



**CHILDHOOD FRIENDS:**  
Emile Österman and Thord at  
Furusund in the Stockholm  
*skärgård* (archipelago).

## CHAPTER X

# The Veteran, 1920–1964

### VISIT TO STOCKHOLM 1920

THORD ARRIVED in Seattle on the Japanese ship *Suwa Maru* on Sunday 7 March 1920. He journeyed on to New York the following day and arrived there on 15 March. The first priority was to regain his health.

During that initial period he was the guest of Charles O Eaton. Naturally, now that it was peacetime, he wanted to re-establish contact with his mother and relatives in Sweden.

On Wednesday 3 November 1920 all of Stockholm's morning newspapers carried lengthy, positive articles about Thord and his career from ship's boy to general. The evening papers, however, were sceptical – an 'emigrant recruiter' and 'propaganda expert' were the bold headlines. At the same time the veracity of his story to the press about his adventurous life was questioned in headlines such as 'Reality or Münchhausen Tales' (referring to exaggerated accounts of war exploits given by the German baron of that name).

His visit to Stockholm served a dual purpose, personal and professional.

Director Leufvén from the Swedish Agricultural Society gave the following explanation: Fredrik Bagge, a Swedish agricultural consultant in England had during the course of his career been trying to encourage the exchange of expertise in the area of agriculture between Sweden and Great Britain. Bagge had some time earlier written to the Canadian Ministry of Agriculture on this topic. He inquired if they could send someone to Sweden to highlight Canadian agricultural findings of recent years.

After the ministry had promised to comply with this request, Bagge wrote to the Agricultural Society to ask if a series of lectures could be arranged through the society's agency. The society arranged this to coincide with their autumn meeting in November. Thus it was that Thord arrived in Stockholm to convey some of the Canadian experience that could hopefully be of use to Swedish farmers. He had been instructed to cover only basic information on cultivation techniques,

such as the use of new machinery and different growing methods in instructive lectures that would benefit farmers. The Canadian Government was aware of this beforehand, and Thord always understood this to be one of the conditions for the series of lectures.

In Thord's account, the visit came about as follows: While convalescing after the war in Siberia, he had re-established contact with his old friend and military superior, Colonel Dennis. After the war, the Colonel was employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), Canada's large landowning railroad company. Bagge's request to the Canadian Government had apparently been forwarded to the CPR, which was therefore interested in finding someone who could make himself understood to the Swedish public.

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Initially Thord hesitated before accepting the task. There were several reasons for accepting. He had not been home for eight years and would now get a chance to celebrate Christmas with his elderly mother and other relatives in Sweden. He was not such a stranger to the topic as was later suggested in the press. After all, he had plenty of experience as a manager on plantations in the East Indies. He had spent the greater part of a year during a previous period of convalescence on a farm in Canada, where he had followed the work with great interest. His experience and ability to tackle new activities has been well documented previously. He was, in other words, well acquainted with the terms of the assignment. A hidden factor involved was the National Organisation against Emigration, which was seemingly behind the attempt to cast suspicion upon Thord in the press.

They were aware that Canada needed immigrant farmers and that Scandinavians were especially sought after. Emigration to Canada by Swedish farmers would affect Swedish agriculture negatively. Such plans, they felt, should not be promoted by the Swedish Agricultural Society.

Thord was a guest at a meeting of the society on the evening of Wednesday 4 November 1920. During one lecture the speaker, Captain C Ehrenborg, found it appropriate to launch an attack, even if indirectly, on Thord and his upcoming lecture by hinting that Canada was planning to deprive Sweden of its much-needed youth. None of the hosts made any move to distance themselves from this accusation against an invited guest.

At the following day's assembly, when Thord was due to hold his lecture and had been given the chair, he reminded his audience of the accusations of emigrant recruitment that had been directed at him the previous evening. He closed with the following words: 'If I had not been Swedish, I would have taken this accusation as an insult, but as a Swede I have to respect freedom of expression. After careful consideration, therefore, I have decided that it would be better to refrain from giving a lecture on the topic of Canadian agriculture either here or around the country as was planned. I do hope, however, that when any Swede is sent abroad to give a lecture he shall not become the target of such behaviour.'

Little understanding was shown for Thord's action. His reaction showed that he had been away from Sweden far too long, said one speaker, who received support from the audience.

'That is the way of the Swedish,' observed Thord.

He was not totally isolated. To be fair, it has to be acknowledged that Director Leufvén regretted the accusations made against Thord without an investigation of the facts. Mr William Olsson, in an article in *Dagens Nyheter*, regretted that the Swedish 'emigration fear' had offended Thord. He explained in a later article that emigrants were no traitors to their country and that 'there were many here that would like to listen to General Gray'. A report in *Svenska Dagbladet* signed by the initial 'I' suggested that some circumstances in 'the Gray case' imposed and called forth bitter – and yes, even humiliating – reflections. How could something like this happen in a nation that was particularly sensitive about its reputation for chivalry? A faux pas had been committed by one individual and then, according to an old recipe, the blame had to be piled onto someone else.

'Who was to blame? Not General Gray. No, the fault was exclusively that of the illustrious company that asked something so absurd, ie that a country such as Canada should send a representative to speak about its agriculture without realising that the whole venture would turn more or less into some form of advertisement.'

Even Marika Stjernstedt in *Veckojournalen* spoke of the event as a case of tactless behavior, when a Swede, returning home from abroad after being honoured in many different ways in foreign countries, had been subjected to unwarranted accusations.

## THE LAST ADVENTURES

IT WAS hardly surprising that troublemakers – looking for help from someone with military knowledge so as to fulfil their ambitions – would turn to a man such as Thord. The world press has often singled him out among 'soldiers of fortune'. Such was the case in Thord's involvement in two abortive escapades in Portugal in 1921 and Venezuela in 1926.

In the first instance, the purpose was to restore the monarchy in Portugal by reinstating King Emanuel on the throne. Jealousy between high-ranking officials caused the badly planned coup to fail. Most of the officers were captured and executed.

Nothing further is known of Thord's involvement other than his own notes stating that he was wounded in the face.

On 7 January 1926 Thord received a letter in New York from the Venezuelan General Francisco L Alcántara stating the following: 'As I have to leave the United States for an important task and find it necessary to be suitably represented here in certain matters, I herewith appoint you purchasing agent and military advisor to the patriotic movement to serve

my country Venezuela, a constitutional government. As a purchasing agent and military advisor you are herewith authorised to pursue the tasks and obligations that such an assignment entails.'

