

### Chapter 3 : “1934/74 – The Haga princesses”

The children of Sibylla came in two litters. The first litter was Princess Margaretha, Princess Birgitta and Princess Desirée. Then there was a delay of five years until Princess Christina and CG. The first three were severely raised, disappeared into their marriages and are mostly remembered as “The Haga princesses”. It was the two youngest who became responsible for the survival of the Swedish monarchy. This is not a book about CG's sisters but it is a book about the monarchy's adaptation to new times. The adaptation included the creation of a new view of the royal house as more “folksy” and democratic, and in this respect the Haga princesses had an important role. Some examples:

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The entourage admired the bourgeois idyll that Sibylla created around herself. Haga Castle became a kind of high-level version of Carl Larsson's Sundborn. Castle is perhaps too much said. It contained only 22 rooms. The bathroom was in the attic. The idyll was documented by Gustaf Vs valet - later Edmunds chauffeur & handyman - Engelberth Bengtsson, amateur photographer and later something of an official court photographer. The first film was Margaretha's debut skiing trip in 1937. Edmund and Sibylla thought the result was so successful that they asked him to continue. In 1940, Bengtsson completed two films “Haga Idylls” and “Summer Castle”, later expanded and renamed to “Once Upon a Time There Where Three Little Princesses” and “A Summer Tale of the Fairy Castle”. In connection with that he also took a number of stills of the children (or - the picture quality seems mediocre - he made paper copies from the film negatives). These were published as “Three Little Princesses : An Album about the Princesses Margaretha, Birgitta and Desirée” with a foreword by Sibylla.<sup>1</sup> The project eventually grew to six thousand meters film and 60 thousand stills.

In 1940, Swedish Film Industry (SF) made a film “Fjäril vingad” (Butterflies at Haga) directed by Gösta Roosling. He was one of SF's most prolific journal photographers, and he and Edmund had met several times. The only condition was that Edmund received a copy of the film for the family archive. Similar newsreels and pictures became a regular feature throughout the 1940s. At the end of the period, Christina was also included. The last films were:

Gösta Roosling, Swedish Film Industry, “Christmas at Haga” (1948). CG was afraid of the buzz, so he first got to play with the camera. Christina bribed him with gingerbread when he protested the direction. The recording went without a hitch. It actually took only four hours.

Bertil Edgren, Europafilm, “With Great Grandpa at Solliden. With the Children of Haga on Summer Holidays” (1949).

Nils-Gustaf Holmquist, Europafilm, “The Haga children at Solliden” (1950). Holmquist and the princesses including CG worked hard for three weeks from seven in the morning to six in the evening with a one-hour lunch break. CG was not in his best mood and would rather play with his pedal car. “Holmquist then took out a teddy, pushed it into the hands of the heir to the throne and roared: Play, kid, play!

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<sup>1</sup> Edger Lund & Engelberth Bengtsson. Tre små sessor. Stockholm, 1940.

And the kid played nicely!”<sup>2</sup> The film premiered as a pre-film in theatres the week before Christmas. “The purpose of the film is to show that these children live, play and work and are brought up just like all other Swedish children. And for other children they are actually role models, not because they are royal, but because they are so well-educated and pleasant, so hard working and conscientious, that they are worth it. ... Swedish children will recognize themselves as comrades with the five siblings.”<sup>3</sup> In the film, the princesses began their day by milking the cows and continued in the same jaunty style.

Gösta Roosling “Summer Break at Solliden” (1951). This took a month to complete because CG would rather play with his newest pedal car. The film featured a dance sequence with sister Christina. CG sneaked up during the recording and watched it big-eyed.

In conjunction with his retirement, Bengtsson showed his entire production of Haga home movies at the Stockholm concert hall and then travelled the country showing them to school classes. The proceeds went to charity.<sup>4</sup> The commercial films were distributed as school films. The images of these well-dressed, well-scrubbed, hard-working girls in corkscrew curls – think Shirley Temple – made a lasting impression on a whole generation of young women. As monarchist propaganda, these newsreels, photographs, documentaries, picture books and memories of the Haga princesses' summer holidays are all too reminiscent of President Sukarno's sarcasm: “The best political film is the American film because it keeps the spectators out of politics.” Sibylla took an active part in all of these films, served as assistant director and insisted on final cut. If she didn't like a sequence it didn't survive.

On January 1, 1939, Ingrid Björnberg (1913-1994) was hired as a nanny. She belonged to the lesser nobility. Her father died while she and her siblings were small and the family lost their entailed estate. The family moved to Skara where she attended a girls' school, graduated in 1932, and aimed for a career as social worker. In 1934, she applied to the Barnavärn Foundation in Gothenburg (childcare) and then practised at a Swedish diplomatic family in Washington. She was recommended by Folke Bernadotte to apply for the like position at Edmund. When CG in 1953 began at Broms elementary school she intended to resign and devote herself to social care in one form or another, but instead became more of a companion for Sibylla and ended up as responsible for the daily cleaning of the Stockholm Castle - 608 rooms. The only personal information that can be found about her is that she took her holidays in the Austrian Alps and allowed her siblings' children to play with CG. In 1953 she attended English courses perhaps to be able to follow CG and the princesses abroad. Like many faithful servants she remained unmarried. However, the reward was not to complain about.

Ingrid Björnberg was nicknamed “Nenne” by princess Desirée supposedly because she always said “no” to everything that was fun and sloppy. Ingrid Björnberg also played a major role in the reputation of the Haga princesses. She kept a diary and this diary was published in 1975 before CG's wedding as “Diary from Haga” ghosted by Året Runts journalist Anna Nyman. It is unclear on whose initiative. The diaries remained in a safe deposit box until 1973, and the book was originally intended as her memoirs. When push came to pull however, she did not want to out herself or the Bernadotte family. What remained in the book

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<sup>2</sup> Björn Vinberg. 50 år med kungen : från lillprins till monark. Pressens bild, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Filmen om Hagabarnen. Svensk Damtidning, 1950:53.

<sup>4</sup> Engelberth Bengtsson. 'Får jag filja', sa prinsen. Året Runt, 1953:44.

was an idyll. (Perhaps not idyllic enough for CG who in any case avoided to medal her. Details are missing. (Queen Elisabeth II's governess Marion Crawford had published a similar book in 1950, of which Elisabeth took offence.) Björnberg's book and supplementary interviews formed the basis for a play the following year about "The Haga Princesses" written by Per Lysander and Suzanne Osten. It was a satire but an extremely benevolent one.

Anyone looking for pictures of CG as a child is referred to the book "Carl Gustaf, the Child Prince of Haga" from 1950 where they are guaranteed to get their fill. The good mood of CG and the princesses in the photographs is usually attributed to Nenne. "It doesn't show on the Christmas pictures, but Nenne is lying on the floor playing the monkey so that the children will laugh."

