

DEATH OF FOUR IS FOLLOWED BY NURSE'S ARREST

Mystery in Demise of Mrs.
Harry Gordon of Chicago,
Father, Mother, Sister
to Be Probed.

ALL DIE WITHIN A MONTH

Victims of the Strange Series
of Coincidence Buried at
Cataumet, Mass., Last
Summer.

TRACES OF POISON FOUND.

Jane Toppan, Aged 45, Is Accused of
the Murder of Mrs. Mary Gibbs,
One of the Members of
the Family.

NOW IN JAIL AT BARNSTABLE.

Barnstable, Mass., Oct. 30.—[Special.]—
Jane Toppan, a professional nurse, 45 years
old, was lodged in jail here tonight on the
charge of murdering by poison Mrs. Mary
Davis Gibbs, sister of the wife of Harry Gor-
don of Chicago. Mrs. Gibbs and Mrs. Gordon
and their father and mother all four died
here within three weeks last summer. Miss
Toppan attended all four as a nurse.

The arrest followed a report made by Pro-
fessor Wood, an analytical chemist of Har-
vard University, who stated that he had
found poison in the stomachs of two of the
victims of the mysterious chain of coinci-
dences.

Miss Toppan was arrested last evening at
Amherst, N. H. In police court today at
Nashua, N. H., she protested her innocence,
waived examination, and agreed to return
to Massachusetts without a requisition. She
was brought here tonight and lodged in the
county jail pending a preliminary hearing.

All Die Within a Month.

The Davis family, four in number—Mr.
and Mrs. Alden P. Davis of Cataumet and
their daughters, Mrs. Harry Gordon of Chi-
cago and Mrs. Mary Gibbs of Cataumet—
all died within a month.

The first of the family to pass away was
Mrs. A. P. Davis, whose death took place
in Somerville, Mass., on July 4. Her body
was taken to Cataumet and buried in the
family lot.

Mrs. Harry Gordon, the younger daugh-
ter, 30 years old, wife of the cashier of the
Equitable Life company of Chicago, and
who had been visiting her mother during her
last sickness, after the funeral went to stay
a short time with her father at the Jachon
cottage at Cataumet. She, too, was taken
suddenly ill and died on July 31.

Alden P. Davis was then taken sick and
he passed away on Aug. 4. The last in the
mysterious chain of deaths was Mrs. Mary
Davis Gibbs, the elder daughter, aged 37,
wife of Captain Irving Gibbs of Cataumet.
She died on Aug. 13.

Jane Toppan Attends All.

Jane Toppan attended each member of the
family, and was with them during their ill-
ness and present when they died.

Mrs. Davis had been in poor health for
some time, and was taken to Somerville with
the hope that a change in scene and air
would prove beneficial. Jane Toppan ac-
companied her.

The attending physician here, Dr. Latter,
had informed Mr. Davis that Mrs. Davis
could survive only a short time, and the an-
nouncement of her death from diabetes came
with no surprise to her friends and family.
The cause was attributed to some affection
of the heart.

Mrs. Gordon's Death.

Miss Toppan, still in the employ of Mr.
Davis, attended Mrs. Harry Gordon of Chi-
cago, who was stricken with illness shortly
after the funeral of her mother, Mrs. Davis.

All the members of the Davis family were
bound to each other by the strongest ties of
love, and Mrs. Gordon's sickness and sub-
sequent death were believed to have been
brought about by the great grief which she
suffered at the loss of her mother.

Mrs. Gordon's physician was also Dr. Lat-
ter, and the cause of her death has never
officially been given, although it was stated at
the time that she died from exhaustion.

Following the death of Mrs. Gordon, his
daughter, whom he dearly loved, Mr. Davis
became ill and in a few days expired. Mr.
Davis' death came as a fearful shock to all
his friends. He was cared for in his brief ill-
ness by the same nurse, Miss Toppan, who re-
mained and performed similar duties for the
last remaining member of the family, Mrs.
Mary Gibbs, during her fatal illness at
Bourne, Mass. Mrs. Gibbs was the wife of
Captain Irving Gibbs, who was at sea when
his wife passed away, and did not hear of her
death or that of any member of the family
until he put in at one of the middle Atlantic
ports.