In his service record Thord states that in this connection he was given the rank of lieutenant-general. On Thord's side, his acceptance of the mission had been preceded by careful investigation into General Alcántara's antecedents, position, and qualifications for the task he had taken on. Alcántara was born in Caracas in 1876. His father had been elected president in Venezuela but had died in 1878 during his presidential term. In 1892 Alcántara had been accepted at West Point. After he had passed through the military academy highly recommended he returned to his country. He participated in several campaigns, rose in rank and later attained high civil and military positions.

In 1908 he was elected president in the state of Bolivar. Towards the end of that year he was asked by Gomez to join in his government and for three years was secretary of state for internal affairs. He resigned his post when the tyrant Gomez made his coup d'état against Venezuela's constitution.

Alcántara was at the time a cocoa plantation owner in Trinidad, temporarily residing in New York. However, he maintained contact with his friends in the Venezuelan Army. These awaited his return, as they were planning to oppose the reigning tyranny. Alcántara had a good reputation in the US. Even in government circles in Washington he was a 'persona grata'. It seems, however, that his failure to raise the amount of \$300 000 needed for the counter coup caused the plot to evaporate into thin air.

## PEACETIME ACTIVITY

WHEN HIS wartime activities came to an end, it was up to Thord, like everyone else, to try to arrange his existence in peacetime society with everything that entails, like family, home, occupational and free time, and so on. In his senior years Thord used to joke that he collected mothers-in-law.

In a first draft to the preface of his memoirs he listed his marriages thus:

- ❖ Edith Voss, 3 March 1904 in South Africa. Divorce 1906. Church wedding. Unpleasant marriage all the time.
- ❖ Isabella M Barr, September 1916 in New York. A son Angus born 25 September 1917 in Scotland. No church wedding. Wonderful marriage.
- ❖ Alice 'Belle' Scott, March 1922, New York. Divorce 1922. Church wedding. Terrible three weeks.
- ❖ Josephine Toerge Schaefer, Greenwich, Connecticut. 7 January 1925. Church wedding. Three happy years; four less good years.
- ❖ Winnefred Ingersoll, born 21 March 1883, died 25 November 1960. Marriage 11 July 1933 until her death. No church wedding; wonderful marriage.

The marriage to Edith was discussed in Chapter IV. The divorce from Josephine elicited a lot of comment in the American press after she sued him for \$200 000 in

costs and claimed intolerable cruelty. His mother-in-law, Emma Schaefer, owned a huge fortune. ‘Take it all with a pinch of salt,’ wrote Thord about coverage of the court case. Josephine’s two children from a previous marriage had taken the name Thord-Gray but reverted to their previous name when the marriage was dissolved.

During the first half of the 1920s Thord was resident in New York and thereafter in Greenwich, Connecticut, with a winter home in Florida, where he built Grayvik, a residence with a harbour on the coast that was unfortunately totally destroyed by a hurricane. Later he resided in Coral Gables close to Miami. In the period before his death he lived in Brickel Town House, forty yards from the beach with a view eastwards over the sea.

It is apparent that Thord became wealthy through his later marriages but he was not the type to depend on such assets. He did try different kinds of enterprises, most of which were not public knowledge.

One exception was his acquisition and management of a meat factory in Örebro in Sweden in 1923. Maybe he had some intention at that time of returning to the land of his forefathers.

The meat factory was advertised for sale in *Dagens Nyheter* on 24 May 1923. The contract was signed on 9 June. The contract stated that the seller, A Roos, had sold his property situated on Trädgårdsgatan in Örebro with the entire inventory, including the machinery in its existing condition, for 14 000 Swedish crowns. General conditions were, among other things, that occupation was to take place on 1 August 1923 and that the stock belonging to the business was not included in the amount paid, but the buyer pledged to take charge of it at the time of accessing the business against an agreed-upon fee. The rent of the premises was 2 000 crowns per year.

Thord was entitled to rent an apartment of two rooms and a kitchen in the same building for 800 crowns per year.

The business turned into a disappointment. A lot of the goods were sold on a cash-on-delivery basis. Times were bad and many were unable to pay. Goods were ‘lost’. At the turn of the year 1923–24 Thord declared an income of 1 749 crowns.

**Thord and  
Winnefred in the  
vicinity of Furusund,  
Stockholm skärgård.**



On 8 February 1924 a contract between Thord and a Mr LA Rune from Motala was made, agreeing to sell the meat factory for 11 500 crowns. Clearly the business was unsuccessful.

From 1925–1929 Thord ran a ‘banking firm’ on Fifth Avenue in New York. Prior to that he had already been interested in oilfields and mines.

When he became financially independent, he was able to spend time on things that interested him more and that were based on his previous adventures and experience in the areas of archaeology, ethnography, linguistics, military history, and political history – not to mention leisure and outdoor activities. These activities are so numerous that they deserve to be mentioned in special sections. If military and shooting societies are excluded, it is still likely that the following list of societies and clubs of various kinds – in which Thord was a paid-up member – is incomplete. It displays the wide scope of his areas of interest. (The admission year is in parentheses.)

## UNITED STATES

- Adventurers’ Club (1924)
- National Art Club (1926)
- American-Scandinavian Foundation (1926)
- Archeological Institute of America (1926)
- Vasa Orden: America (Lodge St Erik) (1926)
- Beach Club, Greenwich (1927)
- Automobile Club of America (1927)
- The Great Captains’ Island Beach and Yacht Club (1930)
- American Classical League (1930)
- American Swedish Historical Museum (1938)
- Polar Society (1949)
- National Geographic Society (1959)

## ENGLAND

- Royal Geographical Society (1928)

## SWEDEN

- Travellers’ Club
- The National Association for Preservation of Swedish Heritage Abroad (1925)
- The Royal Swedish Sailing Association (1929)
- Friends of the Nordic Museum (1934)
- SS Abraham Rydberg’s* Shiphands



## GEOLOGIST, ARCHAEOLOGIST, ETHNOLOGIST AND LINGUIST

THORD HAD an interest in archaeology and ethnology, which can be traced back to his early childhood exploits on Björkö and his father's tales of ancient times. This had been reinforced by contacts with his brothers' lifetime work. Gunnar had – in word, picture, and painstaking practical detail – presented Björkö's ancient land, nature and culture. Gustaf's archeological research focused primarily on northern Scandinavia. Thord's interest was also stimulated by contact with primitive foreign cultures, first in South Africa and later in Mexico.