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The "Haga Diary" has been regularly used as a source of the Haga children's childhood. Given the origin, that it is actually a biased propaganda script, one should probably be a little careful with it. A common feature of all alternative depictions is that the idyll was not as compact as it appears in the diary. Edmund may have occasionally played with his children, but neither he nor Sibylla had any close relationship with them. They were raised by the servants. Sibylla read evening prayers with her children and received reports of how they behaved.

Children must learn to behave in company, move about, exchange greetings, converse with strangers, hide their shyness. I [Princess Sibylla] couldn't tell the girls, "don't imagine anyone looking at you; As long as you behave correctly, no one will notice you". Because that's exactly what they do: staring, listening, noticing, photographing, maybe filming TV movies.<sup>5</sup>

Sibylla devoted a lot of thought to CG's education. The daughters were treated much more pro forma. She and King Gustaf VI decided jointly (and apparently over the girls' head) that after the Castle school they would study at the French School and then receive some form of housewife education so that they understood what the servants were doing. The exception was Margaretha, who both stammered and suffered from dyslexia and was allowed to attend the Castle school until her 16th anniversary in 1950. In the aftermath, Sibylla felt that it had been a big mistake. She became "too royal". Another mistake was not to give the daughters more freedom. They were followed everywhere by their own lady companions: Their governors Dényse de Muralt and Patricia (?) Hamilton, handy-woman Miss Birgitta Wijkander and later any lady-in-waiting.<sup>6,7</sup> Sibylla afterwards had a guilty conscience:

In her upbringing of the children, she has tried to compromise between the old royal continental upbringing, the only one she knew, and the modern view of democratic Sweden.

- Perhaps I was too strict, she has said afterwards. But I didn't think I could let the girls walk alone in town like their comrades did and as they themselves wanted. They must always be accompanied by a lady-in-waiting, and they hated that. "Sibylla is iron hard", it is said.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Margareta Vinberg. Prinsessan Sibylla: "Så har barnen varit mina bästa kritiker". Vecko Journalen, 1965:13.

<sup>6</sup> Svenska Dagbladet, 1948-02-16.

<sup>7</sup> Tyra Öhrvall. Där en prins är bollkalle. Året Runt, 1952:1.

<sup>8</sup> Ebba Samuelsson. Prinsessan Sibylla. Svensk Damtidning, 1972:39.

Sibylla's severity towards her daughters was widely noted abroad. She was referred to as both “the Iron Princess” and “the German Junker”. Perhaps the princesses had complained. Their everyday life was full of unwritten rules: You never go outside without a lady in waiting. You never touch money - it is the lady-in-waiting who pays. You're always in line. You don't look for bargains when buying. In restaurants, a married older couple should sit at the same table. You dance according to a fixed schedule. You don't smoke in public. Your acquaintances must be approved by the Court. “But they are used to this and do not complain.” Princess Christina prided herself on being the first of the sisters with a “modern” upbringing, but she did not take any excessive liberties either. When her fiancé Tord Magnusson was in America in 1970, she lived as a hermit and saw neither sun nor moon. No discotheques. No cinema. Only official events. CG flatly refused to comply with such a thing.

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There was a general feeling that the Haga children were unusually shy and late developed. According to Sibylla a Bernadotte family trait. The worst was allegedly for the two “royally raised” Margaretha and CG. This was explained by their special situation: To be constantly looked at, exposed to unfamiliar situations and receive special treatment. It took time to get used to. The problem was that no one opposed you. They did not associate with such people. The pedagogy does not seem to have been the best. There was a notion, especially from Edmund, that royalty could manage anything and if they could not, they were not royal enough. Pampering was forbidden. If any of the girls started crying, Edmund could say: Does it hurt? No? All right, then! What's the problem? After his death, the upbringing became less military: More of gradual habitation, less of being thrown into the water unprepared.

The main problem for the Haga children is said to have been understanding their social position as a prince or princess. Edmund's view was that “people must be bent early to become crooked for real.” When you were a king, it was a question of living up to the demands, “nobless oblige” from the cradle which was the way he himself was raised. Sibylla's opinion was that the later in life they realized their position with the demands it put on them, the better it was for them. They became too premature otherwise. Birgitta and Desirée did not even go to Castle school the first years, but were home taught by a governess. They were to be protected. Later in life, however, the demands increased.

Obviously there was a lot of discussion at home about what was a suitable upbringing. It was rumoured that Margaretha's lack of self-confidence later in life was due to her being “a pedagogic project”. Hard to know what is meant. Maybe there were too many chefs on the recipe. One of the chefs appears to have been Edmund's friend and chief of court 1932-1936 (according to other information 1934-1937 or 1934-1940) Folke Bernadotte. In his 1940 book, *Boys and Scouting*, he wrote: “My own upbringing was strict and consistent but never hard. What made it, however, in the best sense of the word, superior was that we children always felt the great fund of love that was behind the severity. Nothing can create the right respect like the dualism rigour - love.” Folke Bernadotte also had opinions on corporal punishment: It was to be exercised only against boys, not against girls, and it was not to be carried out in haste. “If the boy finds out that the father repents, the situation may worsen.” Parents must also be in agreement. It could be fatal otherwise.

As the whole family was involved in the Scout movement, the Scout ideals were important. About Sibylla it was said: “She had the Scout's approach to discipline: discipline of his or her own free will, not for the sake of discipline itself.”<sup>9</sup> Or, as one said in earlier times: “Obedient children need no punishment. They punish themselves.”

When Birgitta later raised her own children, she wanted to revive the Haga education: “[I demand self-discipline and obedience!] Neither my husband nor I believe in the so-called free raising of children. We are convinced that a small child needs to feel a will that is stronger than its own. I am totally against the system of the father being the punisher. I will never tell my children to wait until their father comes home, then you will be spanked for disobeying. Instead, I deal with the problem when it is fresh, then it does the most good. Daddy shouldn't have to feel like the tough in the house! When he comes home from work, both he and the children should feel that it is a party time!”<sup>10</sup> A bad experience of the Haga method was that Nenne became too much a part of the family. Birgitta and her siblings would rather run to her to be consoled than to mother or father, which allegedly made Sibylla jealous. Birgitta avoided such things by having her own children cared for by short-term au pair girls.<sup>11</sup>

Sibylla and Ingrid Björnberg performed the discipline: slaps, pulling hair, and admonitions, but no corporal punishment. Both had a guilty conscience afterwards for being too harsh. The emphasis was on the children's duties, not on their privileges. They only slowly realized their privileges. The domestic people were apparently unsure how to behave in the face of all this sham democracy. But obviously it was not all sham. The only time Edmund got really angry was when the girls tried to exploit the domestic people for their own comfort. Why else were they there? Apparently Edmund had difficulties answering.

