

Bergdoll's Dairy

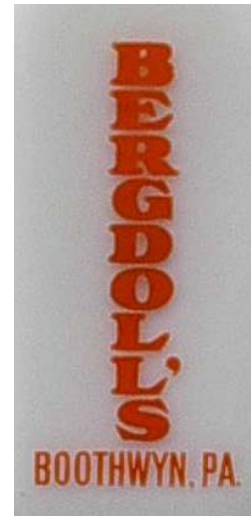
(and More)



1940-50's Bergdoll
Milk Truck



Milk Bottle Negative

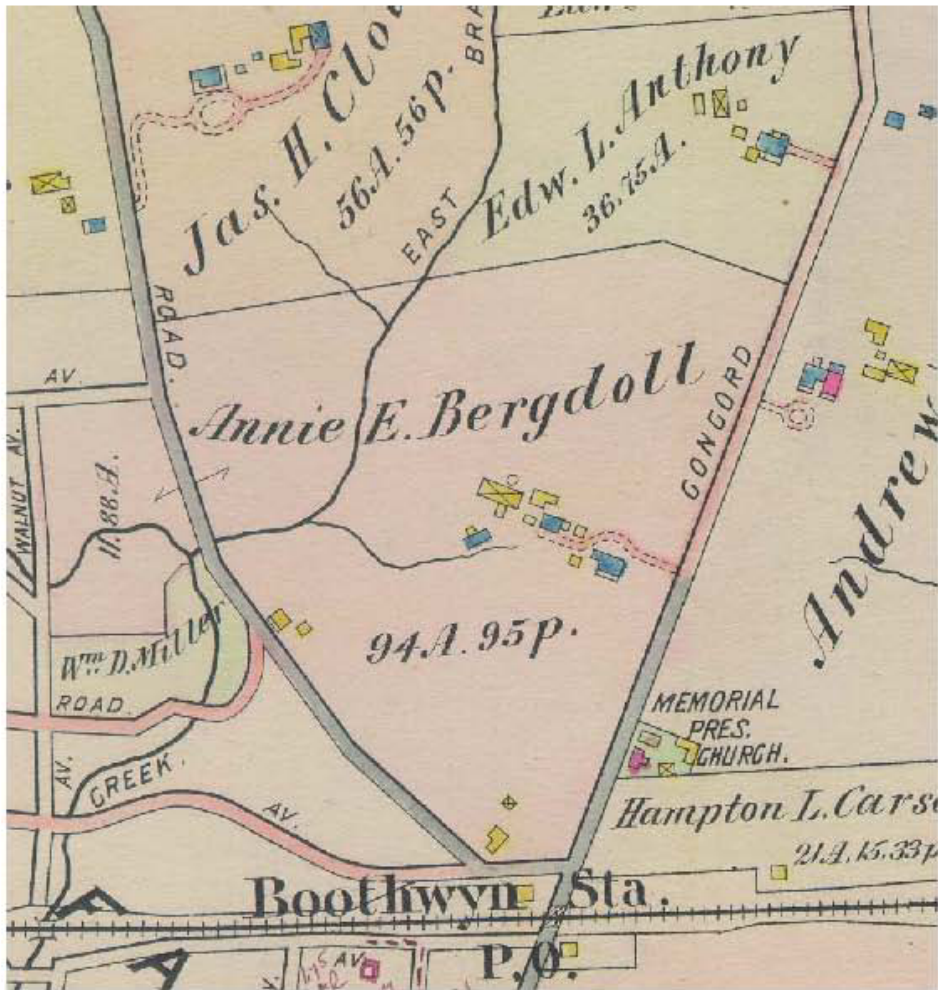


Bergdoll Milk Bottle Label

As compiled by: John Schueren
March 31, 2012

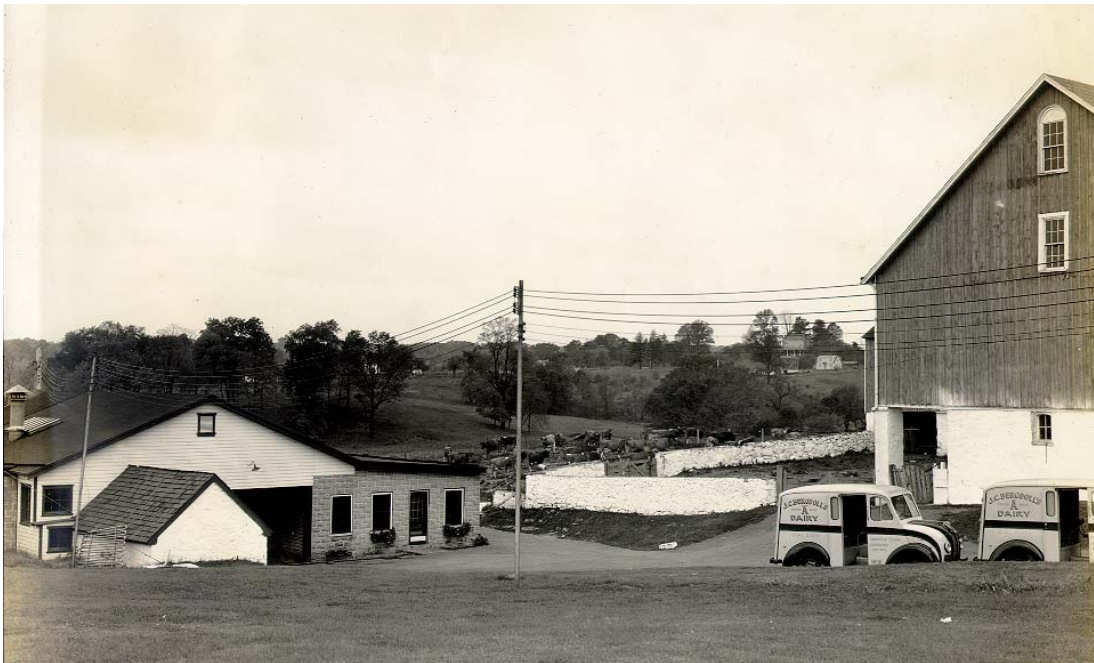
Bergdoll Farm 1913 – The Bergdoll Dairy Farm was a popular and well-known operation. They started producing dairy products in 1899 and continued into the 1960’s. Below is the layout of the farm in 1913. Chichester