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# A Tale of Two Brothers

Shelly Dobbs Dooley\*

How did a painting by a Swedish artist find its way to Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park in Georgia? The story goes back many years, to Sweden, and touches the families of Thulstrup, Hahr, and Roos-Olivekrona.

Carl Magnus Thulstrup was adjutant to King Charles XV and Swedish minister to France. He married Hedvig Kristina Akrell; they had two sons: Henning (1836-1901) and Bror Thure (1848-1930).

Henning Thulstrup, Lieutenant and later Colonel of the King's Own First Grenadier Regiment, and aide-de-camp to King Charles XV,<sup>1</sup> married Zuleima Hahr in January 1863. Their child, a girl named Selma, was born 5 January 1864, and the young mother died a week later. Old family letters from Sweden reveal the following:

I have now in my hand Zuleima Hahr's journal and a multitude of letters, written 1860-1863 from her fiancé lieutenant Henning Thulstrup. I have them on loan from a daughter by his second marriage, who lives in England. They are highly interesting. In one letter Zuleima describes when Jenny Lind visited her and her parents in their summer home at Drottningholm!<sup>2</sup>

The letters have given me much information about the deep and sweet love between Zuleima and Henning Thulstrup. Zuleima was surely a sweetheart in its best sense, beautiful, intelligent, and musical! A sad fate, her death after the short marriage of only a year.<sup>3</sup>

A letter from Zuleima's mother, Charlotte Hahr, dated 2 February 1864 and addressed to Rosalie Roos Olivekrona,<sup>4</sup> shows her grief at the death of her daughter Zuleima, and also mentions her other daughter Hulda, who was experiencing the effects of the American Civil War in South Carolina.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Dir. Sw. Nob.*, VIII:272 b.

<sup>2</sup> Shelly Hahr Dobbs, ed., *The Stor Mor and the Colonel: the correspondence of Annie Hahr Dobbs and Gösta Hahr*. Privately published by Shelly Dobbs Dooley (Indianapolis, IN, 1997), 70.

<sup>3</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 78.

<sup>4</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 101.

<sup>5</sup> Letters from Hulda Hahr to Rosalie Roos are published in Shelly Dobbs Dooley, "Young Ladies' Boarding Schools in Sweden and South Carolina," *Swedish American Genealogist*, Vol. XVIII (December 1998): 193-207.

Dear Rosalie,

For your innermost sympathy from your heart expressed in your letter I thank you most sincerely and the depth of the sadness to which I have sunk words cannot describe, as she was all that I had. We were like sisters in everything; thoughts and deeds, all melted in one, and now it is all over—all the sunny thoughts for her future and the lovely little baby have now turned to deep sadness; I have been during these last weeks totally incapacitated to keep my mind on anything else, only her passing. Yesterday through you, you sweet friend, a glimpse of a different feeling entered my saddened heart, through my Hulda's unexpected letter, which informed me that the lovely children are alive and well, but it was written last September and therefore nearly five months old. She described the terrible war. Her husband is assigned to James Island near Charleston, and she says that should it last another year, they will be without clothing and food. Oh! How sad it is not to be able to be of any help to the poor child. She even informed me that she was expecting a baby in March. I cannot think about this coming event without the greatest worry as I just recently have experienced such a happening; and she asks if Mother could send her a box of little things! But I cannot see any way by which I could send her anything. I should love to send her what she needs but I do not know how to find a way to get it to her.

The little darling who so suddenly was left to my care is in good health and growing and we were fortunate to find a good wet nurse who is rich in milk. The little one was christened and her name is Selma. After the Christening her dead mother was taken to Solna Church to her last rest. She was in her bedroom as long as she remained home.

Thanks my dear friend for your kind offer to send the letter to Hulda. I have recently through Miss Hammerskjöld been able to send the sad news to Hulda. Now however I dearly wish that the sad news won't reach her before the months of March and April.

I wish you would give my heartiest thanks to your nice husband the good old Knut, who through the post script in your letter tries to comfort me by writing that even in Uppsala there is an epidemic and that death is not something rare; but only hard to understand, and just about the day my Selma left us, five young married ladies also died in the same circumstances.