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This is how Margaretha grew up:

Margaretha was raised in the traditional way. Went to Castle school [1941-1950] together with a few select girls, never got to go alone on the town. She is the only one of the sisters who still does not say “you” to their friends nor do they. In the old way, they address each other in the third person.<sup>12</sup> [She is addressed as “Sessan” , the familiar form of *princesse*.]

To be a little mean, you can say that Margaretha both wanted to eat the cake and keep it. She wanted to avoid all the duties she did not like or could not manage, but at the same time preserve the unquestionable privileges of a royal title.

Margaretha was allowed to continue at the Castle school because of her word blindness. It deprived her of any contact with ordinary children. She was picked on for her height and started to walk curled up. [She and three equally long friends were known as the “poplar-avenue”.<sup>13</sup>] The parents did their best to help her, which made her extremely dependent on them. She had a hard time keeping a straight face.

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<sup>9</sup> Barbro Hultman. Det skulle blivit ett julkort till vännerna . Vecko Journalen, 1972:50.

<sup>10</sup> Om Birgittas familjeliv. Husmodern, 1965:44.

<sup>11</sup> Prinsessan Birgitta von Hohenzollern & Fred König. Prinsessan Birgitta. Min egen väg. En memoarbok. Albert Bonniers förlag, 1997.

<sup>12</sup> Christina Franzén. Kungen och hans flickor. Svensk Damtidning, 1972:25.

<sup>13</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1994:43.

When something scared or bored her, she couldn't hide it. She also had poor self-restraint and a passionate temperament and feuded with her younger sisters [Birgitta and Desirée].

She was totally indifferent to such things as clothes, hairstyle, make-up and other things.<sup>14, 15</sup> [That seems like a misconception however. Margaretha, like Sibylla, was careful with her makeup and dresses when was necessary but otherwise relaxed.<sup>16</sup> For everyday life it was almost never lipstick, rarely nail polish and just a little black on the eyelashes. The hair was ash-blond and self-curly. The hairdresser came at most once a week.<sup>17</sup>]

At the Castle School, Princess Margaretha has studied the same courses as other Swedish children, with some additional literature and art history. She understands all conversation in English and German.

She will now read some more language, art and literature history, as well as increase her knowledge in social science, economics and history. It is part of good general education and above all part of her royal duties. A young princess must learn to speak to strangers with different interests, and that is what one must aspire to.<sup>18</sup>

(The fact that Margaretha was allowed to continue at the Castle school because of her dyslexia is probably untrue but has not been possible to unravel. The first year she received the same type of home education with an informant as her mother. She missed out on classmates. During the breaks, she used to go down to the kitchen for company. Later she had few classmates selected from her parents acquaintances. Their teacher was Ulla Werner – earlier at Lyceum (a girls school) – who was also responsible for the kindergarten. Margaretha tried to overcome her word blindness through hard work. Eventually she was able to read *Anne of Green Gables*, *Polyanna*, *Seven Little Australians* and the like. Given Margaretha's troubles, it seems strange that Sibylla would later have been unaware of the reasons for CG's reading and writing difficulties. You can sense some kind of wishful thinking.)

After Edmund's death, Sibylla seems to have changed her mind about how to educate her daughters: They would learn something real, “maybe a profession, at least an occupation, where they can develop their individual talents.”<sup>19</sup> In the summer of 1950, she discussed the matter with friends in England. These would try to find a board and lodging for Margaretha so that she could learn the language and broaden her horizons.

Nothing came of it. During the summer, Margaretha contracted pneumonia and was hospitalized for three weeks. She then developed a long-lasting cold with bronchitis. In the first half of 1951 she convalesced three months in Italy. She was there incognito and thought it was very exciting not to be recognized. She then spent time with Queen Ingrid in Copenhagen where she studied art history and language and also attended courses at *Handarbejdets Fremme* (handicraft) in binding and embroidery. The stay in England was postponed for a year.

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<sup>14</sup> Anita Nyman. Allt om kärleken i Margarethas liv. *Svensk Damtidning*, 1973:25.

<sup>15</sup> Christina Franzén. Kungen och hans flickor. *Svensk Damtidning*, 1972:25.

<sup>16</sup> Greta Olsson-Wright. *Prinsessornas nya liv*, del 2. Året Runt, 1965:2.

<sup>17</sup> Barbro Alving. *Min vän Margaretha*. *Vecko Revyn*, 1964:13.

<sup>18</sup> Brita Hiort af Ornäs. *Prinsessan Margaretha*. *Vecko Journalen*, 1950:43.

<sup>19</sup> Martin Siwertz. Intervju med Sibylla. *Okänd källa*. Citerat i: *Husmodern*, 1949:17.

In the autumn of 1951, she took a physiotherapy course at the Norrbackainstitut and practised at Crown Princess Lovisa's Children's Hospital. In the spring of 1952, she joined a civil defence course and in October she entered a household school in England, Seer Green House in Beaconsfield halfway between London and Oxford, where she spent six months under the express order of Sibylla that she should be treated like any other pupil, a very unfamiliar experience. However in 1953, she was still placid, yielding, dependent on Sibylla and Ingrid Björnberg and too shy to speak her mind or assert an opinion in front foreign persons.<sup>20,21</sup> At the formal opening of the Parliament that year, she accompanied her mother into the courtroom in a formal dress. Apparently she made an impression because for several years, she every Friday at 14 a.m. received a pair of red roses. There was speculation about an admirer who was too shy to propose.

She continued her professional practice at St Göran's children's day nursery. In the autumn of the following year, there was a four-month course at "Sällskapet barnavård" (childcare) in Stadshagen where she learned to care for children and scrub floors and then a course in dress stitching at Märthaskolan, driving license and a one-year evening course in fine cooking at Stockholm City's vocational schools. As a seamstress, she was good enough to sew everything except the prom dresses. Märthaskolan assisted with the cutting of the cloth and then she sewed. She used to get the fabrics as a gift. One advantage of being the eldest was that she had first choice on the dress colour at the balls and none of the sisters were allowed to have the same.