Avenue (then known as Concord) was paved up to their driveway. On the left hand side of their driveway is their stone farmhouse. Sadly, it is long gone, replaced by Willowbrook.

The Memorial Presbyterian Church built in 1885 of brick is also shown on the map. It stands in place and looks much like it did back when it was built.





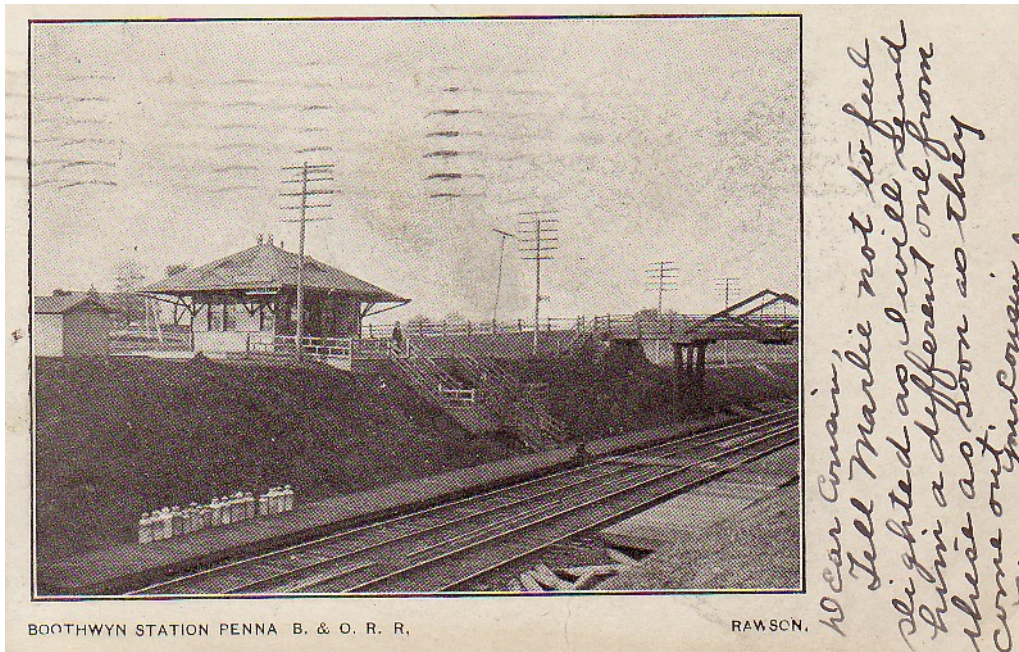
Bergdoll's house and dairy farm c1950's





Lots of milk trucks ready to go





BOOTHWYN STATION PENNA B. & O. R. R.

