

ENIGMATIC MISS MARKESFELD WAS MYSTERY TO HER FORMER EMPLOYERS AT SHELBURNE

Her Statement to Toronto Police is False; She Was Sent to Canada by Dr. Barnardo's Home Eight Years Ago

SAYS HER PARENTS WERE MURDERED BY ENGLISH; HER DESIRE REVENGE

Testimony of Local Doctor is That Shock May Have Unhinged Her Mind; She Went From Shelburne to Buffalo and Disappeared

From a Staff Correspondent.

Shelburne, Ont., June 14.—Louisa Markesfeld, arrested on May 26th, is still to the police a riddle with two solutions—one held by Crown Attorney Corley and Sergeant of Detectives Mackie, that she is a mentally defective humbler; and the other, held by Inspector of Detectives George Kennedy, that she is precisely the reverse and a German spy or "underground agent" for smuggling German reversists through from Canada to the United States.

Her own story as told to the Toronto police is that she was born in Alsace, could speak English, French, German, Italian, Spanish and a little Russian, came to the United States two years ago; that she was in Buffalo at the outbreak of the war when she crossed to Niagara Falls as agent for Germans in Buffalo and smuggled enemy reservists across the border. She said she had visited various military encampments on this side of the line and had made an extensive tour through Western Canada for purposes of espionage. She added that she had taken employment in the house of a prominent Canadian public man with a similar aim.

The Daily News is able to state positively that in many respects this story is false though it may have a foundation in truth, and is also able to supply at least some of the real facts of the girl's history.

Her story as told by herself in Shelburne, a rural centre four stations on the C.P.R. beyond Orangeville, Ont., where she was employed by Dr. C. L. Morgan, veterinary surgeon, is no less strange.

Heard Wild Ravings.

One night the doctor and Mrs. Morgan were working late over accounts in the study when they heard Louisa, whose room was on the third floor, raving so strangely that they were sufficiently alarmed to call Dr. S. T. White, a local medical practitioner to come at once.

"I won't tell a thing," raved the voice of Louisa. "Don't try to coax it out of me." Then there were incoherent mutterings of murder and plot and revenge.

Seriously alarmed by the words, and even more by the tone, the doctor went to the foot of the stairs and called "Louisa, did you lock the doors to-night?"

"Shoot the doors! Don't cross Louisa to-night," came the reply.

Dr. White arrived. Dr. Morgan feared to break in upon the girl lest in her excited state she should throw herself out of her third storey window. Mrs. Morgan went up to the landing, where through the open door she could see Louisa lying on the bed feigning to be, or really, asleep.

"Louisa," said she, "are you ill?"

"Why, no." The girl appeared to be just waking, dazed from some nightmare.

"Are you sure? We have a doctor here. Wouldn't you like to see him? You have been acting strangely?"

Slammed and Locked Door.

The girl sprang from her bed, slammed the door and locked it so violently that the noise could be heard all over the house.

Dr. White strongly advised that the room should not be broken into. Later he interviewed the girl. Then she told this story: When she was very young her uncle, for the sake of their money had murdered or done to death, her father and her mother. She and her little sister Lottie had seen the deed done or had seen the bodies after the tragedy (Dr. White was not very sure on this point). They had not then known who was the culprit.

Their uncle, to get the girls out of the way, had sent them to a convent in England. Somehow Louisa had overheard her uncle and aunt talking of the deed, and its gains. She had determined to escape and with her little sister had fled to Canada, where she had sought the country to avoid discovery.

She had tried to educate her little sister, Louisa told Dr. White, and to do so had sat up far into the night writing lessons for Lottie in German.

This latter part of her story was told to explain why she had been seen by Dr. Morgan returning as late as three or four o'clock in the morning from a call, pacing up and down her room muttering to herself, still fully dressed. She begged Dr. White, as indeed she had begged others also, not to let anyone know where she was.

Instinctive Feeling.

"Your name is not Markesfeld," said Mrs. Morgan to Louisa one day. "How did you know that?" asked the startled girl.

"There are some things we know and cannot tell how we know them," said Mrs. Morgan.

Louisa confessed that, however Mrs. Morgan had arrived at her conclusion, it was correct. The name belonged to her family, though "Louisa" was really her name.

"One curious thing about her," said Mrs. Morgan, "was that she was always asking about Lieutenant Von Forstner, the German Alsatian, who was captured by the French at the beginning of the war, and who, refusing to give his parole, was shot while trying to escape. I found that she had clipped every reference to him from the newspapers. I am proud of him," she would say.