In the autumn of 1955, she improved her French at the convent school "Maria's Ascension" in Paris. The school had 300 students, of which 35 had board and lodging:

The day began with bedding and cleaning. At 10 o'clock it was French lessons with 10 classmates. Everyone was from famous families but only Margaretha was royal. At 14:30-16:30 a teacher took them to museums, exhibitions, famous places etc. At 18 they had to be back for homework etc. At weekends it was cinema and theatre. A lady-in-waiting made sure she didn't escape her confines in the manner of Audrey Hepburn in the movie Roman Holiday, one of Margaretha's favourites.<sup>22</sup>

[“Maria's Ascension” was a so-called finishing school, at this time more or less compulsory for upper-class girls. Most of them had a restricted upbringing, had received home education or attended private schools and were not very accustomed to real world challenges. Here they got to meet others in the same situation and exchange experiences before their society debut. It was a kind of vocational school for society ladies. The schedule included language, shorthand, typing, sewing, cooking, bridge and museum visits. The office skills were there for a possible job while waiting for Mr Right.]

In between there was representation: “Margaretha began to 'appear' as a thin and slightly moody teenager as she assisted mother at inaugurations and swung around in the first Cadet balls. Then we saw her quite sporadically for a few years, that was when language studies abroad took place.”<sup>23</sup> Margaretha's first cadet ball in 1954 at Karlberg (Sweden's West Point) was like this:

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<sup>20</sup> Året Runt, 1953:24.

<sup>21</sup> Sibyllas familj, del 2. Året Runt, 1960:36.

<sup>22</sup> Lena de Faramond. Jag älskar kajerna längs Seine. Vecko Revyn, 1955:29.

<sup>23</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1957:24.

After curtsying and bowing for the commandants, colonels and majors etc., with wives, everyone eventually gathered in something that I think is called the pillar hall and practised curtseys. In the meantime, a whole army of photographers buzzed around and occupied strategic positions at all angles and crannies. Suddenly trumpets announced the royal entry and the flashbulbs stood like northern light. Then the princess entered [in green lace and tons of strengthened petticoats] in the hall at the arm of “her” cadet and lightly bent her head towards us who were lined up against the walls, and we curtsyed and bowed deeply. It was deathly quiet, so the weak rustle that arose when all the dresses swept down over the floor, appeared as a solemn sound effect.<sup>24</sup>

Came 1956. Margaretha was 22 years old, a healthy young beauty interested in gymnastics, horseback riding, outdoor life, handicraft, Harlequin novels and cooking, perhaps not the sharpest knife in the box but ready for something new.

She “is really handsome. She is one and eighty tall with a smooth and beautiful figure, and she knows it. She moves with the adorable gracious grace that only a tall girl can bring about and that in an instant turns into absolute grace.” She is a product of the most sophisticated of the Scandinavian courts. In addition to attending art school and listening to jazz music, she enjoys riding, dancing, sailing and skiing, but also devotes a significant part of her time to such “good work” as nursing courses. She is an enterprising, independent youth who ensures that she gets the most out of the hard-fought democratization of the royal family and treasures nothing higher than her independence.<sup>25,26</sup> The Swedish princesses have a freedom that many other royals in the world can envy them. They have received a democratic education, they largely choose their friends themselves, they have freedom in choice of clothes as well, and they are allowed to travel and take walks without the whole staff of courtiers following in their heels.<sup>27</sup>

The flip side of the whitewash was that Margaretha was shy, insecure, extremely sensitive, took offence at everything and encountering adversity fell apart, cried and was depressed for days on end. She was extremely careful in her choice of friends, meaning that they could never criticize her, not the easiest thing, because she was “secretive all the way down to her toes”. Foreign people frightened her. She was most at ease with babies, home furnishings and dogs. The façade was impeccable however. Never has a Swedish princess looked so good in pictures.

Then came September 1956. Margaretha was in London to improve her English, living in Hampstead with friends of Sibylla, Mr. and Mrs. Desmond Boyle, an English businessman and his Swedish-born wife. During the day, she took the subway back and forth to where she practised as a play leader in the children's ward of “Middlesex Hospital” with the daughter of the house Carina Boyle. The family had promised to look after her, but left this to their daughter. A mistake. Margaretha entered into an inappropriate relationship with the impoverished noble Robin Douglas-Home. The reader is referred to the next chapter for all the interesting details.

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<sup>24</sup> Renée Holger. *En bal, min bal. Husmodern*, 1954:8.

<sup>25</sup> Svenska Dagbladet, 1958-05-06.

<sup>26</sup> Svenska Dagbladet, 1960-06-02. *Newsweek om prinsessan Margaretha*.

<sup>27</sup> Maria Ek. *Inte längre rädd. Svensk Damtidning*, 1960:16.



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After the dissolution of the romance, Margaretha continued her studies. She wanted to accompany Prince Bertil on his public relations trip to America in the summer of 1958, but was not allowed. In the winter of 1958/59, she practised briefly at Karolinska Hospital as an assistant occupational therapist without pay. However, the hospital work had lost its appeal. Apparently, she had to interrupt her practice when another person was seeking the job. She continued with a two-year education in silver work etc. at the Nyckelviksskolan 1960-1962. She finally started to mature:

Margaret likes to represent. [In 1959 she became the patron of My Summer Child. The following year, she made a long trip to America with Princess Astrid of Norway and Danish cousin Margrethe.] “If she can only show what she can do and is appreciated for it, then she can handle things with flying colours”, was the judgment. She has a relaxed way of talking to people and makes even the most grumpy politician relax.

Margaretha is very much a Princess Alone. She is more isolated than her sisters. She was raised as a queen, an heir to the throne, while the sisters tumbled about as “little princesses”. She keeps her distance, is followed by a lady-in-waiting. If she is forced to answer any question on a subject where she is unsure, she can state by virtue of her royal dignity that “it is so, because that is what I have said”. In this, she resembles her father, she is the sibling who most resembles him, stubborn, caring, reserved, often submerged in dreams and lost to the world. Always has a portrait of her father on the night stand.<sup>28</sup>

In early 1959, Margaretha entered a new relationship with Hans-Ulrich von der Esch (1928-2009). Before he was formally invited to her daughter's 25th birthday ball on October 31 Sibylla interrogated him about his finances, future plans etc. Esch replied that in his current economic situation he could not afford to marry a princess. Sibylla concluded that he was more interested in the publicity than in Margaretha as a person and forbade her from inviting him. Margaretha then canceled the ball.<sup>29</sup> The relationship did not survive this. Sibylla's comment long after was: “If you understand that your children will be unhappy with a certain person, then you avert the marriage. So do all parents.<sup>30</sup> But life goes on...

Margaretha seems to be quite happy with being a bachelor girl. “Do not interfere with my plans. I'm doing well and have no thought of getting married right now.” Her height, 176 in her stockings, no longer worries her. “I'm proud to be this tall...” Sibylla is reportedly positive about her marrying a Swedish commoner.