Oh may God give me strength and comfort. I sincerely hope and wish that your two little ones may soon retain their health and yourself peace of heart.

Your devotedly and thankful friend,

Charlotte Hahr

Within two months, the baby, Selma, was also dead. Another letter gives the information on Zuleima, Selma and Henning's final resting place: "I have continued the walk to the old church of Solna, built about 1200. I wanted to find the grave of Aunt Zuleima Hahr Thulstrup. I was successful in my seeking and the grave was, I am glad to say, well maintained. The stone had only the inscription *Generallieutenant Thulstrup familje grav*."<sup>6</sup>

In 1868 Henning Thulstrup was married a second time, to Agnes Fleetwood.<sup>7</sup> Agnes was the daughter of the Colonel, Baron Abraham Georg Fleetwood and Anna Carolina Wolffram. They had two daughters, Ebba and Amalie.

Ebba's son was Åke Thulstrup, (1904-1989), an historian. His father was Jakob Peterson, for some years councilor of state and mayor of Södertälje near Stockholm. The son was permitted to take the name Thulstrup.<sup>8</sup>

Another letter, unpublished, dated November 1888, written by Hulda Hahr says: "...Mr. Henning Thulstrup is now at the head of the only military institution in Sweden, and quite a high position. You may be proud of him in every way."

Henning Thulstrup's younger brother, Bror Thulstrup, became known in the U.S. as Thure de Thulstrup. He was born 5 April 1848 in Stockholm, Sweden; died 9 June 1930 in New York City; and was knighted in 1910. He married Lucie Bavoillot in New York City on 3 June 1879. She died in 1915. There were no children.

Though all but forgotten by the end of his life and now generally unknown, Thure de Thulstrup was one of the leading illustrators of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He graduated from the National Military Academy in Stockholm and was commissioned in the Swedish Army as an artillery officer. Soon after, he went to Paris, where he joined the French Foreign Legion and eventually saw service in the Franco-Prussian War. In 1872 he studied topographical drawing for a short time in Paris and then immigrated to Canada to work as a civil engineer. From Canada he was hired by the Prang Lithographic Company in Boston to prepare maps for an atlas. There he began sending illustrations to the *New York Daily Graphic* and was soon hired to the staff and moved to New York. In the late 1870s Thulstrup was hired by *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*. His illustrations appeared in *Harper's Weekly* for more than three decades. In his own day he stood in the front rank of his profession and was held in high esteem by his colleagues.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 104.

<sup>7</sup> See *Dir. Sw. Nob.*, 11:731 b.

<sup>8</sup> Gösta Hahr, *The Hahr Family*, trans. Lennart Hahr (Norwalk, Conn., 1960); originally published as *Släkten Hahr* (Stockholm, 1954).

<sup>9</sup> Steven E. Smith, "American Book and Magazine Illustrators to 1920," vol. 188 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, ed. Steven E. Smith, Catherine A. Hastedt, and Donald H. Dyal (Detroit: Gale Research, 1998): 352-359.

Known as a “workhorse” with a “Viking constitution,” he was praised for both his versatility and dependability. He had a special knack for depicting crowd scenes. He was often assigned to cover presidential inaugurations and other important public events. Thulstrup was also considered a specialist in military illustrations, for which he was particularly well-suited due to his military background.<sup>10</sup>

My grandmother, Annie Hahr Dobbs, for about eleven years before her death in 1961, corresponded with a genealogist/historian/cousin in Sweden, Gösta Hahr. I have transcribed their letters, and privately published them as *The Stor Mor and the Colonel*. Annie wrote to Gösta in the 1950s about Thure de Thulstrup’s painting of the Civil War battle at Kennesaw.