The Daily News reminded her that Louisa had told the police that she had two brothers (whose names she had refused to give) with the German forces, and that one of them had been killed.

"Perhaps von Forstner was her brother," conjectured the doctor's wife.

"Another strange thing about her is that she used to say that her father's initials and her own were

imprinted, interwoven on her breast," said Mrs. Morgan.

"Can she speak six languages?" asked The Daily News.

Mrs. Morgan laughed. "She had a smattering of Latin and knew English, which she spoke without appreciable accent, but with distinct German idiom, German and more or less French, as was natural if she was born in Alsace and had been educated in a convent in England." Mrs. Morgan ridiculed the idea that she could speak any other languages. Mrs. Morgan, by the way, is a college graduate who specialized in languages.

Described Rural German.

"She probably came from the country near Straasburg," said Mrs. Morgan, "for she was fond of describing rural scenes from that district."

"She was very fond of walking alone in the country. She made arrangements with Rev. Geoffrey Hill, a superannuated Anglican clergyman, living just across the way, to learn landscape and portrait painting." "To send the results to Germany?" suggested the doctor ironically, for he had heard of the spy theory and ridiculed it.

"Don't cross Louisa when she is in those black moods," Dr. Morgan had warned his wife for all these uncanny happenings had made quite a deep impression on his mind. Though Louisa was usually gay and could be very pleasant, she was often morose, sullen, passionate. Still, she did her work well and they got used to her. Mrs. Morgan would say, "Why Louisa, what are you frowning about?"

No things went along till war broke out. "She said it was an Englishman who had murdered her parents or made them commit suicide," said Mrs. Morgan, "and she said it was her one constant wish to go back and get even with them."

"There! That is the English for you every time," she would say.

Dr. Morgan warned her, whatever her sentiments were to keep them to herself but, "she couldn't control herself after war broke out," said Dr. Morgan.

Watched Bulletin Boards.

"She would go down to see the bulletin boards and I suppose people would chaff her. 'Poor German!' The Germans don't need any sympathy," she said on one occasion.

"Things went from bad to worse and at last her employers were forced to give her notice. Then began petty thefts of money from accounts paid, for the doctor trusted her honesty absolutely and allowed her to receipt bills. She had saved about \$200 when she left Shelburne."

Then came gossip that she had boasted that she would poison the water. The doctor told Mr. John Best, M.P., for the County, Dufferin, that the house was open to the inspection of the authorities. Mr. Best interviewed the girl. In September she left.

"I'm sure she did no spying while she was with us, or we should have known about it," said Dr. Morgan.

"No, I don't think she ever got any letters from Germany," said the Shelburne Postmaster. The girl mailed all of her letters at the station or at Primrose, a few miles out, where by the way, she was confirmed in the Anglican Church on July 8th, 1914, giving her age as 17. She was in the habit of going to early communion whenever it was celebrated. She declined also to have her mail put in the Morgan's post box, preferring to get it herself from the general delivery. "Her letters were mostly from people in Canada," said the postmaster. "She had a friend in Ottawa, who, she said, knew more about her than anyone else," said Mrs. Morgan.

A Barnardo Girl.

The matron at the Margaret A. Cox Home for Girls at Peterboro, stated that Louisa Markesfeld, with her little sister, Lottie, were sent to Canada in November, 1907, by Dr. Barnardo's Home in London in 1907, when both children were quite small. They had been under the supervision of the Home until February, 1914, when Louisa undertook to look after herself. They knew nothing of her after that date.

Louisa, when she came to this country after working as a nurse girl in Toronto, went to Blythe, Ont., where she worked for Mr. Thomas Gasby, from there, on 1st of March 1914, to be near her sister, who is and has been for four years with Mr. John J. Kirkpatrick, a farmer at Shearcliffe, some 14 miles from Shelburne, Louisa went to work for Mr. John Newton of the same place. Thence she came, in April 1914, to work for Dr. Morgan.

From Shelburne she went to Toronto, where she was seen by Mr. Cassey, station master at Shelburne, a few days later.

Then she went on to Buffalo, or at least Mr. Morgan received a discursive letter from Buffalo in October 1914. It was written on a piece of blotting paper and was a mixture of English and German words with passages evidently culled straight from some book on psychology.

Whereabouts a Mystery.