RAWSON.

Above: c1907 – Boothwyn train station stop on Chichester Ave. Note the Milk Cans, must be Bergdoll's
 Below Left: August 1936 newspaper Ad

BERGDOLL COWS CAREFULLY TESTED

The Bergdoll Dairy Farms at Boothwyn boast an enlarged plant with modern equipment, open at any time for inspection. John C. Bergdoll, the proprietor, has with him in the business Mrs. Bergdoll, his daughter, Elizabeth, and sons, John, George and Leonard.

Products of the farm are pasteurized milk, butter, cream, buttermilk, chocolate milk, cottage cheese and allied products. The dairy house, where equipment is maintained for cooling, separating, bottling, churning, washing and sterilizing bottles, is arranged for accessibility and cleanliness. The Bergdoll cows are tested twice a year for Bang disease and tuberculosis.

Above: Sept 1936 newspaper article. A family business, the Bergdoll's were proud of the health of their cows and let everyone know it.



Quart Bottles like the one shown on the left were a popular delivery item. From the 1940's through the 1950's, the orange Pyro was used for advertising products and sending messages to their customers. This bottle speaks of Years of Experience 1899-to-1954

The ½ Pint on the right attempts comedy as the stork delivers the baby: Listen Pal! I hope they have Bergdoll's Dairy Milk where you are taking me!





Above and below are an assortment of Bergdoll bottle labels, cartons and caps.



An unusual mini coffee creamer



BERGDOLL ENTERS TWILIGHT CIRCUIT

Bergdoll Dairies, winners of the Twilight League last year, will again take the field as a member of the Twilight League. This decision was reached in the past week as at the loop meeting last week they were not sure of placing a team on the field for this season.

The re-entering of the Bergdoll ning almost completes the circuit of eight teams in the Twilight loop. West End is the only team still undecided about entering the league this year.

The team will work out on Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock on the Bergdoll field at Boothwyn. All of last year's players are invited to attend and any others interested in trying out for the team are asked to be on hand.

Elmer Grantham, a former Chester player, will direct the team this summer.

Left: April 1935 newspaper article. John C was a big baseball fan and dedicated a part of the farm to a baseball field. The article indicates their success as a team.

Bottom: July 1956 newspaper article. The Bergdoll's on their porch, John C is arranging articles about the Bergdoll team. Complete article on following page.

THURSDAY, JULY 19, 1956

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33



KEEPING THE RECORD—John C. Bergdoll, Upper Chichester dairyman, places news clippings about his baseball teams in a scrapbook while his wife, Mary, looks over pictures in another book. The scene is the wide porch of their home on the Bergdoll dairy farm, Chichester rd., Boothwyn.

Bergdoll Recalls Years Of Pail and Ladle Milk

By CHICK GARRETT

BOOTHWYN — Times in the dairy business have changed.

John C. Bergdoll, who's operated a dairy in Delaware County for almost a half century, recalls that in the old days all you needed to get into the dairy business was a cow, a wagon, some pails and a ladle. In contrast, he said, today's equipment in a dairy plant runs into the thousands and thousands of dollars.

But while you didn't need much equipment in the old days, Bergdoll observed that it meant a lot of hard work. He worked 365 days a year and in all kinds of weather!

BORN IN UPPER CHI

Bergdoll, who was born in Upper Chichester, in 1888, sat on the wide porch of his Boothwyn home, reminiscing about his boyhood on the huge dairy farm his father operated before him. His wife, Mary, sat in a rocker and nodded agreement to his tales.

Bergdoll's story is one of civic pride and progress in the milk business, and that of a man busy with hobbies.

His big relaxation is baseball. Twenty years ago he organized a team among his milk drivers. Since then he's sponsored numerous teams, and is a real dyed-in-the-wool fan. He loves to see kids get the opportunity to play baseball.

