



ADLERBERTSKA STIFTELSENA

To recipients of scholarships and
research grants from the Adlerbert Foundations
(Adlerbertska Stiftelserna).

AXEL ADLER, DONOR

AXEL IVAR BONDE ADLER (1878-1966) grew up as the oldest of five siblings. The family ran a small dairy business and milk store in the Gothenburg area and the company was to become the cornerstone of Axel Adler's work for half a century. At just seven years of age he experienced a financial 'awakening' where he realised the value of thrift. This thrift, in combination with a desire to invest, was to become an important principle in everything he did for the rest of his life.

At the age of 15, Axel Adler was employed as a clerk at the family company Jamab. The company expanded and consisted of 22 dairies and some 50 milk stores when it was transformed into a limited company in 1903. Axel Adler became a director at the age of 24. After another couple of years of hard work he resigned from his position as director of the company and travelled in Europe where, among other things, he started a cinema company in Vienna. He eventually returned to Sweden and trained as an agronomist at the Alnarp Agricultural Institute, where he also met his future wife Rut Hallenborg. Together they purchased a farm outside Gothenburg, where they put into practise and mediated their knowledge of modern agriculture. They opened a public library and held seminars on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from economics, politics and psychology to literature, art and music. The farm became a centre for new ideas and attracted speakers from the whole of Scandinavia.

In 1910, Axel Adler once again became a director of the family company, which was to undergo major changes under his leadership. He bought out his siblings and developed the business by purchasing a number of dairies and milk stores as well as Rosenlunds Ångbageri. He then brought all the milk companies together in one company, Arla. Arla developed and eventually handled most of the milk distribution in Gothenburg. In the middle of the 1930s, Axel Adler sold Arla to the co-operative movement. Following the sale, Axel Adler invested his assets in various ways, including shipping and banking through the companies Rederi AB Transatlantic and Göteborgs Handelsbank. He was a director of both companies and for a period he was also chairman.

During the latter part of his time as owner of Arla, 47-year-old Axel Adler studied at what is now the University of Gothenburg School of Business, Economics and Law. He graduated with a MA in economics and developed close links with the School, both as an honorary member of the Student Union and later as a member of the School Board. He was also active on the Construction Committee when the School's first building at Vasagatan 3 was erected in the 1950s. Just before his death, Axel Adler was awarded an honorary doctorate by the School, which made him immensely proud.

Axel Adler was a great admirer of the social democrat finance minister Ernst Wigforss and his social thinking. This inspired Axel Adler to make what was to become his greatest and most extensive investment and act of social involvement. Between 1945 and 1959 Axel Adler donated money and shares to establish the six Adlerbert Foundations: Adlerbertska Stipendiestiftelsen (Adlerbert Scholarship Foundation); Adlerbertska Premiéstiftelsen (Adlerbert Grant Foundation); Adlerbertska Hospitiéstiftelsen (Adlerbert Foreign Student Hospitality Foundation); Adlerbertska Studentbostadsstiftelsen (Adlerbert Student Housing Foundation); Adlerbertska Elevbostadsstiftelsen (Adlerbert Pupil Housing Foundation) and Adlerbertska Forskningsstiftelsen (Adlerbert Research Foundation). The name Adlerbert had been in the family for many years. Axel Adler chose to give the Foundations that name and later in life he even changed his own name to Adlerbert. The main purpose of the Foundations is to support education and research in Gothenburg. For over 50 years these Foundations have awarded significant sums to high school students, students in higher education and researchers.

Axel Adler had a vision of Gothenburg as a living university city where young people had access to a rich centre of knowledge and cultural activity. The Adlerbert Foundations became his way of attempting to realise that vision.

*The Adlerbert Foundations wish you every success
in your future studies or research.*