During his youth the interest was more sporadic – something that he did during his recreational time. His notes from 1903–1905 on the natives in

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Sekukuniland were an example. Another was the reflections in 1912 on the old sacrificial place on the Papandayan volcano slope in Java. The experience in Mexico of primitive Indians – and fantastic memories of a time gone by – became a milestone among Thord's activities during his later years. It was remarkable that even while waging war he could accumulate and preserve information and artifacts. It must have been his close collaboration and friendship with his Indian assistants that made it possible. Thord's notes on the Tarahumara language, which were eventually compiled into a lexicon, are based mainly on his conversations and interviews with his orderly, the Shaman Pedro. We

have learned how in Tula he had gathered – and arranged storage of – sculptures from the Toltec time. Seven years later he collected them and handed them over to the museum in Gothenburg. His greatest archeological experience during the war was most probably his visit to the pyramid temple Tepoztlan. During his second visit to Mexico in 1916 he wrote to his mother from Veracruz on 17 September: 'Travel tomorrow to Yucatan, which is full of Mayan civilisation ruins, to study the history of the Mayan culture, its rise and fall. I have worked for many days and dug in Aztec, Pre-Aztec, and Pre-pre-Aztec ruins in south-central Mexico and even further south.

'I am now carrying with me more than 200 different kinds of statues and necklaces, etc. When I left here two years ago I had a wonderful collection, but as the train was derailed on its way to Veracruz (I was not on it – was warned the last minute) I lost them all.

'During the revolution, further south, I found towns and the ruins of towns thousands of years old, which no white man had ever seen. One town stood there twenty miles long and ten miles wide without a soul present – a dead town. Only I and another white man have been there....

'In Mexico I dug down twenty feet deep in seven days and found three different... civilisations that I call Aztec, Pre-Aztec, and Pre-pre-Aztec. Between the latter two there was a layer of two to six feet of volcanic ash. The idols I found under this volcanic ash are totally different from those that I found above.

Pre-Aztec has Egyptian resemblances; Pre-pre-Aztec has Chinese and Burmese resemblances.’

After his return from the Siberian campaign, Thord visited Mexico again during two periods in 1922. Through his good contacts (his old superior Obregon had become Mexico’s president at that time) he was able to get permission to export some of the items, even though that was normally forbidden. A collection of these ancient pieces was deposited in the National Historical Museum in Stockholm. Later on it was placed at the disposal of his brother Gustaf and finally ended up in the Gothenburg Museum.

In 1923 Thord published the results of his research in the book *Från Mexikos Forntid (From Ancient Mexico)* printed by the Gunnar Tisell publishing company in Stockholm. He was eager to spread knowledge of the old Central-American culture. He was supported by the Archeological Institute of America and lectured as a representative of the institute during 1930 and 1931 at about twenty-five universities and many archaeological societies all over the US on the topic ‘The Pre-Columbian Civilization in the Valley of Mexico’. Judging from press reports, the series of lectures awoke great interest and appreciation. In 1930 the institute reported to him: ‘We had such splendid reports from the lectures you gave for our institute this year.’ They wanted him to continue, which he did, and on 6 March 1931 the president of the institute wrote:

‘We have had wonderful reports of your lectures, and the tremendous numbers of people that came, and even those who came but could not get in. Not since I have been president have we had... such turnouts for any of our lecturers. I congratulate ourselves and you.’

‘Not bad for an old warrior that was denied a professorship last month,’ wrote Thord to his brother Gustaf in April 1931.

He was especially interested in old weapons. His collection of antique weapons was possibly unique. Out of this collection he gave 24 Swedish swords to the American-Swedish Historical Foundation in 1949. Regrettably, one of these was stolen in 1954.

A summary of Thord’s scientific work and donations was written in a document by the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History, and Antiquities by Professor JG Andersson on 4 February 1936.

‘I the undersigned, Andersson, geologist by profession, have with great interest studied Gray’s geological work about the goldfields within the Lydenburg area and found these to be characterised by professional knowledge and based on fairly extensive field observations. He has also performed archeological excavations in Mexico and the important and especially valuable material from these works has cost General Gray approximately \$20 000. In 1928 or 1929 he donated this collection (through Professor Erland Nordenskiöld) to Gothenburg Museum, where it is presently displayed in a special room. Professor Nordenskiöld greatly appreciated this donation and expressed his gratitude in the press. In 1923 Gray published a popular work: *From Ancient Mexico*. We have turned to an ethnographer and archaeologist, Dr Gösta Montell, who has also done archaeological fieldwork in

Mexico, to get his opinion of this book, which to us seems especially well written and characterised by real expert knowledge.

‘Dr Montell replied that Gray’s book was the best resumé of Mexico’s archaeology and that until today it is still very much worth reading. Concerning Gray’s collection from Mexico in the Gothenburg Museum, Montell explained that it contained a number of treasures that would absolutely not have been allowed to be exported with the strict laws that now are in force to protect Mexico’s ancient heritage. He further expressed his surprise that Gray had succeeded in exporting these treasures even at that time when the collection was gathered.

General Gray’s interest in anthropological and archeological research is apparent in his studies of the South African tribes, his publication *Från Mexikos Forntid*, his archeological work in Mexico, and as a result thereof his donated collection to the Gothenburg Museum. Added to this was a donation of £1 000 to the East Asian Collection, which he handed over to the undersigned Andersson in London last November. He did this at my request willingly and without any reservation as recognition of Sweden’s participation in the international exhibition of Chinese art as well as an aid to Sweden’s activity in this area that interests him very much.

**The University of Miami  
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‘During General Gray’s visit to Stockholm in January this year, I learned that the Egyptian Museum needed the sum of 2 000 crowns for some important purchases. I then turned to General Gray, who immediately offered to donate the amount without any reservations. General Gray has therefore not only shown the East Asian Collections and the Egyptian Museum extraordinary generosity but also through his own scientific works and publications has proved himself a skilled montane geologist as well as an intrepid and capable archeological collector. I would highly recommend that General Gray should receive official recognition from our country for his scientific works and donations.’

The Tarahumara lexicon was not ready for publication until 1955. The University of Miami Press printed 800 copies that were not sold but presented to the university, institutions, and researchers around the world, in many cases with personal dedications. It comprises no fewer than 1 170 pages.

‘The enormous dictionary is part Indian-English, part English-Indian,’ according to Professor Axel Boëthius’ review in *Allsvensk Samling* (No 11 1955). ‘As soon as an interesting idea appears, complementary cultural-historical and ethnographical information is given, whereby the tribe’s entire conception of the world is presented. In addition to that, the introduction of the book describes the Tarahumara Indians’ environment, way of life, customs, and religion, as well as grammar and the rules of pronunciation.’

Naturally such a contribution was followed by reviews in the press and private letters of gratitude that Thord kept on file. Gratitude was expressed by universities in the most remote parts of Africa and Asia, but to his great disappointment,

recognition was not forthcoming from some American colleges with Swedish-American management. Among the reviews Thord paid special attention to that of Professor Nils M Holmer at Lund University, who wrote in *Göteborgs Handels och*

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*Sjöfarts Tidning* on 29 June 1955 and in *Ethnos* 1956:3-4.