Bergdoll grew up on the dairy farm, worked a milk route when roads were nothing but dirt, gravel and ruts. He drove a wagon with large milk cans and customers provided a pitcher or pot into which he ladled the milk.

Later he took over the farm and has been in the dairy business on his own since 1908. Of the original huge farm, only 90 acres are left. Recently a section of the property was sold to a housing development company and in his honor named Bergdoll Village.

"They are going to name a street after me," he said with a grin. "How about that, 'Bergdoll st., in Bergdoll Village?'"

The large herd of milk cows is gone and now Bergdoll gets his milk by truck from nearby farms.

While baseball is his main hobby now, Bergdoll was a gunning enthusiast during his younger days. He liked to tramp the woods and fields that abounded at that time, hoping for a shot at quail, rabbits and other small game.

He remembers when there were only four dwellings between his home and Marcus Hook. That, too, has changed. Today the area has all the aspects of a fast-growing community.

Bergdoll is believed to be the first dairyman to deliver milk in an automobile. From the Chester Times of April 29, 1940 there appears this paragraph in the "20 years ago" column. That would be 1910.

"John Bergdoll, the Boothwyn dairyman, came to Chester this week with an automobile wagon from which he delivered milk and products of his dairy to Chester customers. It is one of the first vehicles of this kind to be seen in the city and attracted much attention."

C FOR DOCTOR

The "C" in Bergdoll's name is for Catizer, the name of the only doctor for miles around in 1888 and the one who brought Bergdoll into the world.

A portion of the Bergdoll farm, located at the intersection of Chichester and Bethel rds., has been made into a ball diamond and athletic field. It is almost always in use during good weather. Bergdoll charges no fee to the many teams that use the field and is happy when youngsters use it for their games.

He sponsors a team in the Mickey Vernon League and another in the American Legion Co-Del League. And he is always ready to lend his moral or financial support to organizations and the youth of his community. He sponsored teams in the Delco Valley League and as a member of the Kiwanis club helps out each year with the club-sponsored basketball tournament.

Every year Bergdoll is invited to attend the annual banquet of the New York Sports Writers Association, held in the big city. He tells, with a chuckle, of the big name ball players he has met.

His scrap book, which he likes to show visitors, is plenty of evidence of his prominence in his community.

In 1954 he was selected by the Marcus Hook Lions Club as the "outstanding citizen" of the area for his work among the youth of the community.

As he and his wife sit on the porch of their home, John C. Bergdoll can be proud of his accomplishments. He has served his neighbors and his community well.

OBITUARIES

John Bergdoll; Dairyman, 82

John C. Bergdoll, president of Bergdoll Dairy Inc., died Wednesday at his home, 3500 Chichester Ave., Boothwyn. He would have been 83 Friday.

He was husband of the late Mary Jane McElhenney Bergdoll who died in 1956.

Mr. Bergdoll was born in Upper Chichester and grew up on the dairy farm. He worked on a milk route before taking over the business from his father in 1908. He was the first dairyman who came to Chester in an automobile wagon from which he delivered milk to Chester customers. It was the first vehicle of this kind to be seen in the city.

Mr. Bergdoll was a baseball enthusiast and sponsored a team in the Mickey Vernon League and another in the American Legion Co-Del League

Every year he was invited to attend the annual banquet of the New York Sports Writers Association held in New York and he had a great many friends among big league players including John and Warren Ogden, his neighbors.

In 1954, he was selected by the Marcus Hook Lions Club as the "Outstanding Citizen" of the area for his work among the youth of the community.

He was a member of Chester Kiwanis Club and the Delaware County Old Timers.

He is survived by two daughters, Miss Elizabeth Bergdoll at home and Mrs. Anna D. Crossgrove of Ogden; two sons John Jr. and Leonard both of Boothwyn; seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Calling hours will be from 4 to 10 p.m. Friday at his home.



JOHN C. BERGDOLL
... Dies

Left: Apr 8, 1965
Obituary for John C Bergdoll.
Below: Apr 30, 1965
Ad in newspaper telling of commitment to the future but later falls short.

We would like to take this opportunity to let everyone know that the 60 year tradition of quality dairy products and dependable service started by our late president, John C. Bergdoll, will be maintained. Customer satisfaction is, and will continue to be, our prime concern.

