

Mystery of the Scarred Heiress And Her Tragic End



After Having Disappeared for Four Months and Being Searched for Throughout the World the Body of Miss Jeanne De Kay Was Found in the Cold Waters of Lake Michigan.

FOUR months ago Jeanne De Kay, the young daughter of John W. De Kay, the multi-millionaire packing king, vanished from the world's sight and knowledge as completely as if the Chicago street on which she was last seen had suddenly opened beneath her feet and swallowed her.

After a world-wide search, her body has just been found floating in Lake Michigan.

But the finding of the girl's body has not dispelled the mystery. Indeed, a disappearance that seemed to be as strange as that of Dorothy Arnold, the New York society girl who dropped out of sight several years ago, turns out to be far stranger.

For the possible explanations of Miss Arnold's disappearance are comparatively few and all quite simple. But for the tragedy of Jeanne De Kay there are many possible explanations—some of them more surprising than any novelist or playwright has told, yet all possessing elements of plausibility that are most convincing.

Was she a victim of morbid vanity? Her face was scarred by smallpox. Over this is known that Miss De Kay brooded. It is even said that those scars had caused her to be disappointed in love. Driven mad by morbid regret for lost beauty, did she throw herself into the lake? Many of her friends believe this may be true.

Or was poor little Jeanne De Kay the victim of the international political intrigues in which her father has long played a prominent part? There are many who think so. They believe either that she was murdered in revenge for some real or fancied grievance against her father, or that terror of these agents, who she thought were pursuing her, drove her to suicide.

Still a third theory held that Jeanne De Kay's disappearance was caused by a sudden disgust for the life of ease and luxury she had hitherto led, and a feeling that she could find true happiness by earning her living, as so many other less fortunate girls had to do. Acting on this impulse she may have renounced her claims to wealth, have changed her name, and then have lost herself among the working women of Chicago—either as a nurse, a shopgirl or a humble domestic servant.

But, these friends argue, this sudden transformation may have proved too difficult. In the sphere of life so strange to her she may have failed to find the happiness that she sought. Too proud to go back to her old ways and confess herself defeated, might she not have sought death as the easiest way out of her perplexities?

It seems very unlikely that Jeanne De Kay could have had her mind fixed on suicide when she walked out of Hull House on the night of December 30. If so, why was she at such pains to take along her toothbrush? The thought of suicide—if such it was—must have come later, after who knows what strange adventures and hardships.

Whatever the answer, it may now never be known. Murder or suicide—the secret is locked up in the dead brain of the blue-eyed, unhappy girl whose body the crew of a police boat saw floating upon the icy waters of the lake not far from Chicago—as though it were striving to make its way back.

And here enters another factor of the mystery. How long the body may have been in the water cannot be definitely told within a period of a month. Outside of that all must be guesswork. The temperature of the waters has been so low that no difference could be discovered between a corpse submerged within them four months ago and one within a month ago.

Identification of the body was made by Miss Gertrude Howe Britton, of Hull House, in which Miss De Kay was a worker when she vanished. Miss Britton has been one of the most unremitting searchers for the girl.

There are, as has been said, a great number of possible explanations of the strange fate of Jeanne De Kay. Which of them would you select as the answer to

What Is the Secret That Explains the Death of Miss Jeanne De Kay, Long Vanished Daughter of the Spectacular American Multi-Millionaire, in the Cold Waters of Lake Michigan?



Was She the Victim of the Vengeance of Her Father's Mexican Entanglements—Kidnapped and Sent to Her Death in Cruel Reprisal?

Miss Jeanne De Kay, the Long Missing Heiress of Millions, the Discovery of Whose Body Has Just Ended a World-Wide Search.

the riddle if you were a detective charged with the task of clearing up the mystery?

Before you could reach a decision you would need to know as much as possible about the girl herself—her personality, her ambitions, her past life, and particularly what she had been doing immediately preceding her disappearance. And you would also do well to give more than a passing glance at the tangled web of intrigue and adventure which has for many years woven itself about her father. When a young man John W. De Kay drifted from the editorship of a small Illinois newspaper to Mexico. The warm friendship which he formed with President Diaz enabled him to obtain concessions that quickly filled his pockets with millions. He gained almost a complete monopoly of the Mexican meat business and was known as "The King of the Packers."

But when Diaz died and Madero came into power De Kay lost the political influence that had made him wealthy. He sold his Mexican holdings for \$5,000,000 and went to Europe to live. There, it is said, he served as Huerta's confidential agent and bought for him large quantities of rifles and cartridges.

Much importance is attached by those who believe that Jeanne De Kay was murdered or that she was driven to death by fear of being kidnapped and held as a hostage to the important role her father has played in the Mexican plots and counter-plots of recent years. The bitter enemies that animate Mexico's rival factions would not, it is thought, stop at the mur-

der or kidnapping of an innocent girl in order to be revenged on a foe or to force some concession from him.

If such desperate conspirators there were they doubtless knew the girl well, for she had spent many years in Mexico. And they knew, too, that she was her father's favorite child and that they could strike no harder blow at him than by bringing her to harm.

It was while living in the City of Mexico that Jeanne De Kay was stricken with smallpox. The disease left her face badly pitted. The greatest specialists were appealed to in vain—nothing that science could suggest was able to restore the satiny pink-and-white beauty of her cheeks.

For years after this Jeanne was a sad, lonely girl, forever brooding over the ugly disfigurement she was doomed to carry through life. Although more recently she had seemed more reconciled to her affliction, keen students of feminine character believe that she still nursed her sorrow in secret. Finally, they think, it became so unbearable that it drove her to suicide after, perhaps, a vain attempt to find for-



Dorothy Arnold, Whose Inexplicable Disappearance Is Less Strange Than Miss De Kay's Vanishing and Mysterious End.

getfulness in the workaday world.