The suddenness of the death of Mrs. Gibbs
and the great bereavement which had al-
ready fallen upon the friends of the Davis
family cast a gloom over the little com-
munity. Mrs. Gibbs was also buried in the
family lot here.

Investigation Is Begun.

At that time it was believed by the villagers
that all the members had died from natural
causes, but the suspicions of one man, Paul
Gibbs, father of Captain Irving Gibbs, were
aroused, and he began a quiet investigation.
As a result Colonel Whitney of the State
police visited Bourne, and, upon the strength
of the investigation that he made there, an
autopsy on the body of Mrs. Gordon and Mrs.
Gibbs was held by Professor Wood, assisted
by Professor Whitney, Medical Examiner
R. H. Faunce, and Dr. Latter.

Official Return Not Made.

It was also learned today for the first time
that no official return was ever made of the
cause of the death of Mrs. Gordon. At the
time of the autopsy it was said that the
reason that no return of the cause of the
death had been made was that the under-
taker had delayed filing it. Inquiry at the
Town Clerk's office at Bourne today revealed
the fact that neither the undertaker's nor
physician's certificate as to the cause of
death has yet been filed.

The law required the undertaker to pro-

cure the physician's certificate of the cause of death before he could have obtained a permit to bury the body of Mrs. Gordon, but it would seem that in this case the law had been disregarded.

Undertaker's Statement.

Undertaker Davis of Falmouth, who had charge of the funeral of Mrs. Gordon, when seen today said that he supposed that the permit had been issued and recorded. Mr. Davis did not personally conduct the burial, but he told his assistant to see that there was a permit, and, as the latter had said nothing to the contrary and the funeral had taken place at the appointed time, the undertaker believed that the law had been complied with. Mr. Davis further stated that he supposed at the time that Dr. Latter had attended to the matter, as the death took place in Bourne, where Dr. Latter, who had been the attending physician, resided. Dr. Latter died at his home at Monument Beach about ten days ago.

Working Up the Case.

The case was placed in charge of State Detective Whitney of Boston, who has worked on it almost continuously since Aug. 30. He alone knows the evidence that has been secured against Jane Toppan. Her arrest followed quickly upon the report of the chemist. District Attorney Holmes applied to Judge Swift of the Barnstable District Court and a warrant was sworn out and sent to State Detective Whitney at Boston, and he at once went to Nashua, N. H., where he obtained a New Hampshire warrant for the arrest of Miss Toppan. Accompanied by the New Hampshire officials he drove to Amherst, N. H., where late in the evening the accused was found at the home of George Nichols, a prosperous farmer, with whose wife she was visiting. Protesting her innocence she was taken to Nashua, arriving late in the night. Today in the police court she waived examination, and the New Hampshire complaint against her was not pressed, she having agreed to return to Massachusetts without contest.

Intimate with the Family.

Jane Toppan had been an intimate friend of the Davis family for many years. She had attended the several members of the family whenever her professional services were required. She had their confidence to an unlimited degree.

Story of a Fire.

Prior to the last illness of Mrs. Davis, a fire which threatened to destroy their home started in the Jachin cottage, in which Mr. and Mrs. Davis lived on different occasions. In the house close by, where Miss Toppan lived a year ago, a fire occurred and the building was nearly ruined. The fires in both buildings gave rise to the belief that they were of incendiary origin.

Miss Toppan, who was stopping at the Jachin cottage and was employed in nursing Mrs. Davis, assisted the members of the household in an investigation as to the cause of the fires. She was the only one who was able to throw the least light on the subject.

She told Mr. Davis that just before the breaking out of one of the fires on the Jachin premises she saw a man stealing his way along in the shadow of the building.

Doors and Windows Locked.

This at first seemed to lend color to the belief that some one had entered the building and applied the torch, but it was discovered that the doors and windows were securely locked at the time this particular fire broke out, and that there was other evidence that no one save members of the family and Miss Toppan were in the house.