BERGDOLL DAIRY

3500 Chichester Ave. Boothwyn, Pa.

Fire Ruins Upper Chi Building

UPPER CHICHESTER — Fire wrecked the huge old barn at 3500 Chichester Ave. owned by Baldwin Frankford Dairies of Philadelphia Sunday night.

Some 125 firemen battled the blaze for three hours in the pouring rain in an attempt to save the barn which formerly was the headquarters of the Bergdoll Dairies.

Bergdoll consolidated with Baldwin a couple of years ago after the death of John C. Bergdoll, the dairy founder.

Fire companies from six communities plus the Moyamensing Juniors of Chester responded to the fire which broke out about 6:15 p.m. They remained at the scene until 9 p.m.

Upper Chichester Fire Chief Hardy Wilbank reported that 60 per cent of the stone and frame barn was destroyed. The structure now was used to store milk cartons and maintenance equipment.

There were no cows in the barn and none of the firefighters was injured. Also, a stone home very near to the barn, was saved from any damage.

George Bergdoll, sales manager for West Philadelphia Division of Baldwin - Frankford, said no estimate had yet been made on the damage to the barn.

Chief Wilbank reported that the cause of the fire had not yet been determined and Pennsylvania State Police Cpl. Charles Hicklin, the state fire marshal, was expected to tour the site today in an effort to determine the cause.

Companies fighting the fire included Boothwyn, Reliance Hook & Ladder and Ogden, all of Upper Chichester; Bethel, Concordville and Linwood No. 1.

Left: Dec 1967,

A little more than 2 years after John's death, the first fire broke out at the Bergdoll farm.

Below: May 1968,

A second major fire occurred about 5 months after the first.

Note: the farm was vacant since 1965 as operations were sold off to Baldwin Frankford Dairies in 1965, right after the death of John

Firemen Fight Blaze At Bergdoll Dairy

UPPER CHICHESTER — Four fire companies battled more than 30-minutes Thursday a blaze that destroyed the former Bergdoll Dairy building at 3500 Chichester Ave.

It was the second major fire at the site in five months, and it destroyed most of the abandoned two-story frame building that housed the dairy operations for more than 50 years.

First Asst. Fire Chief Louis DeShullo said firemen found the building almost enveloped in flames when they arrived shortly after the 1:50 p.m. alarm.

The flames shot about 40 feet in the air and gave off thick clouds of gray smoke which blew

north into Gardendale and hampered firemen.

DeShullo said the blaze apparently started on the second floor of the building and burned through the roof. State police arson investigators have been asked to assist in a probe of the fire's cause, he said.

DeShullo said the blaze was declared under control about 2:25 p.m. An unidentified fireman was treated at the scene by the Boothwyn Fire Co. ambulance crew for a foot cut.

The dairy has been unoccupied since it was sold in 1965 to the Baldwin Frankford Dairies of Philadelphia and relocated.

Bergdoll Field in Upper Chi feels bite of bulldozer

By EILEEN SHOMO

Daily Times Correspondent
UPPER CHESTER — Bergdoll's Field, the township's playground for more than 50 years, is feeling the bite of the builder's bulldozer and soon will disappear.

"I remember when that field was a potato patch," said Gino Galbursera, who worked for the Bergdoll Dairy for 44 years.

"Mr. Bergdoll was a rabid baseball fan and no request was too much from kids who wanted to play baseball," Gino ("Don't call me Mr. Galbursera; I don't know who you mean") said.

Bergdoll went to work for Mr. Bergdoll (John C. Bergdoll, who died in 1962) in 1912. We delivered milk by horse, and wagon to Boothwyn, Ogdon, Linwood, Marcus Hook and Avline Village.

"When the Philadelphia A's or the Phillies were in town, we had to get up at 1:30 a.m. and deliver milk like mad. Then Mr. Bergdoll would pile as many old cars as he could get in his old car and take us to the ball game.



JOHN BERGDOLL.

"Noah, if Mr. Bergdoll were still here, there wouldn't be any building going on there now. He wouldn't have stood for that. He thought it was more important that the kids had a place to play."

THE FIELD hasn't seen the frenzy of activity in recent years that it did in its heyday.

The multi-acre field at Chickester Avenue and Bethel Road was the home field of the baseball team at Boothwyn High School in 1942.

Frank Holland, 285 Clayton St., played on that team.

"Everyone used Bergdoll's field," he said. "I just seemed like it belonged to everybody."

