

Hunting The Insolent, Draft Dodging, Millionaire Bergdoll Outlaws

Humiliating Failure to Capture the Rich Slackers Who Flout and Defy the Laws of the Country Which Showered Wealth Upon Their Family



YEARS ago Edward Everett Hale, the famous author, attracted the attention of nearly all the world with his classic story, "The Man Without a Country." "A man without a country!"—could there be any greater human tragedy on earth? How would a man feel if he had no country, no flag, no kingly bond with his fellow men, no right to that ineffable thrill that surges through the blood when the military band marches by, keeping step to the stirring strains of a patriotic air?

Deftly, cleverly, Mr. Hale drew his word picture of the passions, the bitterness, the despair and vindictiveness that must abide in the heart of such a man—a "man without a country."

Yet Hale's man without a country was at the most a true patriot compared to Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, of Philadelphia, sharer by inheritance of one of the greatest fortunes in America, the favorite son of a pampering mother. Two years ago this young man, possessor of millions of dollars in his own name, was one of the richest youths in Philadelphia. His father, the late Louis Bergdoll, had amassed an immense fortune and had accumulated a great estate in city properties. It was commonly said that "the Bergdolls own half the Quaker City." And, in those days, young Bergdoll had a country.

Now no mother in the land would permit her daughter to receive him. There even is no country in the world that would harbor him as its own. Any citizen of the United States who meets him on the street may, if he refuses to halt, shoot him dead.

He and his brother, draft dodgers and slackers, both of them, are outlawed. Around the home of his mother in Philadelphia, one of the stately mansions in the East, a ring of police is constantly on guard, patiently waiting, night and day, for just one clear shot at him. In England, France, Italy—and South America, even—the authorities constantly are on the watch for him. Wherever he turns there are only enemies.

No one will sympathize with him, no one will be his friend. So he has brought into play all his old, daring bravado which might have made him one of the country's honorable heroes, and has declared a strange war upon all society—

particularly upon the Secret Service of the United States and the agents of the law in his own city. And because he has no remorse, no responsibilities to society or to any nation's flag, he has given his bitterness full rein and, so far, has insolently defied the whole nation which once was his own but which now has declared him an outlaw from all nations.

When many young men of Philadelphia rushed to the recruiting offices to volunteer for the first contingent of the Expeditionary Forces, during the first months after our entry into the war, all his friends believed that Grover Bergdoll would be one of those who would not wait for the draft. They remembered his record of daring feats, his defiance of death itself on dozens of occasions in his racing car, his aeroplanes and in his laboratory dabbling with the dangerous X-rays—even his constant defiance of the law in carrying out his hazardous escapades.

"Here is the stuff of which our heroes must be made," his friends said, and waited for the sight of him in a uniform.

But they waited in vain. Young Bergdoll did not enlist. Neither did his younger brother, Erwin, who had been quite as much a daredevil in his way as had Grover, but not quite so spectacular.

Then came the draft law. "The Bergdoll boys have been waiting," said their friends, taking new hope in the midst of their disappointment, "that they might set a good example to other young men by submitting themselves to the draft. They feel they can serve best by going in the ranks as conscripts and thus encouraging the sons of poorer families. Perhaps that will be their way of making up for their ill-advised pranks in the past."

But again those who knew the Bergdoll boys were disappointed. This time there was no mistaking the intention of Grover and his brother. Both announced publicly that they would not submit to the draft. When they were reminded that the draft act was a law of the land they replied, in effect:

"There is no law for us but our own desires. We defy the law." The agents of the Government heard this boast. They knew the Bergdoll boys—especially Grover. They knew they would need nothing if their whims were set against it. The draft board peremptorily ordered both young men to appear before it at once. Erwin, the younger, simply disappeared. It is whispered that he drew from the bank where his inheritance was kept \$100,000 in cash and took this huge amount of money away with

him. He has been heard from in various parts of the world, but whenever his trail is found he disappears again.

Grover, however, had too much contempt for his country—his country then! He would not go away so quietly. He, too, drew \$100,000 from his bank, but he made no secrecy about it. He even sent for a newspaper reporter and announced that he had fortified himself with a hundred thousand dollars and that with that much money he could get along very nicely in the world "without a country, if necessary."

