

## Son of a Family of the East is Receiving his Student Cap

*[This refers to Lars who is to graduate from the Danish high school, Duborg Skolen which is in Flensburg, Germany. In Denmark you get a special kind of beret upon graduation. Since he graduated in the Spring of 1954, we assume that's when this article appeared.]*

Nimble, sensitive fingers hold the black paper while a tiny scissors carefully finds its way forwards and around and then again forward. Mrs. Margaretha *[actually should be Margarethe]* Luther is one of the silhouette cutters' unusual creators. She has customers all over the world, yet her ability is so unusual in her art that she has not been accepted as a member of the German Papercutters union. Mrs. Luther doesn't care about exclusion from this society. She does not seek this German association.

Margaretha Luther, whose artist's name as a young girl, was Margaretha von Glehn, was born in Reval, Estonia. That is the city where the first Danneborg *[the Danish flag]* fell from the sky and gave King Valdemar the victory. *[The story goes: During the Battle of Lyndanisse, also known as the Battle of Valdemar (Volmerslaget) in Estonia, on June 15 1219, the flag fell from the sky during a critical stage, motivating the Danish forces into action and resulting in a **Danish** victory.]* In Estonia the city is called Tallin which means the Danish stronghold. Mrs. Luther and her husband, Ferdinand Martin Luther who was born in Helsinki *[Finland]* and has also lived in Russia, have spent a good part of their lives in escape from the Communists.

### He Cooks and She Cuts

Now these refugees live in Lyksborg *[Glücksburg, Germany]* near Flensburg in two rooms where he cooks and also works with a fretsaw to make items for sale, and she works every day and a good deal of the night with her silhouette cutting, which assures income.

The extended family as a whole is international. His family is descended from Martin Luther's uncle and has kept alive the name Martin down through the generations. Her mother was English, her foster mother, Mrs. Mary Johansen, was married to the Danish counsel in Reval and was forced to spend several years in Siberia, and among her forefathers is a Russian architect of the king and a Swiss clockmaker. *[This all isn't really correct. For example, we have no idea who Mary Johansen was.]*

Now this international family ended in Lyksborg where both he and she are able to speak Danish. Their oldest son will this summer become a graduate of the Duborg Skolen.

### We are all Europeans in Spirit

It is rare that a family of refugees will feel an urge to join the Danish minority in South Schleswig Holstein. Mrs. Luther explains it in this way:

We feel ourselves to be Europeans and our sympathies turn toward the North [*meaning away from Germany*]. On the spiritual side we are all Europeans – that means that we cannot be without each other. What is philosophy without Sören and Kierkegaard and what is art without Michaelangelo? Our children go to a Danish school because we do not wish to raise them with the narrow nationalism or Prussian spirit. It's our feeling that the Danish teachers are friends of the children, while the German teachers put more emphasis on their own authority. That's the best way, says Mrs. Luther.

The Luther family knows the sadness poverty. They began their lives without serious worries. He was destined to become director of an international building company, and she had artistic training by the Russian professor Kaygorodoff. But Communism overturned all their plans for the future, and for a while the family could carry all their belongings in three backpacks. On top of the backpacks were the little scissors that Mrs. Luther uses for her silhouette art. She learned this art as a 14-year-old and her first work was "The Elfin Girl's Dance".

Only the happy accident that a friend was able to get an apartment for the family with two rooms in Lyksborg got them in touch with the Danish.

### **She Made Brushes of His Hair**

It was difficult to get started after the War [*World War II*]. She had to make brushes of his hair and he made his fretsaw blades from clock springs. Ferdinand Luther has shop students and, in order to become a teacher, he has taken a course in Askov [*a town in Denmark*].

What is unique about her art, is that she, unlike other silhouette artists, is not satisfied with cutting out only around the edges, but she cuts holes into the design and, since her pictures are cut from a single piece of paper, they all hang together. The designs are most often religious pictures, flowers, deer, animals and themes from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales. Before she begins to cut the design is sketched on paper. There is uncertainty in the pencil and the hand, but when it's being cut with millimeter accuracy, there is confidence in the hand and the eye. It is as if the art hides the human difficulties and carries her into the fairy tale world that she mostly inhabits.

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