Margaretha prepares herself by reading before meeting people in official contexts. For example, a large part of John Steinbeck's production [before the Nobel-ceremony]. She responds to marriage proposals with a friendly no. She has a drivers license, but it took many lessons [21 to be exact]. As a child, she was called “Mimmi”, now it is “Sessan Margaretha” (princess M). She has opinions on most things, for example Kristina Michaneck's debating book [“Jungfrutro och dubbelmoral” (1962) about free love], greasers, boxing, Mallorca sins etc. At parties the cavaliers change, usually the

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<sup>28</sup> Sibyllas familj, del 2. Året Runt, 1960:36.

<sup>29</sup> Sibyllas familj, del 2. Året Runt, 1960:36.

<sup>30</sup> Ebba Samuelsson. Prinsessan Sibylla. Svensk Damtidning, 1972:39.

last dance is with the host. If he is too short, she usually kicks off her shoes. At official dinners, she is accompanied by her lady-in-waiting Dagmar Nyblaeus.<sup>31</sup>

She loves masquerades. Most times, she dresses as a vamp in a skirt that is torn up over her knees, long black hair, false eyelashes and war paint. ... At Birgitta's hen party [1960], Margaretha made sure that everyone dressed in baby clothes. She dressed Birgitta in play clothes and put her in a playpen with a potty and toys. She herself came in big bow, nightgown and teddy. Then there was baby talk all night, you drank juice cobbles in straws, sat on the floor and ate meatballs with mashed potatoes and had fun. ... She's a night owl. For example, loves to sit with a bottle of red wine after the theatre and discuss the play, directing, actors etc. She can keep going until 3 in the morning. The only times she doesn't hang out with us friends is when she knows Mom Sibylla is alone at home. Since her father's death - she adored Prince Gustaf Adolf - they were very close. ... She likes to watch TV: Sport, Panorama & The Flintstones. She plays bridge and always wins.<sup>32</sup>

People who meet her fleetingly have sometimes been offend by her manners. Her friends have over the years stood up for her and explained what a lovely person she is deep inside, soft, warm, with a good heart. But she's not smooth. She defends her opinion in a discussion to *the bitter end*. To adapt she just doesn't know what that is.

This is a typical situation for Princess Margaretha. Attending an event they discussed a film and everyone thought it was charming and praised it in lyrical terms. Then, Sessan - as her friends always called her – out of the blue suddenly objected and continued in detail to explain her dislike. She loved to throw herself right into a discussion.

Sometimes Sessan looks morose. This is due to a complete inability to dissimulate. If she is not 100 percent she will force you to take notice.<sup>33</sup>

In October 1963, Margaretha visited her friend Carina Boyle, now married Maitland, and brought businessman John Ambler to the table. He visited the castle secretly to be approved by Sibylla. Margaretha and Ambler married in 1964. Nobody knew at first who this Ambler was. When their first child, a daughter, was born, it was made clear:

The main thing is that the girl does not become a blue stocking. I can't stand this kind of woman. I firmly believe that a woman's happiness in life consists above all in becoming a wife and mother. Look at my wife... I can't tell how well she's doing. ... I'm not sure that ambition and a razor-sharp intellect are the best equipment for a young lady, sex appeal and money I think is a better combination. And then it is always nice if she can take life with a pinch of humour, above all you have to be able to laugh at yourself.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> Bertil Häggström. Sibyllas döttrar, del 1. Vad krävs för att bli Sibyllas svärson? Året Runt, 1963:1.

<sup>32</sup> Barbro Alving. Min vän Margaretha. Vecko Revyn, 1964:13.

<sup>33</sup> Husmodern, 1964:15.

<sup>34</sup> Husmodern, 1965:46.

Birgitta (“Tuss” among friends, “Dittan” with Desirée) attended the Castle school four years until 1950 and then the French school where she graduated in 1954. She then spent half a year at a Swiss finishing school for society debutants “Clos des Abeilles” where she studied French, German, domestic science and drawing and received the necessary polish by studying with millionaire daughters. She gained weight (10 kilos in six months!) and dieted hard on her return home. Part of the weight loss was fluid deficiency. It ended by her having to be watered up with injections.

Birgitta never came to the French school without her governess, Ingrid Björnberg, lady-in-waiting Maj Vicander or any other apron. She and the other royal children, including CG, were picked up by car during the lunch break to eat food at home and meet Sibylla who ate late breakfast. CG commented long after that Sibylla was a real “chicken mother”. The food was served 11-13 because the children's schedule varied. Their English governess accompanied them. Maybe to dampen the feelings because it was always lively at the table. Birgitta wanted to ride a tram but it was not considered appropriate. There must have been some lunch breaks spent at school, however, because Birgitta tells in her memoirs how the girls exchanged sandwiches with each other. The classmates found the royal cold cut exciting. Birgitta thought it was exciting with loaf and sausage.

Christmas and summer holidays, the boys from Lundsberg and Sigtuna boarding schools participated in the parties. These were increasingly formalized during the last years of school. If you received an invitation card with the time 19:25 it meant that Princess Birgitta arrived at 19:30. The girls knixed for her as the convention required but the mood quickly eased. Not entirely though. At first Birgitta and Desirée had separate dance clubs but they always attended each other's dances so the clubs were merged. The dances took place at the participants' apartments. The arrangements were simple. Barbecue sausage, soft drinks or juices and gramophone music. The dance teacher was Holger Rosenqvist. Sessorna also (when young) trained ballet for Brita Geijerstam.

1955/56, Birgitta attended Märthaskolan to learn sewing and cutting and twice a week Borgarskolan to improve her English. She also took a driving license. In 1956, she joined the Gymnastics school (GCI) as an extra student. The education there was two years. In order to obtain a degree, she required a high school qualification in mathematics, physics and chemistry, which she had previously skipped, but now had to cram. Her physique was mediocre and she trained intensively. The first year at GCI was thus very hectic. Birgitta had originally intended to become a physiotherapist, but this would mean giving strangers massages, which Gustaf VI and Sibylla considered unthinkable. Teaching was acceptable however. A journalist who wanted to know why all this effort? was fobbed off with “If the republic arrives, I will have a bourgeois profession as a gymnastics teacher to fall back on.”<sup>35</sup> The education included taking the skipper degree and getting acquainted with various sports. CG insisted on joining her for the boxing match between Ingemar Johansson and Henry Cooper at Johanneshov athletics stadium. It was a bloody affair that Birgitta tried to explain away with the fact that it was lingonberry jam in the gloves.

Birgitta finished 4th in a class of 28. In 1958 she practised as a gymnastics teacher at Broms school to get her certificate. Due to the legislation, she was not allowed to collect any wages for her work. All the students, including CG, were very excited to have a real princess as a teacher. Birgitta countered with a harsh regime: Students were either too busy with the gymnastics or too tired to make any trouble. There were rumours that she had a love story.