Another summons was sent by the draft board. Grover sent back an insulting reply, returning unopened the envelope in which the summons was delivered. For months the agents of the Secret Service and the city police sought him. At the various residences of his mother, the big town house and the splendid estates out beyond the suburbs which she maintained as summer homes it was denied by the mother herself and the servants that Grover was about.

But almost every day someone reported that Bergdoll had been seen in one of his racing cars speeding along the beautiful country roads which link the Philadelphia suburbs. Many times his car was pursued by Government agents—but the Government supplied only the ordinary cars of daily usage. Bergdoll's car had been made in France for racing—and he escaped. He waved his hands at every pursuer and sped away.

Repeatedly the Government agents thought they had traced him to one of his mother's homes and rushed in after him. But each time a servant met them at the door with drawn revolver, demanding their search warrants. By the time search warrants had been procured the outlaw had flown.

At another time, while rumors were many that Bergdoll frequently was seen by neighbors through the windows in the upper floors of the town house, Bergdoll openly dared the cordon of police drawn about the house watching for him. One night, just after dark, a servant silently drew back the gates that led inside the house yard, opening up the roadway to the garage. The police were alert at once, stationing themselves across the path, ready to fire upon any car that might come dashing out if it carried young Bergdoll at the wheel. But they were not looking behind. Suddenly there was the whirr of a powerful motor—just behind them.

They turned just in time to leap aside as a huge racer sped full speed into the path and through the gates into the yard. A second's hesitation would have brought death to any one of those policemen.

When they recovered themselves they rushed into the yard and beat upon the house doors. They were admitted and coolly told to search the house—but they could not find the fugitive. When, crestfallen, the police filed out of the house, puzzled but powerless,

their attention was attracted by a sneering laugh from an upper window.

Turning they saw young Bergdoll peering down at them. Again they rushed into the house, but again their search was unsuccessful.

At another time the outlaw appeared mysteriously in his mother's home and just as mysteriously disappeared, despite the closely drawn cordon of police. Search for a tunnel was fruitless—the secret never has been discovered.

Shortly after this Grover disappeared from Philadelphia. Mrs. Bergdoll appealed to the chairman of her sons' draft board, Mr. John P. Dwyer, an old family friend, for his assistance in helping her sons evade the draft call. She would gladly give \$100,000 to the Red Cross, she said, if her two boys might be exempted.

She could never ask her boys to submit to the draft and become fighting soldiers, she said. Her excuse was that both were afraid of the sight of blood. Some time later Mrs. Bergdoll was arrested and charged with abetting her sons in their evasion of their military duty, but the jury acquitted her. It could only be shown that she had not urged them to submit—it could not be proved that she had asked them not to do so.

