

Giddings Deutsches Volksblatt, 23 July 1914. Image 011400115.

Letter from Germany
(Original correspondence)

Berlin, 28 June 1914

The Wild Hilde

The epidemic of revolvers spreads in Germany, which was expected to happen this way and was lately predicted in murder lawsuits and has been written about in these letters after the strange verdicts of the jury. It has not been long ago when German journalists pointed to the womanly faint-hearted verdicts of the French and other juries when one of the female murderers was given her freedom. This time the action happened in the town of Erberfeld, in which, on the basis of obvious false steps of justice, the minor by the name of Schröter and a widow by the name of Hamm were thrown into jail and were not guilty.

Her name was Brunhilde Wilden. She was the daughter of esteemed parents. As a child she was so sensitive that an old physician who had already treated this 20-year-old as a child reported before the trial by jury that he did not want to touch her with his finger because he saw how very sensitive she had been, "I did not want to stroke her and told her parents that this child should not be stroked even if found not guilty."

This hysterical child with her disease like early onset of sensuality was trapped by a male student when she was thirteen. Then she met a student teacher and he was so overwhelmed by her actions that he passed her on to a colleague of his. He falls in love with her and carries a photo of her and has a paperweight made of her hand on his desk. But Hilde gets to the age where she needs to look for a future spouse if she does not want to miss her opportunities. Marriage? The young teacher does not think of that. What would happen to his future plans? They would not have the funds to live together. And considering her youth, should he marry somebody like that? The beautiful Hilde withdraws from him and a medical doctor falls in love with her. They get engaged. As he finds out that Hilde still has feelings for the young teacher, he breaks the engagement. Hilde had talked to several people about her relationship with the teacher. All will be well if the teacher will confirm before the court of honor that he and Hilde were not in an intimate relationship. He could have done this voluntarily or be forced to do it if the girl's honor could have been saved, but this was not possible.

The poor sick Hilde may not have had the mental strength to understand the consequences of what had happened. She removed a pistol from the bookcase of the doctor. The next morning she went to the teacher's apartment. Did she want to force him to marry her or demand a false word of honor before the court of honor would take place that evening? She claimed in court and in front of her former lover that she wanted to kill herself. As a result, the teacher has three bullets in his body, one in his stomach, one in his head, one in his neck and as he was trying to tell the events as they happened, he died.

The jury gave Hilde her freedom. The people who had come to court and waited for the results of the judgement shouted their "Bravo." [several illegible words]. The newspaper "Frankfurter Zeitung" explains in regards to the fact that more and more judgements are not carried out according to the legal law and writes "There is enough proof for prosecution but the moral strength is failing to proclaim somebody guilty where the law would have demanded it." This is a tough judgement on the jury. Who is the true guilty one in this tragedy? Putting the moral scruple aside, has the dead teacher acted as 999 of 1000 men would have acted? Set aside hypocrisy! If the young Hilde is responsible for her actions should be decided by the medical profession. If you look closely, you will see that the capital crime is put on those who did not recognize the inner sensual and sexual forces of the young woman.

REN

Translated by Margot Hendricks