There is reason to believe that her vanity's wounds were made still more grievous by a shattered romance. In France, just after the signing of the armistice, Jeanne is said to have met a young American officer. It was a case of love at first sight on her part, and for a time it seemed to be so on his. But soon the officer's interest in the heiress began to wane; she saw him less and less; finally even his letters stopped coming; and presently she heard that he was to marry a Parisian maiden.

Jeanne was broken-hearted. Her oversensitive nature convinced her that it was because she was not like other girls—because her face was pitted—that her love had not been returned. She could not bear to remain longer in Europe with only idle luxury to distract her mind, so she obtained her father's reluctant consent to come to America and engage in settlement work under the famous Jane Addams at Hull House, Chicago.

Grief over this unhappy love affair, added to years of brooding over her lost



Or, Brooding Over the Scars of Smallpox That Disfigured Her, Did She Become Insane and Throw Herself Into the Lake? Again, as Shown by the Picture on the Left, She May Have Hidden Under Another Name, Worked Among the Poor and Afflicted, and Failing to Find the Happiness She Had Hoped For, Fearing to Confess Failure, Have Destroyed Herself.

in the events of those few weeks no clew to her death?

Jeanne De Kay left Europe on the Italian steamship Duca d'Aosta and landed in New York December 19. She was accompanied by her brother John, who, after escorting his sister to Chicago, was to enter the University of Virginia.

The twenty-year-old heiress and her brother were subjected to a searching examination by the agents of the Department of Justice who met the steamship. This was done, so the secret service men said, because they believed De Kay, the father, had been an extensive buyer of munitions and also the author of several radical books. But the young people gave a satisfactory account of themselves and were allowed to go on to Chicago.

Jeanne settled down with apparent enjoyment to her work at Hull House. Early in the evening of December 30 she was seen to leave the house, and from that moment all trace of her is lost. Search of her room revealed that besides the clothes she wore she took none of her personal belongings other than a small purse containing \$2 and a tooth brush.

After the girl's disappearance her brother recalled the fact that on the voyage to America Jeanne had become very intimate with two Rumanian ladies—Mrs. Ernestino Salter and her daughter Didy. When search for them was instituted it was found that Mrs. Salter had already returned to Rumania. Didy, who was finally located in New York after considerable difficulty, denied any knowledge that would throw light on Jeanne De Kay's whereabouts or the reasons for her disappearance.

But while the police were searching for the Salters there came into their hands a cablegram from the father of the missing heiress, which said among other things: "Very anxious. Jeanne confided in Rumanian lady. Stop."

What was the precious information which Mr. De Kay believed his daughter had given away? Whom was he so anxious to stop?

Curiously enough, the relatives and closest friends of the missing girl were not at all agreed as to whether she was alive or dead or what had become of her.

Judge Thomas Z. Lee, of Providence, R. I., the attorney who represents John W. De Kay in this country and undoubtedly echoed his client's own belief, was confident that the girl committed suicide.

A cousin of Jeanne—Charles De Kay, the distinguished New York art critic—was equally positive that she was alive and well and was keeping out of sight of her own volition. "She's a clever little miss," he said, "and she will reappear when she has made good at whatever she has set her mind on."

The brother, John D. Kay, Jr., was of the same opinion, but he thought it was worry over her facial blemishes rather than the desire to demonstrate that a pampered heiress can make her way in the world which impelled her to run away. "If she had been going to kill herself she would never have bothered to take along her toothbrush," the young man argued.

Mrs. Gertrude Howe Britton, a social worker who was closely associated with Jeanne at Hull House, was until the discovery of the body unable to make up her mind whether the girl was alive or dead. Her hope that the former was the case was based largely on the eagerness she constantly showed for an opportunity to "work with her hands."

Can it be that the answer to the riddle of unhappy little Jeanne De Kay's fate will some day be found in a Mexican bandit camp or in the secret archives of some European Government?

beauty—may this not have proved a burden so intolerable that death seemed welcome?

Exactly the same causes, it is argued, might have led her to seek oblivion in life rather than death. Finding it impossible to live longer where there would always be everything to remind her of what might have been, is it not quite possible that she decided to seek forgetfulness by cutting herself off from family, friends and fortune and joining the great army of working girls?

Did the enemies who sought through her to harm her father finally encompass her death? Or was she driven to suicide by her failure to find forgetfulness in the way she had expected?

In support of the theory that before she found her way into the cold waters of Lake Michigan she had tried for a time to fight the world single-handed and alone, associates of Jeanne at Hull House recall how eager she was to do the most menial kinds of housework—tasks which an heiress would hardly be expected to enjoy. The day before she disappeared she bought herself aprons and dust caps and pleaded to be allowed to take over the duties of a man who cleaned the library.

Jeanne undoubtedly inherited from her father many of his socialistic instincts. It was to satisfy these that she took up her residence at Hull House and began an apprenticeship in social service work under the guidance of Miss Addams.

Perhaps her brief experience at Hull House convinced her that she could be of greater service to humanity by hiding her identity under an assumed name and going out to work alone and unaided among the poor and afflicted. Such a spectacular and daring move as this would be one that would appeal most girls, but it is nothing more than might be expected from the daughter of a man of John W. De Kay's temperament.

His career, not only in finance and international politics, but in literature as well, has always been characterized by a passion for the surprising, the unusual. Among his literary achievements is a play entitled "Judas" which he wrote for Sarah Bernhardt and in which the betrayer of the Saviour is raised in the most astonishing fashion to the place of hero. This drama proved so shocking to the religious sentiments of the American people that its production in this country was forbidden.

But what of the life the little heiress was leading just before she faded so strangely from the world's sight? Is there