Holmer was positive but was of the opinion that one appendix designated ‘English, Sanskrit Oceanic, Tarahumara’ could well be excluded. This prompted Thord to write to Holmer: ‘You are perfectly right when you say that I am not trained in the science of linguistics, but I do nevertheless like to dabble in it. I have found that when a researcher, civilian or military, arrives in a new little-known area, he is often forced by circumstances to learn the basic principles of the language, as local interpreters cannot always be trusted. His understanding of the spoken word might be good, bad, or indifferent but it still provides a foundation on which others can build something better.

‘Without these observations – unskilled as they may be – very valuable information about the language can be lost irretrievably. Words change in a comparatively short time after the arrival of the white man. The Tarahumara Indians, often accurately, call him “the bearded devil”. Words and often complete legends are twisted in a few years by some extra-zealous missionaries, especially Catholic priests, into almost inarticulate Christian expressions which, in my opinion, is shameful. Of course there are some educated people too among these Christian apostates who are exempt from my remarks.

‘Almost all my travels have been in connection with punitive expeditions, wars or revolutions that have often made language into an immediate and dominating factor. This has forced me to learn several – I would estimate around thirteen languages and dialects, albeit poorly, during my 65 years of almost constant research work in four continents. My Tarahumara lexicon was written in a spirit of gratitude towards – and for better understanding of – these people, because they assisted me steadfastly and refused to disclose my hiding place to the Federal soldiers when I lay sick and helpless under some bushes. They were offered a large herd of cattle – riches beyond their wildest dreams – to capture me dead or alive. Instead they helped me, nursed me, and cured my fever. Later on they gave me three hundred archers to escort me back to... the Rebel Army. This is the reason for my Tarahumara lexicon.

‘Concerning my appendix C in the book, you said that it ought to have been totally excluded. You may well be right in this because I have an enormous respect for your knowledge in the linguistic area. But it might interest you to know that I receive letters and phone calls that criticise me for not having continued work on the subject. Although we have rather well-founded theories of the so-called origin of the Indians, there are still scientists that claim, even if to no avail, that the American Indians, at least some of them, came from the Pacific Islands. If that is the case, it would explain the similarities in many words as well as in the artifacts. Dr P Rivet, a prominent scientist, suggested in 1926 that the inhabitants of Tierra

del Fuego crossed the Antarctic from Australia around six thousand years ago. His earlier theory, which was abandoned, was that Australia's Aborigines came from South America's southern tip through Melanesia and Polynesia three thousand years earlier.

'Apart from the great distance over water that could well have been frozen, the Antarctic theory is not as bad or impossible as it may seem. The Smithsonian expedition to Siberia some years ago came to the conclusion that northern Canada's Eskimos crossed the Lena River delta in Siberia on the Antarctic ice. There are several similarities with the Indian culture along the entire west coast of America, if one compares it with some southern Pacific Ocean culture. Some of these have a rare distribution. For example; one characteristic can be found in Central America but not in North or South America. Another can be found in the furthest northwest but not in South America and vice versa.

'There are serious doubts whether people from the islands of the Pacific Ocean landed in any great numbers on the American continent. However there are signs – or maybe I ought to say that it is presumed – that some daredevil canoeists from the Pacific Ocean might have been driven by storms to the American coast. If that is the case they must have left some trace, not only in words but also in

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the culture, even if ever so slight. These and other signs on probable Pacific Ocean contacts during the last thousand or two thousand years caused me to include Appendix C. I regret, Professor Holmer, that this letter has become almost an article – a lesson, you may think – of a chicken trying to tell the hen how to lay an egg.'

In his reply to this letter, Professor Holmer expressed the wish to convince Thord that he did not judge people according to the special training they have. 'In linguistics two things are needed: A technique and a sound judgment. If I had to choose between the two I would choose the judgment. There are so many specialists that are active with artful techniques – and yet they reach the most absurd results.

So there is no need to repeat – if perhaps I neglected to say so in my review – how much I appreciate your common sense and your endeavour to give facts when you compiled this large lexicon.

'I do hope that I was fair to your grand and useful work because I had much pleasure in reading it – for some time several pages per day. I count your lexicon among the very few that really give some information of the people and their culture. Currently I am enchanted to read what you mention in your letter regarding the culture of honesty in these friends of yours, and I would like to add that I do share your opinion from my own experiences among the Indians in every way. Naturally theories do always differ when it comes to "origin" and "relationships". I am a bit doubtful if any connection cannot be proved in a very concrete way. Concerning comparative linguistics, the danger is that we have to learn too many words from too many languages and dialects, which leaves too

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much room for coincidental similarities. One does really have to work with other methods here, the structure of a language etc. Yet it might interest you to know that I am starting to realise certain connections between America and the Oceania, not exactly after the general lines or even those of the great Rivet. In any case I try to learn all these languages and find out what is new and what is old (which really is the key to the secret). So I might revert to your appendix C yet again, for inspiration. Regarding your comments about cultural similarities between America’s West Coast and the Pacific Ocean islands, as well as expeditions over the ice, I completely share your opinion. But last of all, how shall I receive your generous acknowledgement, which in addition is undeserved? Surely I do work at present with both the American and the Oceanian languages, and I might in the future yet again do another expedition. But yet... so little has yet been done.’ With this answer Thord has to be judged as excused for Appendix C.

His efforts in these scientific areas were acknowledged in Sweden. In 1959 he was appointed a permanent fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in Uppsala. On 31 May 1960 he was given an honorary Phd at Uppsala University for his work in linguistics and archaeology.

## THE VETERAN

SHARING hardships and enduring difficulties bind people to each other. Friendship has always been a decisive element for a military unit’s concord and fighting ability. Thord realised that, and he never let an opportunity pass to keep in personal touch with old battle friends.

This applied especially to those from his youth in South Africa.

Thord maintained lifelong friendships with comrades like Midgely from this time. In Mexico and Russia it was among the ordinary soldiers that he found some of his most trusted friends, like the Indians Pedro, Tekwe, Jesus, Lopez, and Francisco, and the Red prisoners of war Matfee and Ivan.

For obvious reasons – his high rank and the geographical remoteness of the conflict regions – personal friendships could not play the same role during these later wars. In any case it would have been impossible after his departure to stay in contact with the likes of Pedro and Tekwe or Ivan and Matfee.

But to maintain close ties, he was keen to participate in organising veteran gatherings, not only as a member but as leader and lecturer as well. He wanted to share his experience with the new generations so that they would not repeat the mistakes that had been made.

The Cape Mounted Riflemen Association branch in London held an annual meeting every August.