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<sup>35</sup> Sibyllas familj, del 3. Prinsessan Birgitta. Året Runt, 1960:37.

The elect was Sven "Tumba" Johansson, a classmate and ice hockey player, who also was an extra student. The relationship started the last semester and lasted 1.5 years.

Over the years, I have been asked the same question a thousand million times: "Hey, did something happen between you and Princess Birgitta, really?" For the first time, I will tell you, and I will do it with the princess's permission. In fact, I called her before I wrote this and asked her if I use it. She had no objection, and she has carefully read through the account and approved it. I will start with the princess's own short version. Here's how she looks back on our love story:

"Sven Tumba was my first love. Like me, he was very interested in sport. It wasn't so strange in the days of youth that you got to like each other. Sven was for me a charming, fun and humorous guy, which I in youthful dizziness fell for. I was not used to being as intensely courted in my circles as I was in such a natural and unimpeded way. That's why I and Nenne and his whole family are still very good friends. Golf is now a common denominator."

The answer to the preliminary question is therefore: YES! We were warmly and deeply in love with each other. Besides, I was actually her first boyfriend.

...

I'm sure a lot of people are wondering what it's like to be with a real princess. One thing is clear - it is not easy! But on the other hand very fun... and exciting! Usually you can take your love in your hand and walk out into nature or wherever you want. With a princess, things are different, very different. Everything you do together must be done secretly. It requires cunning, and sometimes even a good portion of luck to not be exposed. The basic strategy for meeting was simple. It involved the princess, or "Sonja", being taken by her private driver - named Alvergård if I remember rightly - to a friend to study. At my friend's house, I picked up Sonja, and then we went to a borrowed apartment or some other place where we could spend time undisturbed. What we did? Just what young people have always done when love strikes and emotions run high. There is nothing strange about that. Even princesses and famous athletes are basically ordinary people. ... Eventually our feelings cooled. These were difficult circumstances with a lot of hush-hush and secrecy, and it was not easy for any of us.<sup>36</sup>

In her memoirs, Birgitta reports a strange episode with the Expressen journalist Gösta Ollén. He simply entered the apartment uninvited and walked around looking in the rooms and even in the closets for "Tumba". This seems to be an unpermissible invasion of privacy, but women and children - even royals - apparently had to put up with a lot.

In 1960 Birgitta won the Swedish Championship in fencing. After that she was in Munich to better her German and met her future husband Prince Johan Georg of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen ("Hansi" among friends). The family was dethroned in 1918 but still wealthy. They married twice in 1961. Both a Swedish and a German ceremony. CG was best man. Despite the title, Hansi must be considered bourgeois. Princess Astrid of Norway also married a commoner at this time. Arbeiderbladet in Oslo called it the "princess revolution". Long afterwards Birgitta claimed that she would rather have married her "dream man" from the August/September 1960 Rome Olympics, but that Hansi was a more suitable party.

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<sup>36</sup> Sven "Tumba" Johansson. Mitt rika liv eller Den nakna sanning. Stockholm: Sellin & Partner, 1995.

After her marriage, Birgitta tried to adapt to life as a housewife which did not go well. "It is Hansi who has the last word - the tradition of the Hohenzollerian law says that the man's will is law. Birgitta wants to have fun but he says no."<sup>37</sup> She started relationships, worked as a model, published a gramophone record for exercise gymnastics, advertised a magnetic bracelet that would be good for your health, wrote her memoirs etc. She summarized her teens as "we should be like all other children, but also royal":

It was a trying experience to say the least for me to start among other children in French school. But eventually my resilience overcame the shocks, it went better and better and in the end I enjoyed the new environment. For other children, school is a constraint, for us princesses it meant the opposite. A new kind of autonomy, greater independence, a slightly less restricted freedom of movement.

...

Teachers have also spoken about another problem : It happened that the girls with whom I became especially good friends and who were invited home to the castle showed tendencies to feel special and even put themselves above others. I did not understand any of this at the time, but it occurred to me that I should distribute my graces.

...

We were never permitted to walk between the castle and the school, but were driven both there and home in one of the courts cars. Of course, to use my vocabulary at the time, this was the worst, but as usual we obeyed without much protest. It was particularly sad to never walk the streets with your classmates after school, never go home to good friends and drink tea.

And it felt worse when I arrived at the age when the other girls started going out to the movies or like and meeting boys.

...

Those years I started to think about myself and my possible self-worth. I was surprised to wonder if my comrades and cavaliers liked me because I was who I was or if they sought my company because I was a princess.

When those thoughts first appeared in my brain, it was a nasty sensation - and even today I think it is terrible when I am gripped by that doubt. I get suspicious and stingy when people, excuse the expression, are behave silly just because they know who you are. When they're not themselves, but they become unnatural and mannered just because I happen to be a princess.

...

I must admit that there has always been a certain distance between other people and me. My upbringing and my awareness of who I am. There is simply no one I dare to trust completely.<sup>38</sup>

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Desirée ("Hé" or "Hes" among friends) attended the Castle school five years until 1950 and then the French school where she graduated in 1956. Like Birgitta, she skipped mathematics, physics and chemistry. She then spent six months in Switzerland at the Château D'Oex where, like her sisters, she studied languages and received polish, then a four-month course at the

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<sup>37</sup> Husmodern, 1968:20.

<sup>38</sup> Anita Lagercrantz. Intervju med prinsessan Birgitta. Vecko Journalen, 1964:11-17.

Society's Child Care in Stadshagen and a two-year preschool teacher training at the Social Pedagogical Seminary in 1958. In 1961, she took the same one-year cooking course as Margaretha and in 1962 a two-year course in handicraft at the textile line at the Stockholm school of fine arts. In between there was representation. She and Birgitta often accompanied each other. Birgitta was blunt and outward. "A Christina Scholin (swedish actress) with a crown on her head." Desirée was her opposite: withdrawn and cool in the way, at the same time haughty, shy and insecure of her role. Her teacher on the textile line Mrs. Edna Martin:

In September 1962, when Princess Desirée entered the textile department of the School of Fine Arts, she had only signed up for one year. At that time, her interest in handicraft was more on the hobby plane and she may have thought that one year could suffice to learn pattern drawing, weaving, art sewing and other textile skills. But during the first two terms her whole attitude changed. She is now in her third semester and intends to continue until the wedding this spring.

During these three terms, the princess has made tremendous progress. It was so noticeable at the beginning that she did not take her own talent seriously. When she showed me what she had accomplished, she usually laughed a contagious laugh that roughly wanted to say that "this is of course nothing strange". When she found out that I *cared about* the little hooks she made, that they interested me, she was extremely surprised. When she became fully aware of her talent, she stopped laughing and became at least as interested as her peers in vocational education. ... Above all, she has displayed an excellent sense of colour, revealing an original talent.

