

# SIR PAUL DUKES, WARIEST OF WORLD WAR SPIES, TRAPPED BY CUPID IN HAUNTS OF LOVE CULT

## Former Mrs. Ogden Mills, Disciple of Oom the Omnipotent, Was Prize Sought MET IN PETROGRAD, KEPT LOVE SECRET Writer Did Notable Work While in Russian Army and Won His Title

WHEN Mrs. Darius Ogden Mills waged her famous war for social supremacy with Mrs. John R. Drexel and tightened the boundaries of the "exclusives," narrowing them from the Four Hundred of Mrs. Astor's day to only 150, she little thought that her quest for foreign titles to support her claims would lead through the rather unsavory cult of Oom the Omnipotent, the Loving Guru of the Tantriks.

Oom wasn't christened Oom. He invented that name and he invented his mystic psychic cult and he invented a lot of ceremonies that finally resulted in his leaving New York and settling in Nyack. And that's where Mrs. Mills comes in. That is, the elder Mrs. Mills doesn't, but her former daughter-in-law, Margaret Rutherford Mills, living near Nyack, came under the sway of Dr. "Oom" Pierre Bernard and joined his cult and there she met Sir Paul Dukes, also a convert, and now they are married.

It is easy to understand how a society woman might become bored by the constant round of monotonous functions and seek some mental relief in such a cult as Oom's. But Sir Paul doesn't strike the observer as the kind of man to follow blindly into such paths. He is a war hero—one of the most daring and reckless spies in the British intelligence service, with a price on his head if he ever returns to Russia—and he knows how to put up with inconveniences until he gets what he wants.

Mrs. Mills, the younger, and Sir Paul met in Petrograd, and there are those who say that Sir Paul made up his mind then and there that she was the woman he wanted. But his work for the British Government was not yet done and his everyday life was still fraught with the pleasant possibility of being ended any moment by the bullet of an enemy.

With his work completed, however, he lost no time in hurrying to this country. Ostensibly it was to make a lecture tour. Really it was to seek out the American woman who had made such an impression on him in the midst of the dangers of war.

**Mystic Cult Ensnared Lover From Overseas**  
Sir Paul, 40, settled in Nyack, and very naturally, when he found that Mrs. Mills was wrapped heart and soul in the mystic cult of Oom the Omnipotent, he joined.

They kept their love affair very secret. Their friends knew that they were a great deal together, but there were no rumors of an impending marriage. In fact, the ceremony had been performed and they were away on their honeymoon before the secret leaked out.

Even the passengers on the ship which they took to Europe did not know they were aboard. They kept very much to themselves, had their meals in their stateroom and were surprised, on disembarking in England, to find that the announcement of their marriage had been cabled across ahead of them.

They are spending their honeymoon with the bride's mother, Mrs. W. K. Vanderbilt, in Paris. But they announce definitely that they will return and make their home in America.

"Mrs. Vanderbilt is simply overjoyed over our marriage," said Sir Paul when he learned it was known. "She wants to live with her in Paris, but I have decided to make my home in the United States and my wife and I have accepted Mrs. Vanderbilt's invitation to live in her New York house."

"I love the American people. They have been wonderful to me. Soon we will visit England and then go for some holidays in the south of France. We will probably return to New York the first of next year. After that my wife will accompany me on an extensive lecture tour."

Sir Paul expects to devote his time in America to lecturing on Russia and international topics, and to writing. Lady Dukes expects to assist her husband in his writing.



Former Mrs. Ogden Mills, now wife of Sir Paul Dukes

## British Veteran Affected Most Remarkable Disguises and Was Considered Among the 'Reddest' Reds in Whole Realm

had given her a fund of \$200,000 to outdo Mrs. Mills in the lavishness of her entertainments.

Mrs. Drexel was looked upon as a liberal in society and wanted to admit a lot of people outside of Mrs. Astor's famous Four Hundred. Mrs. Mills was ultra-conservative and believed that the Four Hundred should be cut down to 150 at the really exclusive affairs.

Most so-called authorities on society matters at that time agreed that Mrs. Mills won. The first time she drew the list to 150 was just before she sailed for Europe for the marriage of her son and the then Miss Rutherford. The complete list was not published, but those who headed it were known and it

only in this very select circle and she soon took her place as one of the most exclusive of the younger matrons of American society.

Then came the war with its leveling of ranks and she went into Red Cross work. Her present husband had not then been knighted and was a plain Mr., the son of a British clergyman who certainly would not have been included in the elder Mrs. Mills' 150.

He did Y. M. C. A. work overseas and then entered the dangerous Secret Service and became head of the Russian section. That's when he and Mrs. Mills first met, but there was no gossip about a romance between them.

Young Mrs. Mills divorced her first husband in Paris in April, 1920.



(Right) Sir Paul Dukes as he is today



Sir Paul Dukes as he appeared when doing valuable espionage work during the war



One of the disguises used by Sir Paul while he was in the Russian Army. He was then thought to be one of the "reddest" Reds in the realm

French law, was the only visible evidence that a marriage uniting two so important New York families was to take place in a few minutes.

"At last the tooting of an automobile horn announced the arrival of the wedding party from the Chateau de Queensay, one of the French estates owned by William K. Vanderbilt, Sr. Vauville boasts of 170 inhabitants. The arrival of the wedding party nearly doubled the population, for while the guests were few their servants were very many.