"I started playing baseball at Bergdoll's Field when I was 10 and until I went into the service at 21, must have been down there nearly every day."

JOHN BENSON, of Benson and Benson, Inc., developers of the 35-acre tract, said the field probably will be available for use by local groups through next June, at least.

The one and two-bedroom apartments will have 374 units in 34 buildings, to be called Willowbrook.

Mill Road is being extended from Bethel Road into the apartment development and will end at Benson's property line. The remainder of the tract, about 38 acres, is still in the Bethel family.

Mill Road will be straightened at the curve where the backstop was, adjacent to the Kealy property, according to the developer.

The developer will donate 3 1/2 acres beyond Mill Road to the township, which will be available for recreation.

THE MOST frequent user of the field in recent years has been the Chickester Crusaders AA, which has used it as a practice field for their four football teams.

"We sure hate to see that field go," said Lou Reuz, one of the founders of the Crusaders.

"We put lights up there several years ago so we could have night practice but a player was hurt during a game and we have since had to stop that practice."

Junior High School field. We have been looking for property, so we can have our own field but so far nothing has turned up."

The Crusaders also have used the field for their annual fundraising carnival, a venture which nets them about \$3,000, according to Jack Marantino, manager of the club's fund-raising.

"We hope we can use it at least in the time," Marantino said. "We've already booked the carnival and I don't know what we would do if we couldn't use the field. I've been upset about the loss of the field since I heard it."

"I was under the impression it was under the impression it would be another five years. We went to the commissioners and asked if it would be possible for a group to have the ground the developer is now donating turned over to our group to develop. We offered to put in a field, maintain it, plus add a playground for the little kids, but were not successful.

"WE USED THE field as a practice team when I came to Chickester as coach in 1947," said Tony Apfelfeld, still the

high school football coach. "We played at the Sun Oil Co. field in Feltonville and sometimes at Marcus Hook until the new high school was built on Meetinghouse Road."

"But mostly I will miss the decreasing open space in our township."

Apfelfeld runs the township's recreation program and although the township is developing fields for baseball, football and tennis on its own property, he said Bergdoll's will be sorely missed.

FINALLY, THE kids will suffer most of all.

Joe Pro Jr., 13, played his last of four years of football this year with the Crusaders.

"I think the lack of a field that will hurt the involvement of some of our football program," Joe said. "Football will find another place, but it might be difficult for some kids to get there."

"No sir, if Mr. Bergdoll were still here, there wouldn't be any building going on down there now."

Left: Dec 1972, The end of an era, with Bergdoll field on its way out, Willowbrook will come in shortly after, about 2 years later leaving no trace of the Bergdoll Farm left.

The Bergdoll Cousins from Philadelphia

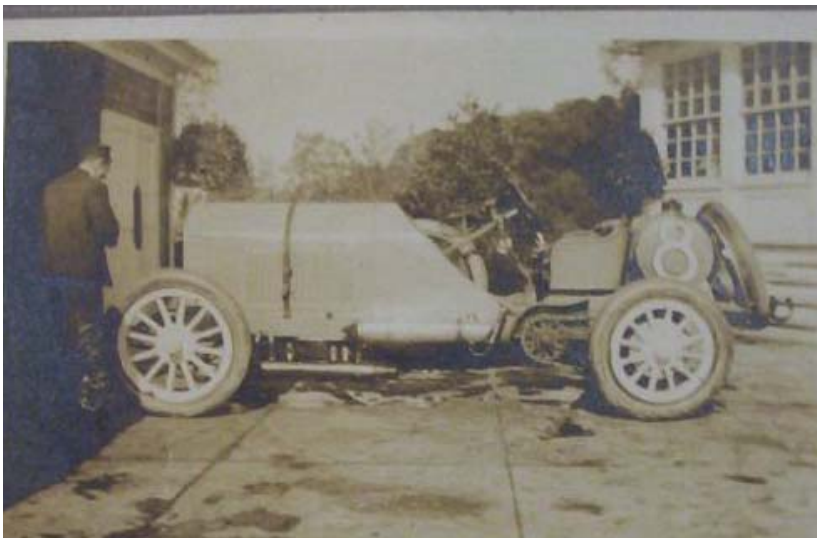
John C Bergdoll's grandfather George was cousins with Louis Bergdoll of Philadelphia. The Philadelphia Bergdoll family became well-known through the Louis Bergdoll and Sons Brewing Co., founded in 1849 by George's cousin Louis. During its peak operating period, the Bergdoll brewery produced one of the most popular beers in the country. In spite of Prohibition, the company did not actually dissolve until 1951. The Bergdoll estates were valued at several million dollars.