Thord was nominated vice president in 1934 and remained in office until 1961 when it was decided to close down the organisation because ‘all the members were far too old to be able to continue’.

Since 1919 the British in the US had their own veteran organisation – British Great War Veterans of America – its main aims being to help sick and needy ex-soldiers and work for better understanding and greater friendship between the US and the British Commonwealth. On 27 February 1929 Thord was elected as the society's president and immediately started a recruiting-campaign to improve the possibility of fulfilling the organisation's mission. He reported this activity to the War Office in London and received an official acknowledgement of gratitude from them. Thord felt that he had too many irons in the fire and asked not to be re-elected. The board regretted his decision but expressed appreciation for his tireless, devoted efforts for the organisation. An appeal from the members begged Thord to reconsider his decision and promised to support his re-election. Years later we learned that the organisation's local department in Yonkers, a suburb of New York, had elected him honorary president and he was guest of honour at the National Organisation's yearly ball on Commonwealth Day, 1944.

The Military Order of Foreign Wars of the United States informed Thord that British officers were eligible to become members of their veteran organisation if they had collaborated with the American Army during the war. Service in Siberia qualified Thord to be accepted into this organisation in 1928.

The detailed description of his experiences in Mexico in *Gringo Rebel* (University of Miami Press 1960) and *Gringo Bland Rebeller* (Bonniers 1961) have already been mentioned. Thord had considerable difficulty in having the book printed in the US in its original form. Because the publishers were extremely sensitive to public reaction, he had to cut down a lot on the ethnographical and anthropological observations, but most of all they refused to print his powerful condemnations of the Catholic Church and its support of the reactionary government.

'I removed 80 000 words this time and around 30 000 words last time. Even "His Holiness the Pope" can hardly object to what is left – the roaring lion has been tamed into a small kitten,' Thord wrote to Gustaf on 23 March 1960.

He never did write a book about the campaign in Siberia. Thord realised that if he expressed his opinion of certain people and events there, he would find it hard to be accepted in the circles he moved in. Nevertheless, his opinions were written down and they have been reproduced here in essence.

He was pleased to speak on less controversial issues on different occasions, especially in interviews and lectures.

The aforementioned tour of lectures – at approximately twenty-five universities – about Mexico's ancient history alternated in many places with lectures about the war in Siberia and the lessons to be derived from it.

Thord was often engaged by the American veteran organisation Military Order of the World War and its local branches. He was accepted as a member in 1926. In 1933 he was 'junior vice commander-in-chief'. In 1933 he was elected as a delegate to represent the New York branch at the annual convention in Chicago, and in 1934 he was elected a member of the organisation's general staff.

One of Thord's most important appearances in this context was on Army Day in Cincinnati on 7 April 1929, when he was the main speaker. According to

reports in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, after a description of his Siberian adventures, he summed up the lesson of the country's security policy:

'The celebration of Army Day gives the citizens of this great nation an opportunity to unite and exchange views on the dangers posed by communism and to make up their minds to stand for the freedom they enjoy.

'From all my experience of revolutions in different parts of the world I have never yet found a good reason why they took place. The reasons for the revolt of the masses against the state always seemed to be the same and the sickness that necessitated such action was to a great extent a rotten development, a corroding patch of shame on the part of the so-called upper classes. If we look back in history we find the same underlying cause for the downfall of many powerful empires. History shows that every nation's fall in the past took place when the nation was incapable of meeting an enemy attack due to the degradation of its people; its men had become emasculated and were afraid to die for the defence

**'These  
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communism.'**

of their country. In other words pacifists had rendered the state incapable of protecting itself. I want to explain that I am not here to promote war. I am here simply to support defence, but I am still fit enough to be of use if the necessity arises. The revolutions in Russia, Mexico, and China were inevitable. They had to take place just like the French and American revolutions. It was a necessity. And necessities will always exist as long as human nature is what it is.

'In these countries, the people were an abused, downtrodden working class that was forced after centuries of suffering to take up arms against a short-sighted, thick-headed, self-righteous upper class.

'These haughty idiots are responsible for the existence of communism. But communism itself is not a cure for the evil of bad government, as it only worsens the situation by exchanging one bad government for another worse one. The communists have gone too far. Their theory includes the abolition of the right of ownership, free speech, and free press. Opposition to the government is not tolerated. A critical word against the leadership is dealt with seriously and can lead to capital punishment. The individual has become part of the machinery and cannot act alone. Nor can he accumulate property if he does not belong to the communist party's ruling elite.

'The strongest weapon in the hands of the communists in foreign countries is their hypocrisy and ability to convert women and weak men to pacifism. In addition they plead for peace and happiness in an attempt to render nations passive and vulnerable. Russian agents agitate for pacifism, disarmament, peace, and love between nations.

'Why then don't they practice what they preach? While all this propaganda is being spread by the Russians they maintain and continuously train the largest army in the world. Why? Every state except Russia is called a "capitalist state", which, together with its institutions, church, home, and honest leadership has to

go. Everything has to be destroyed and then on the ruins they intend to build the perfect communist state – like they say now exists in Russia. Their intention is that the Soviet Republic in America shall become a satellite of Moscow, where the world proletariat's dictatorship will be situated.

'The seriousness of the threat is great, as the communist agents work in secrecy and make special efforts in the schools; universities; trade unions; among farmers; Negroes; in the army; and the marine – all imaginable tools are used to undermine our principles and destroy all that America stands for.

'These agents are skilled, daring, educated men and women. They are experts in their areas, but with almost frightening understanding of each group's psychology, with such persuasive facts and numbers, that they sometimes fool deep-thinking, serious men and women. But in general they easily fool people who are simple and easily manipulated

'It is surprising to find that what we consider to be true citizens work hand in hand with our enemies. Many of these people do not know what they lend their name and influence to, or to what they give their money....

'They do not know that their names are on the communist's list of gullible people from whom money can be obtained for different purposes like "hunger-relief in Russia". That is only a red herring to collect funds with which to finance the movement to overthrow the US Government.

'Bolshevism was the natural answer to the Tsar's miserable rule once the masses had been let loose. Many imperialists under Kolchak and other leaders continued the abysmal rule. The people were initially undecided between the Reds and the Whites, but they were forced to go over to the Reds in the hope that things would not get worse and might turn for the better.

'With the masses turning Bolshevist the Whites were put in the position of a lawless minority. In that way hope of restoring the old imperialist rule ended and the proletarian republic took first place, where it will remain until it is modified to a less radical rule, or until some internal power overthrows it.

'We all know that Russian conditions do not apply to the US, but this country is rich and they want it. It is history in a nutshell. Let them have their Bolshevism and communism in Russia – that is their business. But we do not wish them to encroach on our freedom. On this Army Day we have to decide to fight Bolshevism in this country and take every precaution in our power to preserve our homes and our freedom.