[This should not be interpreted as Desirée forgetting who she was.] On a class trip to Gothenburg in March 1963, the person responsible for the trip wanted to pay her train ticket which Desirée refused. After much arguing, she straightened herself up, looked the person in the face and said aloud "*You* are not permitted to tell *me* what *I* will do."<sup>39</sup>

Desirée was also something of a practical joker. During the preparations for Birgitta's wedding, she pretended to be a journalist and called Ingrid Björnberg with all sorts of strange questions.<sup>40</sup> Another time she called a friend who she knew was looking for a nanny. Desirée with disguised voice: - Me be in Ståkkholma on lightning and be able to help immediately, Madame, I have recommendation of fine family in Europe. When the friend tried to hang up the phone, Desirée continued mercilessly: - Me come immediately with my luggage-things!<sup>41</sup>

When questioned, Desirée replied that she wanted to marry an ordinary man, not royalty. The son of Sibylla's chamberlain Count Greger Lewenhaupt (1937-1960) was the heir to the entailed estate Geddeholm, but he died in a skiing accident shortly before the intended wedding. Desirée was so depressed that Birgitta persuaded her friend Eva Norlin to move into the castle, to keep her company and make sure she got through the day. Come autumn Desirée had recovered and accompanied Birgitta on a public relations trip to America. In 1964, she married Baron Niclas Silfverschiöld, the heir to the entailed estate Koberg. To be sure nothing went wrong, apparently the Baron was somewhat shy, she proposed herself. Images of the wedding were shown at a Soviet photographic exhibition as examples of how

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<sup>39</sup> Husmodern, 1964:8.

<sup>40</sup> Lisa Killander & Margit Fjellman. Om prinsessan Desirée. Husmodern, 1964:23.

<sup>41</sup> Inga-Lill Sjöström. Om prinsessan Desirée. Allers, 1971:50.

the capitalist upper class amused themselves at the expense of the working proletariat.<sup>42</sup> Their wedding exhilaration was tempered by an inheritance tax on the estate of one million kronor that took several years to work off.

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Christina (“Titti” among friends) would receive a different education than her sisters. When CG's Education Council decided to put him in Broms school, the Castle school was closed down and Christina started at the French School in 1951 after only one year in the Castle school. Birgitta and Desirée had graduated from the French school without diploma, but Christina passed with colours.

The French school was described by contemporaries as very democratic:

A school where you can be yourself; where neither language, religion, race or skin colour matter among comrades, and where good manners and considerate behaviour are considered the prerequisite for learning - even of the intellectual kind. ... In the French school, no one will be discriminated. Once you wear the blue school coat with the initials EC (École Français), everyone is a school mate, whether you are a Princess from the country's ruling royal house, a foreign diplomat's daughter or an ordinary little Swedish blonde with a blunt nose. This was probably to Princess Sibylla's liking, since she chose to let her three youngest daughters begin there right after finishing the Castle school. Princess Birgitta has just “graduated seventh grade”, as has Princess Desirée, and now Princess Christina is studying in her last year, at the all-classical branch, with both Latin and Greek on the schedule to become the royal house's first female A-level student.<sup>43</sup>

But Sibylla quickly made sure that also Christina was given special treatment:

There were 17 of them in the French school class. All classmates were instructed not to reveal anything about Titti to the press. The comrades were not allowed to say “you”, but use the third person “Titti”. Likewise the teachers, but they persisted in saying addressing her as “Princess”. Apart from that, Titti was treated just like the other students. If she couldn't do her Latin homework, she endured scolding as much as the others.<sup>44</sup>

[The situation was complicated. The theory of democracy is more beautiful than its practice:] - It was only when I started school that I understood my special position. Or, rather, it was the other children who made me realize it, by always letting me have the deciding word. And of course I took advantage of it. I'm sure I became a bit of a bully. - Was your special position emphasized in your upbringing? - What I first found out was that I was not allowed to do certain things. What was never emphasized, however, was that my position carried privileges.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Svenska Dagbladet, 1964-10-08.

<sup>43</sup> Franska Skolan. Svensk Damtidning, 1962:18.

<sup>44</sup> Monica Wadstedt. Så har det gått för Christinas klasskamrater. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:15.

<sup>45</sup> Adam Inczédy-Gambos & Henrik Palmstierna. Om prinsessan Christina. Husmodern, 1972:17.

Christina's acquaintances were checked so that no "fortune seekers" infiltrated. While CG did socialize with classmates after school, few of Christina's classmates passed the eye of the needle:

Titti was friendly but reserved with her classmates and her classmates did normally not visit the castle. Antonia Ax:son Johnson (future industrialist) was the only person invited. The other classmates were only invited once and that was when the abuterium caps were to be sewn. Only Antonia Ax:son Johnson was invited to Tittis's school-leaving party.

She neither had lunch at school but was picked up in the royal car for lunch at the castle.<sup>46</sup>

Christina graduated in 1963. During the summer holidays, she had lived with a French family to improve her language. The grades were good. Christina and Antonia continued their studies at Radcliffe College in the United States. Radcliffe was an educational institution for girls closely associated with Harvard University and with similar demands. Christina wrote an essay on the Swedish emigration to America and also studied music theory and Dutch 17th-century art. She was then called home. It was speculated that Sibylla did not want to see a repeat of Margaretha's love affair or that it was too expensive. There were also signs that the democratic atmosphere "over there" was too massive. After spending a year in America, Princess Christina had divided feelings about her position:

\* How do you perceive the role of a princess in a modern democracy as the Swedish one?

– I would like to say that I do not really see myself as playing a role. As a young person I try to live a normal life that happens to be split in two - I am a student, a private person, but also a princess, an official symbol of Sweden.<sup>47</sup>

Returning to Sweden, Christina continued with two years of art history at Stockholm University with the goal of becoming a museum curator. She began an essay about the plafond paintings in the state hall at Drottningholm Castle, which she never managed to complete. Instead, it became representation at home and abroad:

She found the representation duties both boring and difficult. She was embarrassed by the close attention. In the beginning she blushed easily when making a speech. She faced the rostrum and read her speech with a monotone voice. Often she stuttered. She was very unhappy about being photographed on all kinds of occasions. But eventually she learned to appreciate the benefits of being a public figure.

"You get in touch with a huge number of interesting people that you would never get to meet otherwise," she said. You travel and see a lot. You encounter a lot of different situations and conditions.

Today, Christina is relaxed and natural when appearing in front of the public. She no longer stutters and is not disturbed by the flashbulbs. Instead of turning her head away

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<sup>46</sup> Monica Wadstedt. Så har det gått för Christinas klasskamrater. Svensk Damtidning, 1973:15.