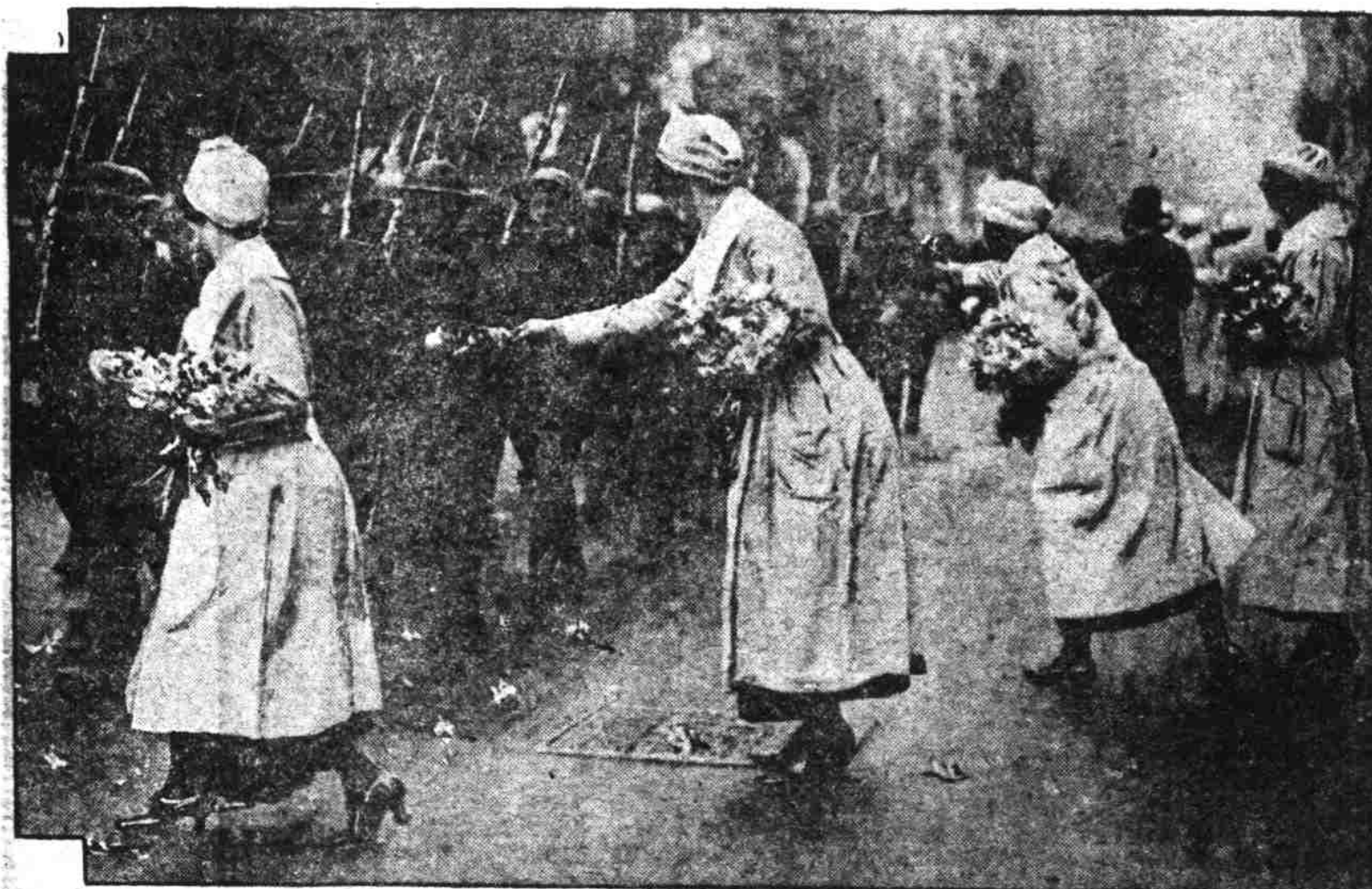
The progress of Grover Bergdoll across the country after he had fled from Philadelphia was marked by postal cards which he imprudently mailed back to the agents of the Secret Service. He seemed to take especial delight in flaunting his disloyalty in the face of the law and in twitting its representatives with their failure to catch him. The trail of the postal cards was closely followed, but Grover kept ahead of the authorities and eventually was heard from in Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela.

Just when the watch about his Philadelphia home was relaxed he appeared there again, boldly riding up to the gate in a car he had taken out of the garage at one of the country homes.

In this country there can be no formal decree of outlawry, yet young Bergdoll, besides being without a country, is as much an outlaw as any man ever was. He may be sentenced to death if he is captured, for the military law provides this penalty for his offense in the 58th article of war. Under the draft law, or Section 3952 of the Revised Statutes of the United States, Bergdoll is declared to be without all rights of citizenship and denied the right to ever again become a citizen. It is expressly forbidden that he ever be accorded public recognition of any kind as an honored member of the society of those who once were his countrymen.

Sooner or later he and his brother must be caught. Until they are they live the lives of the hunted—degraded even the use of the name that they have covered with scorn and dishonor!

"No matter how strong his bravado, there must come times when the nerve of the millionaire outlaw, lurking in his hiding place, fails. Then the outside world must seem to him full of searching eyes, hunting, peering for him in every corner—"



"And does then this picture of the soldier boys, returning in triumph and in whose ranks he, too, might have marched, flash before him?"



Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, the More Spectacular of the Millionaire Outlaws



The Bergdoll Home, Near Philadelphia, Surrounded by the Cordon of Police on Constant Watch for the Return of the Brothers.