'It is very pleasing to see the true American showing himself in the American Federation of Labor when they rejected all the communists' suggestions. As long as there are such men in this federation we can be proud of them. We ought to collaborate and help them in their efforts to stand against communism. We do not see blood being shed around us. Therefore many think like the well-known ostrich with his head in the sand. We do not realise that the enemy is constantly but stealthily making his way towards our strongholds. One of these days – if we do not react – there will be an explosion and in our confusion we will find ourselves eliminated and incapable of continued resistance.

‘Our many laws and our religion forbid theft, but try removing the locks from your doors, and leave the doors to your safes open, and see how long you can keep your valuables.

‘Abolish the police in the cities and see how long it takes before criminal gangs arrive to take command. Abolish the army and the navy and within a short period the richest parts of the world will be attacked by foreign powers, and none of the written documents or signed agreements will deter them any more than the country’s written laws would deter the burglars without the police upholding the observance of the laws.

‘We have to open our eyes to the danger signals, and if we wish to keep our homes, our country, and our freedom intact every good citizen must be loyal to the American flag and all it represents. We must practice real American nationalism and instil this into our youth while they are still in school. We must demand an adequate army and navy to protect our coasts from invasion. The army and the navy must be in accord with the nation’s prosperity and size. Thus protected we will never need to bow our heads in slavery and shame or bend to the language of authority from a foreign power.’

Thord’s experience of different theatres of war caused him to wonder where such scenarios could be expected in the future. He expressed his thoughts on this topic several times. One of them was ‘A New Line-Up for Another World War’ in *Leslie’s Illustrated Weekly Newspaper* on 15 May 1920, in which he expressed his suspicion that Germany might be planning a great new conflict to conquer the world with the help of the Soviets, Turkey, Japan, and some of the Allies’ dissatisfied colonies.

In an article in *The Greenwich Press* on 17 May 1934, written after he had a conversation with Herman Göring in Berlin, he seemed inclined to dismiss the idea that a new world war was looming. A year later, however, he dissuaded me from accepting a military educational mission in Ethiopia on the grounds that ‘there will soon be a greater and more important war’.

It seems natural that Thord’s military competencies and experience were officially in demand. On 8 April 1935 the governor of Florida appointed Thord to the rank of major-general and chief of his personal staff. Little is known of this period of activity.

From available documents we know that in 1938 he was elected to a lifetime honorary membership of the Officers’ Club at 116 Field Artillery Regiment in Florida’s National Guard for ‘his prominent contribution to and his interest in the state’s and the nation’s military matters’. Among other things he donated a grand trophy for an annual award to the best National Guard unit in the state.



## THE SPORTSMAN

DURING his youth – and especially during the period of training in South Africa – Thord was an agile youth who enjoyed a variety of sports like shooting, ball games, boxing, and running. His interest in fishing and hunting dated from his childhood. During his time in the States of Malaya he did a lot of horse riding, and in many campaigns he covered thousands of miles on horseback. It goes without saying that different kinds of nautical sports were also of interest to the old *Rydberg* hand.

After some years in the US, Thord came to be especially interested in archery, both as participant and instructor. This sport, possibly the oldest in the world, witnessed a revival in the US during the twenties. Thord had experience with the bow and arrow as both hunting weapon and fighting weapon in South Africa and Mexico, without having actually used it himself.

He had been on the receiving end from opponents but had never been hit; although he was wounded once by a spear.

He had been particularly impressed by the performance of the Yaqui Indians. In covered terrain they were able to creep up quietly and defeat troops bearing firearms. Consequently they had captured large quantities of weapons and ammunition from the Federals and helped to redress the imbalance in armaments between the two sides.

The possibility of using the bow and arrow in hunting might have provoked the new surge of interest in archery as a sport. ‘Some of us intend to travel to Africa for a big game hunt. Meanwhile as long as business keeps us here, we are going to practice and increase our ability to hit the target,’ said Thord in an interview. (*Brooklyn Eagle* 25 April 1926.)

They had therefore formed the Metropolitan Archery Association, which among other things, organised shooting ranges in New York’s suburbs where members could practice for a small fee. Thord became the association’s first president and the activity became lively. People participated in the sport with all the enthusiasm that characterised men like Ivor Thord-Gray.

It attracted high schools (even girls’ schools), camps, and active societies, all eager to compete against Hercules and Diana, Friar Tuck and Will Scarlet. The response was so overwhelming that archery equipment was in demand in every sports shop and supply had difficulty keeping up with demand. (*New York Times Magazine*, 8 September 1929.)

Thord came second in the association’s first competition on 31 May 1926. ‘General Ivor Thord-Gray, President of Metropolitan Archery Association, provided the surprise of the game. General Gray had only a few months’ experience of archery but is a fighter with many years’ experience. It was a pleasure to watch his work.... General Gray chose to make a personal record in his first competition.’ (*Archery Bulletin* no 73, 1926.)

In Deerfield, Massachusetts, in July of the same year as well as in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, in September he came third. In October he won the Metropolitan Masters (*Archery Bulletin* numbers 76, 78, and 81). In the Open Masters the American results had improved so much that the best Briton could only come in at seventh place. Thord took third place. It should be remarked that the British have a tradition of competition in archery going back several hundred years. Thord's home in Greenwich became a gathering place for the best archers to train. (*New York Times* 29 January 1926.)

In Pinehurst on 5 January 1927 he set a new world record in the Double American and Double New York Rounds with 2 566 points. The old record had been 2 496 points (*New York Times* 6 January 1927).

It amused Thord to arrange competitions between archers and pistol shots. Fourteen chosen pistol shots from 9th Coastal Artillery Regiment shot at a distance of 75 yards while he shot with bow and arrow at 80 yards. Thord scored 1 016 points while the pistol shots scored 971 points. (*New York Herald Tribune*, 30 January 1927 among others.)

'We dare to be of the opinion that this result will stand for a long time.' (*Archery Bulletin* no 89, February 1927.) Thord also wrote about this competition in the same bulletin: 'The conditions were awful. I had a thousand spectators on either side of the hall and in the cramped corridor, all yelling, talking and pushing me from time to time when I was about to shoot. I felt so calm that I was surprised and only kept them aside to make sure that no one got hit if a string broke. But after [the] shooting... they were all over the place again and I just let it be.'

On 10 June of the same year he again won in the Metropolitan Association's Masters and was second in the Open Masters with the same score as the winner (*Archery, National Bulletin* no 95, June 1927). In 1928 Thord successfully defended his title in the Metropolitan Association Masters and won the Open Masters as well (*New York Times*, 4 May 1928). That year Thord became president of the National Archery Association of the United States. 'The English longbow originates from Sweden according to English history. Archery was very common in Sweden during the eleventh century and was highly regarded. A double Swedish victory meant that a Swede became champion with a primitive Swedish longbow!' (*Svea* 9 Feb 1927.)