The grandsons of Louis, Grover Cleveland and Erwin Bergdoll, took advantage of the good fortune brought to them from Louis Bergdoll and Sons Brewing Co. to venture into many things such as starting their own car company, racing in the early Indianapolis 500 and even buying a plane from the Wright Brothers. They were notorious throughout Philadelphia and Delaware County for flying planes and police chases.



MoToR's Series of 1912 Models.
The Bergdoll "40"
 Louis J. Bergdoll Motor Co., Philadelphia, Pa.

<p>PRICES AND BODIES: Touring, berets and two-seater, \$1,200. WHEEL BASE: 111 inches. GAUGE: 42 or 60 inches. TIRES, FRONT: 18 x 4 inches. TIRES, REAR: 24 x 4 inches. SPRINGS, FRONT: Semi-elliptic. SPRINGS, REAR: Semi-elliptic. FRONT AXLE: 1,600 lbs. REAR AXLE: Full floating type. FRAME: 2 1/2 inch channel section, ground steel. HORSE POWER: 40. CYLINDERS: Four. BORE: 4 inches.</p>	<p>STROKE: 3 1/2 inches. BORE-STROKE RATIO: 1.125. PISTON DISPLACEMENT: 247 cubic inches. VALVE ARRANGEMENT: Inlet on top, exhaust at side. FUEL SUPPLY: Gravity feed. CARBURETOR: Meyer. CARBURETOR CONTROL: Throttle on steering wheel and foot accelerator.</p>	<p>IGNITION: Jump spark. CURBENT SUPPLY: Bosch magnet. DISTRIBUTOR: Bosch. IGNITION TIMING: Adjustable on steering wheel. COOLING: Water. PUMP: Centrifugal. RAILWAYS: Locomotive oil-lubricated type. MOTOR SUSPENSION: Thompson. CLUTCH: Multiple disc. CHANGE GEAR: Selective type.</p>	<p>SPEED: Four forward and one reverse with direct drive on third speed. CHANGE GEAR CONTROL: Hand lever at side. CHANGE GEAR SUSPENSION: 1501 with motor. TRANSMISSION: 2400 drive. BRAKES: Internal expanding with external emergency. BRAKE CONTROL: Service by pedal, emergency by hand lever. CHASSIS WEIGHT: 2,200 pounds. EQUIPMENT: Two, wood-buff, detachable seats, self-cleaning, 400 lbs., 2 lamps, tools, battery, etc. STANDARD COLORS: Dark blue body and chassis, silver fenders. "The Top" selling at \$1,200, but a 2,000 lbs. and a 400 lb. motor, 2400 wheels and three speeds.</p>
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Above: Car Ad for a 1912 Bergdoll '40'. Bergdoll cars were only built in 1908 to 1913. The '40' represented 40 horsepower. It was made in 1912 and 1913. **Left:** Grover's #8 car won the 1909 Fairmont Park Race. This photo was taken in his



Top: 1910 photo of a Bergdoll racer.

Right: Car badge from a Bergdoll '30', made from 1908 to 1912 and of course was 30 horsepower.

Below: Grover and Erwin bought a plane and received flying lessons from the Wright Brothers. They were some of the earliest aviators in Delaware County using an airfield that is now the Manoa Shopping Center.



Possibly the most famous Philadelphia Bergdoll was Grover Cleveland Bergdoll, 1893-1966, who earned a nation-wide reputation when he dodged the draft during World War I. He fled to Germany and dodged the draft there when German authorities demanded that he join their military. After years in exile, Grover returned to America in 1939, was tried, and sent to prison. He was released in 1946.

Grover spent most of his later years under psychiatric supervision. Grover's son, Alfred, and lawyer, David Meade White, became his guardians after his incapacitation. Grover Cleveland Bergdoll died on 27 January 1966.



Above: 1942 press photo of a Grover Cleveland Bergdoll (on left). Handcuffed and serving time for dodging the draft for World War I.



John C Bergdoll
1882-1965
An Upper Chichester Icon