<sup>47</sup> Göran Lundberg & Lars-Erik Örtgren. Mellanstick : intervju med prinsessan Christina. SVT, 1967-03-04.



from the cameras she flashes a dazzling smiles at the photographer and tries to be accommodating in every way.<sup>48</sup>

Like her mother Christina was fond of outspoken “feminist” interviews. In a television interview in March 1967, she even stated that she thought it wrong that woman could not inherit the throne.<sup>49</sup> Gustaf VI allegedly perceived her as such an asset that he urged her to postpone her marriage until CG came of age.<sup>50</sup> She was so popular that even those who after Sibylla's death, when Christina became first lady of the kingdom, thought it a shame that she was CG's sister. She was fit to be a queen. Everyday life, however, was not as glamorous: “To be the first lady of the kingdom? It is not a full-time job. It is seasonal with most tasks scheduled for April-May. You cannot live [in that way] for occasional and irregular official engagements. It would be a kind of horrible eternal holiday.”<sup>51</sup>

To occupy herself, she began working part-time unpaid. In 1971 she was posted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' information service where she among other things kept contact with foreign guests on visits to Sweden. 1973 she had an internship at the Red Cross. She planned to continue her training at the Red Cross headquarters in Geneva but in 1974 she married the businessman Tord Magnusson.

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In order to understand the situation of the Haga princesses when they wanted to use their education for something other than as a conversation piece, one must refer to the Constitution, §45 of the 1809 form of government: “Neither the crown prince and heir princes of the Svea Kingdom nor the princes of the royal house shall have any livgeding [income of personal fiefdom] or civil office.” This meant that the princes had to live on their appanage, wealth, business or military office. The Professor of Law Robert Malmgren (1875-1947) in his comments interpreted the law as also applying to princesses.<sup>52</sup> In practice, the restrictions were even more severe. Princes and princesses were also not allowed to work in privately owned companies. Moreover, the legal position was so unclear for self owned companies, the exemption from the obligation to declare and pay taxes, the value of advertising vis-à-vis competitors to be royal, etc., that in practice the choice of occupation was limited to gentleman-farmer or artists where there were precedents.

For Margaretha, it went like this: She worked for a while at the Norrbackainstitutes without pay. However, she was not allowed to “stand in the way” of other Swedish citizens in their professional activities. As soon as an applicant came to her post, she had to resign. Her sisters Birgitta and Desirée didn't even get that far. Admittedly, there were propositions that “civil office” should be interpreted as “state civil office” and that they could thus work in public schools or some other municipal positions. They talked about opening their own school and Birgitta had an offer to become a gymnastics teacher in the school for prince children set up by the Margrave of Baden in a wing of his castle Salem near Lake Constance where, for example, Prince Philip had attended.<sup>53</sup> But nothing came out of it and then they married. Their

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<sup>48</sup> Svensk Damtidning, 1976:26.

<sup>49</sup> Göran Lundberg & Lars-Erik Örtégren. Mellanstick : intervju med prinsessan Christina. SVT, 1967-03-04.

<sup>50</sup> Christina Franzén. Christina och Carl Gustaf har lovat att inte gifta sig. Svensk Damtidning, 1970:7.

<sup>51</sup> Kerstin Hallert. Svenska Dagbladet, 1973-08-01.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Malmgren. Sveriges grundlagar och tillhörande författningar med förklaringar. Stockholm : Norstedt, 1957.

<sup>53</sup> Året Runt, 1958:3.

training was not wasted however. Their children were well-raised and their homes were fantastically well-furnished.

Sibylla was bitter: “No matter what my daughters do, it's wrong. If they have no professional work, they are considered anachronistic luxury creatures. If they take a paid job, people think they are receiving a salary that others need better. Unpaid [labour] is wrong too.”<sup>54</sup> Idleness was apparently what was expected of them. Difficult with the Coburg wealth confiscated. Sibylla even started airing feminist views on professional woman. When the issue of the succession of women to the throne was removed from the political agenda in the early 1970s, she even attacked the drafting of the constitution, which she believed discriminated against women.<sup>55</sup>

Margaretha, Birgitta and Desirée married 1961-1964 and disappeared into a bourgeois existence. Margaretha found it hardest to adapt. She wanted to be treated according to her rank, addressed as princess and the surroundings to give her honours. At the same time, she had difficulty coping with the contrast between her reclusive life and the attention she attracted as soon as she showed herself. There was a theory that she married an Englishman in order to be able to escape Sweden. She and Birgitta avoided each other. While Margaretha cultivated a royal conservative style, Birgitta blossomed into free love, golf and impetuous remarks. The headlines about her were of the type “The sparkling, blonde, toothy, braless barefoot bimbo Birgitta.”<sup>56</sup> The couple Birgitta & Hansi lived in a 14-room villa with built-in garden and swimming pool where CG often was a guest. Although Hansi was an academic, he also had an upbeat side that appealed to CG: “They joke mercilessly with each other, telling countless not always suitable stories and compete outdoing the other with practical jokes. Diluting the whiskey and withdrawing chairs when the other is about to sit down are among their favourite jokes.”<sup>57</sup>

Christina later claimed that all the sisters were expected to marry royally. Sibylla made at least three such attempts: In the summer of 1959, she took Margaretha, Birgitta and Desirée to Greece on what appears to have been an invitation to present them to the Greek Crown Prince Constantine, in 1960 she organized her own castle ball with invited royal youths and in 1962 the princesses were invited to the wedding of Spanish Crown Prince Juan Carlos. The Greek visit (?) appears to have generated an official inquiry by the Shah of Iran (Birgitta, 1959) and an unofficial inquiry by Prince Constantine of Greece (Desirée, 1960). Both were rejected. Since in the Shah's time there was a clause that he could only marry a Muslim woman, there have been some doubts about the proposal taking place but perhaps Birgitta was expected to convert. In any case, the Shah shortly afterwards married Farah Diba. The last possibility of a royal marriage was in 1968 for Christina to marry Norwegian crown prince Harald, but he chose against his father's will to marry the ex shop assistant Sonja Haraldsen. King Gustaf Adolf and his Queen attended the wedding but neither Sibylla, Christina or her siblings. The Nordic exchange of princesses was over and evidently there was hard feelings.

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<sup>54</sup> Margit Vinberg. Christina aktiv i Röda kors-hjälpen: Jag har fått en ny världsbild. Vecko Journalen, 1974:12.

<sup>55</sup> Michael Jägerblom. Prinsessan Sibylla till attack mot grundlagsberedningen : Varför duger inte en kvinna på tronen? Vecko Journalen, 1972:38.

<sup>56</sup> Expressen, 1972-01-27.

<sup>57</sup> Året Runt, 1971:5.