Where she was from October, 1914 to May, 1915, when she was working in the W. G. and R. shirt works in Berlin, is still a mystery.

There are, then, three solutions consistent with the evidence regarding the enigmatic Miss Markesfeld:

1. That she is a novel-fed liar.
2. That of a naturally "explosive," morbid temperament, partially deranged by nervous shock in early life, the constant surrounding suspicion that she was a German spy led her eventually to believe that she was a German spy—when she was not. This theory is approved by Dr. White.
3. That she was a spy, having

entered the active service of the German Government after the outbreak of war, Either,—

(a) through having been in touch with the connections of her parents—German secret agents as she affirms; or

(b) Embittered against the English by her morbid brooding, and against the Canadians by loss of situation, she may have gone to Buffalo and offered her services as a secret agent to some German organization, and been accepted.

Girl is Sane.

A rumor that Louisa Markesfeld, "The Girl of Mystery," was to be examined by the jail doctors to see whether she was insane, was stated to be without foundation by Inspector of Detectives George Kennedy to-day.

"Anybody that made such a statement should be examined themselves," said the inspector. "There is no doubt but what the girl is sane. The only trouble is that she has too much brains."

The officer is still of the opinion that she is a German spy and has been conducting his investigation along those lines. It is learned that reports of the girl's activities have been received from all over Canada and the United States. The girl appears to have travelled extensively, but the curious part is that she seems to have left a clear trail behind her, that is as to her place of abode and employment. With regard to her spying activities, however, the police appear to be in the dark.

Ontario Growing Early Tomatoes

Experiment Being Conducted by Department of Agriculture

Mr. S. C. Johnston, vegetable expert for the Ontario Department of Agriculture, now has under way an experiment in growing early tomatoes which, if successful, will result in an increased production in Ontario to the possible extinction of the New Jersey product. "The earliest tomato district in Ontario at present is Leamington," said Mr. Johnston to-day. "But if the Pelee Island location at the southwest of Ontario, lying out in Lake Erie, proves up, we expect to get tomatoes there at least a week earlier than in Leamington. At present we have a quarter of an acre of the island under cultivation, and if the experiment is a success there are seven thousand acres there capable of being put into tomato production, enough to supply the early Ontario demand. Onions are prospering at Leamington at the present time, and we expect an increase of at least two hundred carloads over last year's figures."

TWO MAY DIE FROM EXPLOSION OF GAS

Two Highly-charged Cylinders Blew up Today in Freight Yards

SIDE OF SHED BLOWN OUT

Car Wrecked; Hundreds of Windows Smashed by the Shock

A terrific explosion occurred at the Grand Trunk freight yards at West Toronto at 11 o'clock to-day, when two men, Frank Ryding, 26 Ashburnham avenue, and Mark Graham, 73 Carrick avenue, were blown through a box car and almost killed. They may not survive.

The men were unloading cylinders containing either liquid air or acetylene gas, belonging to the Searchlight Gas Company. Two cylinders exploded either because the pressure was too great or careless handling. The pressure in the cylinders was said to be 2,000 pounds to the square inch.

Two freight cars were blown to small pieces, and the whole middle of the freight shed was torn through and thrown across the driveway in the rear.

Windows were broken for three blocks around. Houses on Weston road had their rear windows blown out, and on Cawthra and Mulock avenues to the west, a number of windows were broken. Over 500 small panes were blown out of the Gurney Foundry shop on the west side of the tracks. The two men were taken to Grace Hospital in Speer's private ambulance.

Neither Expected to Live.

They were both badly burned and cut about the head and body. The hospital authorities stated later that neither of them is expected to live.

A fire started after the explosion but was quickly put out. The explosion was heard for blocks around and a crowd of three or four hundred gathered immediately. The police kept the crowd well away from the cars, as some of the remaining cylinders were leaking, but a number of men continued working on the far side of the freight shed close to the broken cars.

Dr. Clendinning attended the men, who were taken to the baggage room of the station before being transferred to the ambulance. They were both unconscious when rescued from the ruins.

Just after the men were taken away a number of women rushed frantically up to find out if it had been their husbands who were injured. Their fears were unfounded. One of them learned that her husband had been near the explosion but got away in time and had gone home for the day with his nerves shaken up. She turned and fled for home.

Later reports of the condition of the two men stated that Frank Ryding was very bad, but that Mark Graham was somewhat better. Both were, however, in a critical state and it was too soon yet to say whether they would recover.