The illness of Mrs. Davis having taken a sudden turn for the worse about this time the excitement incident to the fires was forgotten.

Real Name Nora Kelley.

Lowell, Mass., Oct. 30.—[Special.]—Jane Toppan has lived nearly all her life in Lowell and her arrest has revived comment on three deaths in a Lowell family, at two of which at least she was present.

Jane Toppan's real name is Nora Kelley, and when a child she was taken from a children's home in Boston by Mrs. Toppan, mother to the wife, Mrs. O. A. Brigham, now dead.

Though never legally adopted, she was given the name of Jennie Toppan. She was graduated from the Lowell public schools, and continued to live in the Toppan family until she was 25 years old, being regarded as a daughter by those who did not know the family history.

Graduates with High Rank.

When 25 years old she left the Toppan home to study to be a nurse at the training school of the Massachusetts general hospital, from which she was graduated with high rank. She was mostly employed in Boston and Cambridge, but she kept up a correspondence with the housekeepers at the Brigham home and occasionally visited here.

It is reported here that she had represented herself as the heiress of the Toppan family and of Mr. Brigham if she survived him.

It has been learned that the State police in their investigation here intimated that three bodies of the Brigham family lot might be disinterred for the purpose of an autopsy. The bodies referred to are those of Miss Elizabeth Brigham, who died at Cataumet on Aug. 29, 1899; Mrs. Edward F. Banister who died at Mr. Brigham's home on Aug. 27, 1901; and of Mrs. Florence M. Calkins, the housekeeper, who died at the house on Jan. 15, 1900.

In the case of Mrs. Banister, at least, it is known that Miss Toppan was not at the Brigham home during her illness or death.

The agent of the local board of health said tonight that no request had yet been received for a permit allowing disinterment.

Prostrated in September.

When Miss Toppan was in Lowell in September she was taken quite ill with what appeared to be nervous prostration, and was a patient at the city hospital for several weeks. During her stay in this city, in the course of a conversation with a lawyer, her attention was called to a newspaper article saying the bodies at Cataumet had been disinterred. She is quoted as saying that that was all right. She is also reported to have said that Mr. Davis had once been arrested for having advised a father to kill his daughter on the biblical ground of personal sacrifice. The lawyer says the impression she attempted to convey was that Davis might have sacrificed the members of his family.

What Miss Toppan probably had in mind when talking with the lawyer was the fact that Davis was a member of the jury before whom was tried Charles Freeman of Pocasset, who killed his little daughter in 1879 during an attack of religious mania. Because of the strong stand he took against the conviction of Freeman, on the ground that he was not in his right mind, Mr. Davis at the time came in for considerable notoriety.

Harry Gordon refused to give any opinion on the case yesterday. Mr. Gordon is the cashier of the Equitable Life Assurance company, with offices in the Chamber of Commerce Building.

"I have nothing to say now," he said.

"If there is a trial, and I am summoned as a witness, I may be able to say a great deal, but at this time I prefer to say nothing."

"Is there anything in your mind that would warrant the arrest of Jane Toppan?"

"Well, Jane Toppan was the professional nurse who was at the bedside of every one of the four persons who died. I have known her since I was a child. Her home was in Lowell, Mass., but for a long time she boarded in Cambridge.

"I have received no notice of the arrest save that given me by the newspaper reporters."

ONE HUNDRED STOWAWAYS

ON STEAMER FROM NOME.

Passengers Arriving at Port Townsend

Say Those Who Stole Aboard Were

Only Small Part of Destitute Army.

Port Townsend, Wash., Oct. 30.—The

steamers Queen and Valencia arrived today from Nome. Each brought down 800 passengers. On the Queen were 100 stowaways who succeeded in boarding the vessel by climbing up the anchor chains while the vessel was at anchor in the roadway at Nome.

Passengers report that 500 men were left at Nome, all of whom are penniless, with no means of making a living during the winter, and a reign of terror is predicted. During the entire voyage of the Queen petty thefts were of daily occurrence.

To Cure a Cold in One Day

Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. E. W. Grove's signature is on each box, 25c.