kongen og Dronningen.] Tidens kvinder, vintern 1946/47? I: Hansen 1947: ss. 172-174,228-232; Bistrup 1997: ss. 134-135.

<sup>12</sup> DBL 1979; Thomas 1995: s. 85.

mingle with people, to talk adults and children and listen to their problems and it was the same when we visited institutions for children, sick and old. No one was forgotten, no one was overlooked and all the participants will remember this day, when the ship docked and a huge crowd gathered at the densely flag-festooned wharf. Among the many small vessels and canoes that came to welcome the royal couple and the ship was one of the completely original type, a *konebåd*, one of the very last in Greenland. It was rowed by 6 women in national costumes, and an old man with a long, white beard sat on the boat. He was a close friend of Knud Rasmussen, and he was probably also related to Knud.

As soon as the queen had caught sight of the boat, she exclaimed: "I want to sail in it". The boat was waved to the ship's ladder, and the queen got on board and sat down beside the old man. With a hurricane of excitement the crowd at the quay received the queen, even before the *Chaloupe* with the king and retinue had reached the harbour.

But everyone knows Queen Ingrid. She is simply Denmark's most significant queen to date. And even the most orthodox Republicans I've talked to admire her.<sup>13</sup>

Ingrid's legacy is divided. She was popular, but no one really knew anything about her, except that she was an organizational talent. In 1996 and 1999, she and the daughters were interviewed about their private life. The daughters agreed on that Ingrid was obsessed with her mother Margaret & with her Swedish-Danish-English background.

[Ingrid:] I have probably all my life been inspired by my mother's love of gardening, i.e. English gardening. It is good to have beauty in your midst. It creates harmony. And I think that harmony is the most important thing in life. Maybe I have this from my mother. I mourned her deeply. After her death all harmony was gone. I will never get over it. She was a very special person. She has always been my role model.<sup>14</sup>

[Ingrid:] For the larger part of my eldest daughter's education, she herself took the initiative, but her English schooling is my doing. Firstly, because I thought it was necessary for her to know the language, and secondly, I wanted her to have the experience, I never had, but very much wanted. I never went to a regular school. I wanted to attend an English boarding school, but no. Maybe I was in search of my mother's background. Maybe I was looking for wisdom, cleverness or whatever defines the English culture. A tolerance that makes them accept the whole scale of life. But all that came to nothing. I would be raised the Swedish way. But to what use? Now I am supposed to be Danish!<sup>15</sup>

To cut to the chase. The *par venue* Bernadotte monarchy was not good enough for Ingrid. She preferred to be related to the House of Windsor & Queen Victoria of England.

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<sup>13</sup> Normann, A C. I: Bjørn, 2001: s. 248.

<sup>14</sup> Wolden-Ræthinge 1999: ss. 48-50.

<sup>15</sup> Wolden- Ræthinge 1996: s. 25.