"It remained for young Ogden Mills, the lawyer, to learn that the French law does not permit husband and wife both to be witnesses at the same wedding, so Lady Gerard, the bridegroom's sister, yielded her place and it was necessary to find another witness.

"Mr. Vanderbilt hurried away in an automobile to Trouville, ten miles distant, to fetch a witness. During the wait that followed, the bridal party, seated in the straw-bottomed chairs, offered a curious contrast to the simplicity of their surroundings.

"Mr. Vanderbilt returned finally, bringing Mr. and Mrs. Whitelaw Reid. The American Ambassador at London was considered an acceptable witness, so the ceremony began."

**Elder Mrs. Mills Drove Sword in Social War**  
More than usual interest attached to that wedding because it took place just at the time that the elder Mrs. Mills



Just before sailing on the honeymoon. Bride of noted author and former British spy snatched at the wharf

the former Secret Service chief, who is still in his early thirties, is internationally known as a journalist and descriptive writer, having been a special correspondent of the London Times. He is admitted in diplomatic circles to be a foremost authority on Russia.

The younger son of a distinguished English family, he spent his early years in Russia, as the result of which he not only learned to speak and write Russian fluently, but also acquired an intimate knowledge of every phase of Russian life.

After his graduation from college he studied music at the Petrograd Conservatory, and eventually became assistant to the director of the Imperial Mariinsky Opera. At the same time he continued his studies in political science and economics and wrote extensively for newspapers and magazines.

In 1914 Sir Paul Dukes received an appointment on the Anglo-Russian Commission, and while thus engaged was repeatedly commended for his efficient work. Having been identified with the Russian progressives, he took a prominent part in the revolutionary movement of 1917, which ended in the establishment of a republican form of government under Kerensky.

In 1918, after the downfall of the Kerensky government and the advent of the Bolshevik regime under Lenin and Trotsky, Sir Paul became associated with the American Y. M. C. A., with which he co-operated in Moscow, Petrograd and other cities. When the Bolsheviks expelled this organization, he went to England and volunteered for Secret Service work under the British Government. He was sent to Archangel, and while there Captain Crombie, British naval and intelligence officer, was murdered by the Reds at the British Embassy in Petrograd. Sir Paul at once offered to enter Russia secretly with the object of continuing the deceased officer's work. Disguised as a Russian workman, and at the risk of his life, he succeeded in slipping through the Bolshevik lines at an obscure point on the Finnish frontier, some miles from Petrograd. Despite his precautions, he was discovered by the Russian guards, who fired upon him, and after an exciting pursuit he managed to escape by taking refuge in a cemetery and hiding in a tomb. The next day he reached Petrograd.

**Walked Among Bolsheviks and Was Never Trapped**

Thereafter Sir Paul had a series of thrilling adventures. For ten months he lived in Petrograd and Moscow under various guises while he penetrated the innermost circles of the Bolsheviks and gathered information of the highest value. Often he was hard pressed by Bolshevik spies. To avert suspicion he obtained a position in a munition factory, earned promotion and enjoyed the confidence of the Soviet authorities. When at last a draft was made, he was forced to enlist in the Red army and was stationed with an infantry regiment near Petrograd.

Sir Paul gives a remarkable account of life in the Bolshevik army, its frequent lack of ration, and the summary measures employed in extorting food from the peasants. Few of the men, he says, could read or write, a newspaper was a rarity, and the principal diversion of the troops was to listen to the anarchistic speeches of Red agitators. In conformity with Bolshevik ideas, the officers were addressed as "Comrade Commander" and they, in turn, addressed the men as "Comrades."

"The most horrible phase of life under Bolshevik rule," Sir Paul says, "is the absence of all liberty of thought, word or deed. Not only our newspapers appear except the Bolshevik journals, but it is dangerous even in the street or on a train to express an opinion contrary to Bolshevik principles, for a man never knows when a word will be overheard by some over-deeping Bolshevik agent, which will land the offender in prison and perhaps end in his being a firing squad. In many ways the Russian 'terror' far exceeds in its horrors the most sanguinary period of the French Revolution. The Russians submit to this tyranny because they have never known anything better, centuries of oppression having prevented the development of any individualistic tendencies."

**Escapes From Red Russia a Series of Encounters**

Sir Paul Dukes was eventually ordered to join an artillery regiment at a distant part of the front, whereupon he decided to escape from Russia. He was joined by three comrades who had planned to desert and join the White Guards. Having secured themselves on a train, the fugitives managed to reach the Lithuanian border, where a little ten miles wide barred their exit from Russia. For miles they tramped through the marshes and bogs, holding the lake until at every step they sank nearly waist deep. When hope of escape had almost been abandoned, they fortunately came across a customary fishing boat in the marshes.

"It was a risky thing," says Sir Paul, "and I looked dreadfully, but after one or two efforts we found it would hold us if our feet were kept all the time. So we cut some branches from a tree for oars and rowed over the lake to Lithuania. My companions sang as they pulled and bailed, but I was meditating on the fact that the lake's edge was a few feet from the shore of Poland."

had triumphed in her war for social ascendancy over Mrs. John R. Drexel. This warfare centered in Newport and New York, and it was common gossip at the time that Mrs. Drexel's husband is interesting now to look back upon the leaders of the most ultra-set of eleven years ago.

For some time after her first marriage, the present Lady Dukes moved