In 1890 Cliff [Dobbs] and I married, and bought our home across the road from Governor Joseph M. Brown of Georgia. I saw a large oil painting, the “Battle of Kennesaw Mountain,” hanging in their home and recognized the name Thulstrup. Thus our correspondence. Many years have come and gone again and I have recently traced that painting which was sold when the Governor’s family moved. I am going to find it and if possible have it copied.<sup>11</sup>

I have a letter from him [de Thulstrup] in which he wrote me of a painting he made for Governor Joe Brown, our neighbor in Marietta, Georgia. I have located it in Atlanta very recently. It is in the First National Bank in Atlanta. He left Sweden for war service. The second wife of Uncle Henning was Agnes; she was fondly spoken of by Grandma [Charlotte Hahr], to whom she wrote often.<sup>12</sup>

I’ve found the Thulstrup painting! It is in the First National Bank of Atlanta. Marietta is at the foot of Kennesaw Mountain, and we lived in a beautiful picturesque section. The painting is still owned by Governor Brown’s family. A son, Charlie, placed it in the bank for safekeeping when he entered the army, World War I. Charlie since died, and two others of the family live in another state now. I went to the bank and saw it hanging in the art gallery with historical paintings of prominent scenes in the Civil War in Atlanta, and governors of the state, etc. I can secure permission to copy the painting only through the Browns, I was told. This I have started and will continue to find a way to get it made.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Stephen E. Smith, “Smith Draws Attention to 19<sup>th</sup> Century Illustrator,” Summer 1997, Cushing Memorial Library, Texas A&M University, URL: <library.tamu.edu/cushing/press/6.html>

<sup>11</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 127.

<sup>12</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 107.

<sup>13</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 129.

Have at last succeeded in getting permission to secure a copy of the painting of "The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain," which hangs in the First National Bank gallery. To get a photographer to do the work caused a delay. Am sorry to send you a copy without color, but the price was exorbitant!<sup>14</sup>

Some time later the painting was moved to the Visitor's Center at the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, about three miles north of Marietta, Georgia.

### Internet Resources

Many of the works of Thure de Thulstrup may be found on the Internet. The following websites will be of interest:

- "A Ball or A Strike: Which?" From *Harper's Weekly*, New York, 28 July 1888. Wood engraving.  
URL: <http://www.philaprintshop.com/images/harpmat.jpg>
- *The Day of Their Wedding: A Novel*, By William Dean Howells, Illustrated by T. de Thulstrup, 1895. (Full text online)  
URL: <http://eldred.ne.mediaone.net/wdh/day.html>
- "The Forlorn Hope."  
URL: [www.people.virginia.edu/~mmd5f/frederic.htm](http://www.people.virginia.edu/~mmd5f/frederic.htm)
- "Hoisting American Colors", Louisiana Cession, 1803."  
URL: <http://lsm.crt.state.la.us/museum/painting/thulstrop.htm>
- "Keep the Windows Down."  
URL: <http://www.railroadextra.com/rtstbk03.html>
- "Sheridan's Ride."  
URL: <http://www.thewildgeese.com/pages/sheridan.html>
- "Today in History: June 2; Grover Cleveland Marries Frances Folsom: The President's Wedding."  
URL: <http://rs6.loc.gov/ammem/today/jun02.html>
- "Wheeling On Riverside Drive." From *Harper's Weekly*, New York, 17 July 1886. Wood engraving.  
URL: <http://www.philaprintshop.com/images/hpc71786.jpg>

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<sup>14</sup> Dobbs, *The Stor Mor*, 132.

- "William Ewing, Captain Of The New York Base-Ball Club." From *Harper's Weekly*, New York, 9 November 1889. Halftone relief.  
URL: <http://www.philaprintshop.com/images/hpbl1989.jpg>
- "With the Squadron of Evolution."  
URL: <http://www.acc.org/about/past/art/portraits/81.html>
- "Yale-Princeton Football Game." Wood engraving.  
URL: <http://sothebys.amazon.com/exec/varzea/ts/exchange-glance/Y01X5964740X8951506/102-1865120-1951229#image>
- "The 5th New York Volunteer Infantry: Duryée's Zouaves."  
URL: <http://www.zouave.org/>