## DONOR AND BENEFACTOR

IN HIS SENIOR years Thord had plenty of money. He could afford to be generous to causes that interested him. Although far from comprehensive, details of gifts and donations are shown in his documents and letters of gratitude. Contributions to purely charitable organisations seem to have benefited, foremost among them the Salvation Army in Stockholm through Colonel Hed. In 1933, 1936, 1937, and 1938 he donated a total of 32 800 crowns.

His contributions to purely scientific organisations were presented to Gothenburg's Ethnographic Museum in 1929 and 1930; the Royal Armoury in 1933; the Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities in 1935; The Royal Swedish Academy of Letters in 1935; the Egyptian Museum in 1936; and the Royal Society of Arts and Sciences in Uppsala in 1959 and 1960, amounting to approximately 53 000 crowns. In 1933 the Swedish Officers' Corps got books to the value of 30 000 crowns. His old school – Maria Elementary School – got 5 000 crowns in 1935. Athletics organisations like the riding school in Strömsholm, the sports club Hellas, the archery, fencing, and sailing schools got 11 500 crowns. The Rydberg Shiphands got 3 000 crowns, Stockholm's Veteran Reserve 1 000 crowns, and the Royal Swedish Society of Naval Sciences 4 000 crowns. In 1934 Baron Rudbeck got 10 000 crowns for the Tureberg Church.

Fees for lifetime memberships in a series of organisations – where he seldom had time to participate – could also be seen as some form of contribution. He recorded that in addition he had donated more than 10 000 crowns to art and archaeology in Sweden. So his charitable donations in Sweden alone totaled more than 250 000 crowns.

In the US in 1960 the American Swedish Foundation got \$50 000 and the American Scandinavian Foundation got \$1 000 000. These two amounts constituted Thord's widower's entitlement in the estate left by Winnefred and Thord-Gray. Winnefred and Thord had agreed in 1952 that if he refrained from claiming the greater part of her fortune, she would place as much in a trust fund that would be called the 'Thord-Gray Memorial Scholarship Fund' to help Swedish students. This happened in 1954. By 1961 the fund stood at more than \$2 250 000. However, the American Scandinavian Foundation would not be able to use the money until after Thord's death.

Other Scandinavian countries also enjoyed Thord's benevolence. In Norway he gave away 44 000 crowns in cash and 12 500 crowns worth of books during the years 1934–1937. In Denmark in 1935 and 1936 gifts altogether totaled 40 000 crowns. In Finland 50 000 Finnish marks were given to the Lotta Svärd Organisation in 1934.

Thord donated books like *Vår Konung och Hans Gärningar* and *Hantverkets Bok* (Lindfors Publishing House). The greatest book donations were surely his own book *Gringo Rebel* and the Tarahumara lexicon, especially the latter that was donated to universities, colleges, and private recipients worldwide.

From his fantastic weapon collection he donated 24 antique Swedish swords to the American Swedish Historical Foundation in Philadelphia.

Other examples of aid were \$1 000 for exhibition expenses at the Swedish 300-Year Jubilee Art Exhibition and a similar sum for the preparations for Ahrenbergs-Flodén's Sweden-America flight in 1929. As for the programme for the planned reception in New York, Thord was involved in the working committee, chairman of the reception committee, and member of both the entertainment and the advisory committees. He was also toastmaster at the dinner in honour of the aviators.

Rumours of his generosity spread, and he was assailed by requests for donations from all kinds of causes, at times for fantastic amounts. He did not always give in but often gave small amounts for the sake of peace and quiet.

## HONOURS AND AWARDS

AFTER THE time in Siberia few people saw Thord in uniform with the decorations that he was entitled to wear. In the military associations he would wear them with his dress uniform on special commemoration days. Otherwise they were worn only for photographic or painted portraits. And then it was necessary to explain all the orders, ribbons, and their meaning. In one instance he complained that the artist, 'though the best in America', had not considered the different ribbon colours as important, which is why it was difficult to distinguish some ribbons. Thord always wore a small red insignia in his buttonhole. It represented Order of St Anna Grand Cross, the distinction that he valued the most. This is a list of Thord's decorations according to his own notes.

### SWEDEN

- Order of the Northern Star Commander with the Grand Cross 1962
- Royal Order of the Sword Commander 1st Class 1934
- King Gustav V's New Sweden Medal 1938
- The Swedish Brigade's Commemorative Medal 1918

### FINLAND

- The White Rose Commander 1st Class 1935
- The Finnish Protection Corps Cross of Merit 1934

### RUSSIA

- Order of St Anne 1st Class Knight Commander with the Grand Cross with Sword and Ribbon 1920
- Order of St Anne 2nd Class Knight Commander with Sword 1919
- Order of St Vladimir Commander 3rd Class with Sword 1920
- Order of St Vladimir Knight 4th Class with Sword and Ribbon 1919
- Order of St Stanislaw Commander 2nd Class with Sword 1919
- Cross of Order of the Compassionate Heart (Russian Veterans) 1933

## FRANCE

French Victory Medal, World War 1914–1916

## GREAT BRITAIN

Cape of Good Hope General Service Medal (1 Bar) 1897–1899

Robben Island Police

Bechuanaland War

Tembuland

Pondoland

Griqualand East

Queen Victoria Medal Boer War (2 Bars) 1899–1900

King Edward Medal Boer War (4 Bars) 1900–1902

Natal Zulu War Medal 2nd Zulu War (1 Bar) 1906

Mons Star (1914–1915 Star) World War 1914–1915

British War Medal World War 1914–1918

British Victory Medal World War 1914–1918

## SPAIN

Order of San Fernando (Spanish Military Cross)

Order of Isabella the Catholic Commander

## UNITED STATES

Military Order of Foreign Wars Companion 1928



WITH THE exception of the Spanish ones, the bestowal of the distinctions are all documented in original letters. In the Swedish Consulate in Vladivostok there are also attested copies of the Russian distinctions or references from the appropriate authority. Nothing is known about the circumstances when he was honoured with the Spanish medals.

Thord recorded that he had been given even more honours, but for various reasons they had never been handed over to him and most likely never would be. Examples of these were Sun Yat Sen's 'Chinese Dragon', a memento of the Mexican Revolution, the German 'Red Eagle' (after his participation in Damaraland), and the Russian St George Cross that Kolchak did not get a chance to sign before he was taken prisoner and shot. At times Thord declined offered decorations because he thought them of low value. If one was a Commander of the Order of St Anna and the Swedish Northern Star Order, he believed, then one could not accept awards that were not war decorations but simply tokens of gratitude for gifts and donations.

