

Some years before the war a German named Alvo Von Alvensleben made a somewhat vivid splash upon the business world around Vancouver and Victoria. He was reputed to be "broke to the world" and gained his daily bread in certain obscure and humble ways. Indeed, he is said to have acted for a time as waiter at one of the local hotels.

During the real estate boom he gradually worked into some deals, and started into business on his own account. He appeared to prosper exceedingly, and after a while announced that he was going to Germany to obtain German money for Canadian projects.

He apparently succeeded, for on his return he plunged into many timber and land speculations.

It was hinted, and he himself rather encouraged the idea that he was the trustee for some of the Kaiser's money, and that he was on intimate terms with that potentate.

Such an idea was not altogether unreasonable. His family was one well known in Berlin court circles; two of his uncles had been general officers during the Franco-Prussian war; his brother held the Kaiser's commission; and he himself had served in the German army.

He was a born gambler, and bought property right and left. In these boom days, however, he could hardly make a mistake, and he prospered exceedingly. He also was a gambler of another sort for he sat in many a big game at the Union Club in Victoria, and at Vancouver.

Shortly before the war, he began to clean up, and at the actual outbreak of hostilities was in Germany.

A week or so before war was declared, his brother, who was in charge of operations at the coast, borrowed all the money he could lay his hands upon and departed for New York. It is asserted that he "touched" the Dominion Trust Company so heavily that the collapse of the company, and the tragic death of Arnold, the manager, was hastened by his operations, if not the direct result.

Safe on the neutral ground of New York, this Prussian gentleman gave an interview to one of the Hearst papers, and told what Germany was going to do to the British Empire in general and Canada in particular.

At that time the operations of the British Admiralty were kept pretty quiet, but it was reported when he took ship for Germany an English cruiser stopped the Italian ship on which he was travelling and took him off. He is said to have been taken to England and interned. His New York boastings in print did not take him very far.

By some means the other brother reached America and established himself in Seattle, from which place he essayed to direct his Canadian affairs. On one occasion he met a resident of Victoria in Seattle. The Canadian was not very cordial, but von Alvensleben made every protestation of friendship.

He said, "You are not like the other Canadians. I'll attend to those who have been my enemies all right. There's a time coming, when we will teach them what the Germans are. Now is there any information about any one at the war you would like to know? If so, I will get it for you."

Just to find out if it were all brag or not the Canadian asked for information of a nephew who had been reported missing after one of the big battles.

"All right," said the German, "you shall have it in a couple of days."

And so he did. He received word that his nephew was in one of the German prison camps. This was subsequently confirmed, and the young Canadian reported that a good deal of the prison discipline was relaxed in his case, owing to some unknown and influential intervention.

There is not the least doubt in the world that Alvo Von Alvensleben had some means of communication with Germany.

When the States entered the war, he was promptly interned. Just the other day he announced to the representative of a Vancouver paper that he was going to South America to recoup his fortunes.