

"FAKED" WRECK OF A TUNNEL TO CATCH GERMAN PLOTTERS

Van Koolbergen Tells in Affidavit How he Worked With the C. P.R. to the Undoing of Baron Von Brincken

GERMAN LORDLING TOOK "RAKE-OFF" ON PRICE PAID PSEUDO DYNAMITER

Trap Was Neatly Laid, Even to the Stories Printed in Newspapers to Prove That Damage Was Done

By Canadian Press.

Providence, R.I., Dec. 15.—The Providence Journal prints this morning the text of an affidavit made by Johannes Henrykus Van Koolbergen in San Francisco on Aug. 27 last. This affidavit goes into much circumstantial evidence with regard to an alleged organized German conspiracy on the Pacific Coast with the object of blowing up munitions plants, on which indictments have been returned by a Federal Grand Jury in San Francisco against Baron George Wilhelm Von Brincken, C. C. Crowley and Mrs. Margaret Cornell. It reads as follows:—

My name is Johannes Henrykus Van Koolbergen; my occupation is civil engineer.

Some months ago, say about April, I met a man named Wilhelm Von Brincken in the Heidelberg Cafe in San Francisco, Cal., and he asked me to call on him. I told him that I intended to go on a trip to Canada, so that I did not think I would have occasion to do that until I came back. Not knowing what he wanted, I went to see him about the beginning of April. He told me that he was an officer in the German army and at present working in the secret service of the German Empire, and worked here under Mr. Franz Bopp, the Imperial German Consul. He then told me that he was informed that I was in Canada and that my nationality and personality had been enquired into by detectives on behalf of the English authorities in Canada, and said, "Therefore, I know you could do something for us in Canada."

Offered Him the Job.

I answered that I was willing to do so if it was for an innocent purpose. He said the price would be \$1,000. I told him that I was too well known in Canada, that he could hardly use my papers, but that if it were worth one thousand dollars to see a friend that I would have no objection to go myself and act for him. I went to the German Consulate and met Franz Bopp, the Imperial German Consul, and upon different questions being asked me by Mr. Bopp, the German Consul, I became very pro-German in the expression of my sentiments. Von Brincken came to me again and asked me if I would do something for him in Canada. He told me that they were willing to send me that Canada to blow up one of the railroad bridges on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, or one of the tunnels or anything at all, he said. I don't remember now the exact amount of remuneration that he did offer at that time, but I said I would think it over.

About a week and a half after that I wrote a letter to Wallace C. Orchard, who is one of the assistants of the general freight manager of the Canadian Pacific Railway in Vancouver, B. C., giving substantially the same facts as hereinbefore stated. I received a telegram from Mr. Orchard in reply of the following tenor:

"Come immediately to Vancouver; your traveling expenses will be paid."

I wired back that I didn't have the cash at the time, and asked him to arrange for a pass to Vancouver, which he did.

Accepted the Undertaking.

In the meantime I had accepted von Brincken's proposition to go to Canada, and he offered me \$500 to defray my expenses. As at that time I did not know whether the acceptance of that money would bring me into any trouble, I told him that I had sufficient funds to get along until I came back. On different occasions, in his room, von Brincken showed me maps and information about Canada, and pointed out to me whereabouts he wanted the act to be done.

This was to be between Revelstoke and Vancouver on the Canadian Pacific Railway, and I was to get three thousand dollars in case of a successful blowing up of a military train, or bridge, or tunnel. There are many tunnels and bridges there, and military trains pass every three or four days.

He also knew when a cargo of dynamite would pass. He then explained to me how I could get hold of dynamite and explained to me that on the other side of the river on which the Canadian Pacific ran (I believe it was the Fraser river), the Canadian Northern Railway was in course of construction and they had at intervals powder and

dynamite magazines and that it would be very easy to steal some of the dynamite.

In the month of May I went to Canada and arrived in Vancouver on a Sunday morning, and immediately telephoned Mr. Orchard. He came to visit me and I spent the most of the day at Mr. Orchard's home. Next morning he took me up to the office of the intelligence officials and I met Mr. Tweedale there, where I made the statements as made heretofore.

Other End of the Plot.

On Monday night Mr. Tweedale and I went to Victoria, B.C., to see the commanding district officer, Mr. Ogilvie, where the statement made by me was read and the following scheme was agreed upon:—

That, with the assistance of the officials of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, a statement should appear in the papers of the fact that a tunnel was caved in on one of the curves of the Selkirks. In order to prove the blowing up of this tunnel, I at the time sent a letter to Von Brincken, stating that something was going to happen in a couple of days. Then Mr. Peters, of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, agreed to the plan, and in the papers appeared a news item, substantially as follows. The head was "Trouble On the Railroads":—

"A report was received this morning that one of the tunnels in the Selkirks had caved in and railway traffic had been considerably delayed. The cause of it is unknown to the railway officials, but the officials are investigating. Mr. Peters, the general superintendent, and the divisional district engineer and other officials left last night for the mountains."

Springing the Trap.

So when this appeared in the papers I wrote a postcard to Von Brincken, of which the contents were about as follows: "On front page of Vancouver papers of such a date (I think that it was the tenth of May), news appears of a flood in Japan; our system may be in trouble, so wire here at the Elysium Hotel." The intention was to get Von Brincken to send on an answer. The meaning of this postcard was to show him that on the same page also was this report of a cave-in in the tunnel. I sent this postcard to Jesse Miller. I was paid by the Canadian authorities my expenses as promised in the telegram.

I saw von Brincken next morning and he then and there handed me two hundred dollars in United States greenbacks and told me to come up to the office of the German Consulate and get the balance, as he wanted Mr. Bopp, the German Consul, to take some responsibility in this matter himself.

When I came up to the office of the German Consulate, I was let into the private office of Mr. Bopp, the German Consul, where were present Mr. von Schack, the German Vice-Consul, the said von Brincken and Mr. Frank Bopp, the German Consul, himself. They asked me to tell my story, showing me a map of British Columbia.

Piling up Proof.

I related my story as it was written out for me by the divisional engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and not satisfied with my story, they wanted to get some further proof. I had already given them the four copies of the different Vancouver papers, which I brought with me, and as I am



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slightly acquainted with the Dutch Vice-Consul, Mr. Van Roggen. In Vancouver, B.C., I wrote a letter to this gentleman of the following tenor, asking him to inquire of the general superintendent of the C. P. R. why a car of freight which I expected from the east had not arrived yet and to kindly wire me at my expense.

In the meantime, I wired Mr. Orchard to send me the following telegram: "Superintendent refuses information. Found out, however, that freight has been delayed eleven days owing to accident."

(Signed) "V. R."

With this telegram I went to see the German Consul, Mr. Bopp, who ordered the Vice-Consul to pay me the additional expense of three hundred dollars traveling expenses, which made \$500 total. I agreed that I would be satisfied with \$1,750 for my services in blowing up the tunnel instead of the three thousand dollars as was first agreed upon, and I was promised the money the next day.

Von Brincken Took "Flake-off."

Von Brincken did not pay me, however, the seventeen hundred and fifty dollars the next day, so I wrote a little note to the German Consul, in which I stated that it would not be in his interest to let me wait any longer and that unless I got the money before the next day at 4 o'clock our relations would not be any more friendly. The next day I met Von Brincken and he brought seventeen hundred and fifty dollars in greenbacks.

Von Brincken had made arrangements before that with me that he should get a certain portion of the money from me and I was paid fifteen hundred dollars and two hundred and fifty dollars he got himself.