But appreciation could be shown in many other ways than through orders and medals. For his scientific contributions Thord was chosen to be a member of the Royal Scientific Community in Uppsala in 1959. On 31 May 1960 he became honorary doctor in Uppsala for his works in linguistics and archaeology.

It is obvious that a donor and benefactor like Thord would receive many oral and written tokens of gratitude. He collected and registered the written ones. For example there is a list of around seventy books that he received in appreciation for his donations of the Tarahumara lexicon. In the letters of thanks he underlined expressions that he especially valued. One of those is from the Finnish General, Unio Sarlin, who wrote about *Gringo Rebel*:

‘I would like to put this book in every young officer’s hand. And when he gets into a critical situation he should call the *Gringo* for help and then he would manage even the hardest task.’

The reviews of Thord’s book were generally positive, even if they provoked debate. For the author they were marks of appreciation. The same could be said about generous comments in interviews, press articles and the like. Like most human beings he valued recognition and awards, and it is probably fair to say that at times he was a bit of a publicity-seeker.

## RETROSPECTIVE

IN SPITE OF his 70 years experience around the world, Thord never forgot the childhood home and environment where he grew up. ‘When I think of Badstugatan 41, the garden and the lake always lie before my eyes. From number 41B, out steps the warrant officer with the sabre and the uniform. Suddenly a ruffian appears and tries to take our sledge. A few seconds later Father comes out of 41 and in full force runs after the ruffian. A while later Father returns and I always thought I saw a certain joy in his eyes – but only at the times we knew he had caught up with the ruffian in some alley or staircase.’ No wonder he was proud of his father. In 1960 he wrote to Gustaf:

**‘When I think of  
Badstugatan 41, the garden  
and the lake always lie  
before my eyes.’**

‘Badstugatan number 41 is associated with sacred memories. There I had my first adventure. I burned Mother’s curtains and you fell down the hill. Vikings, ruffians.... I ought to have tried to collect something from the home, for example the iron bar that held the gate closed.’

In the introductory chapters that he wrote himself, he told much about the childhood and boyhood years of Björkö and Viking dreams of the archipelago, of fishing and hunting, and other wonderful pastimes.

These memories stayed with him all his life.

And he liked to return to them as often as possible, a longing that could often be detected in his letters, a longing that extended to his family.

‘There is not a day that passes without us talking about you,’ he wrote home in 1957. His last wish – to be buried on Swedish soil – was also fulfilled. Since 1964 his resting place is in the Sandsborg graveyard in Enskede south of Stockholm, where his parents are buried as well.

The events that Thord was involved in are remarkable from many points of view, and taken together they make up a cross-section of our modern history.

From a current perspective, the wars he took part in seem rather primitive, though no less bloody. The enemy, as in the past, was confronted eye to eye, even though the repeat and automatic weapons, like the machine guns introduced in the Boer War, forced new combat techniques and tactics to be developed. Aircraft and tanks differed only slightly in Flanders in 1915 from their later versions. Chemical warfare had just begun with the use of deadly gas.

From being a mounted infantryman and machine-gunner, Thord became an artillerist in the Boer War. In Mexico he was mainly a cavalry man and during the World War, again infantry. He was consistently interested in organisational work: recruiting, forming, and training conscripts and voluntary units. In Mexico as in Siberia, he was quickly promoted through the ranks to command of a brigade or higher units in the field.

It is a miracle that he got off as lightly as he did and that the injuries he sustained in Omsk did not become worse. He was lucky and he believed in his lucky star,

**Circumstances forced him from the beginning into the warrior's path. But he had many strings to his bow.**

but he had also learned his lessons in a tough school. He was an outstanding sportsman in many areas of athletics and had few equals when it came to military-type sports like fencing and shooting, as is borne out by his world record in archery in his fifties.

Thord's most remarkable trait is perhaps his versatility. The wide spectrum and at the same time the penetrating depth of his interests are evident in spite of having only an elementary school education. August Reinhold, his father, had a favorite expression: 'One should always be the least among the party,' meaning that if a person keeps company with educated and skilled friends he too will learn and become skilled. Without trying to claim that this particular phrase meant anything special to Thord, it was obvious that his craving for learning, his struggle for new and penetrating knowledge in the areas he dealt with, was unusually strong. The breadth of his interests is manifested in all the clubs and societies of which he was a permanent or honorary member. It comes across too in his written works and the opinion of them by prominent researchers and scientific institutions. There are also the reports of – and the expressed gratitude for – his oral presentations, whether in academic disciplines like archaeology and ethnography or in his motivational speeches in support of the vital wartime shipbuilding programme in the US.

To do a long day's work as a soldier and thereafter spend time on scientific work must have required strong self-discipline. Thord wanted to do so much. He began work at the desk every morning at six o'clock at the latest.

Many obviously regard Thord first and foremost as an adventurer and a mercenary. Maybe so, but that was only part of the truth. Circumstances forced him from the beginning onto the warrior's path. But he had many strings to his bow. Both in the civilian and military context he fulfilled the objectives he had set himself. Luck stood by him when it came to getting out of a tight spot and when it came to becoming financially independent.

There are countless testimonies of his personal fearlessness and bravery.

He opposed both crabbed formal discipline and slackness, and was scathing when he encountered a lack of a sense of responsibility, especially when it involved the care of subordinates. Among the latter he found his most trusted friends like the Indians Pedro, Tekwe, Jesus, Lopez, and Francisco in Mexico and the Red Army prisoners Matfee and Ivan in Siberia.

He fought for what was right and for human freedom. He was able to adapt linguistically to foreign environments but he remained Swedish to the end. Somebody once called him 'our last Grand Swede'. Without a doubt one can agree with Gösta Moberg's conclusion: 'If destiny was kind to him, he has also truly contributed through his own power and capacity, physical vigour and spiritual force, to earn the honour and respect his name carries.'



**RIGHT:** Thord in Stockholm with Astrid Hallström (wife to Thord's brother Gustaf), and his wife Winnefred. The Royal Opera and St James Church are visible in the background.





**LEFT:** Thord presides over the smoking of herring in 1953 with the sons of his brothers Gunnar and Gustaf.

**FROM LEFT:** Cissi, wife to Gustaf's son Ingvar; Ingvar; Sassa, wife to Gunnar's son Karl; and Thord-Gray.

**RIGHT:** From left to right, Sten Rinaldo, husband to Gustaf's daughter Birgitta; Bengt Rinaldo; Thord Hallström and his brother Sverker (half hidden); Magdalena Rinaldo on Thord's lap; and Gustaf Hallström.