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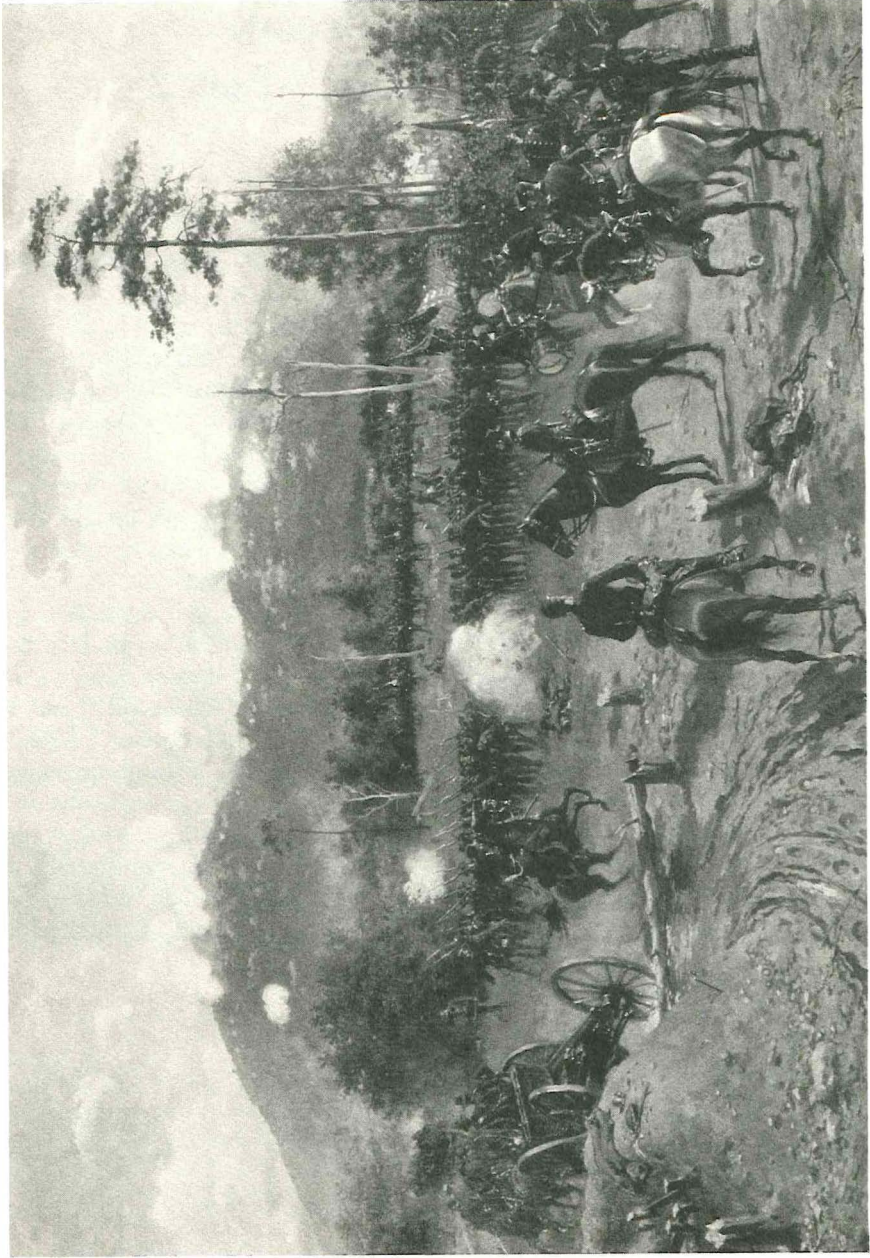
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Obituary, *New York Times*, 10 June 1930.

Smith, Steven E. "American Book and Magazine Illustrators to 1920," Vol. 188 of *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, edited by Steven E. Smith, Catherine A. Hastedt, and Donald H. Dyal. Detroit: Gale Research, 1998. Includes portrait.

*Who Was Who in America*. A component volume of *Who's Who in American History*. Vol. 1, 1897-1942. Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1943.





Thure de Thulstrup's *The Battle of Kennesaw Mountain*. Courtesy of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park, Kennesaw, GA.