

## The Late Inventor's Young Daughter Alone Knows It.

### Mr. Coston's Aged Mother Is Left a Share of the Business—The Fatal Explosion.

Now that William Franklin Coston, son of the original inventor of the famous Coston light signals, is dead, the secret process by which those lights are made is known by but one person. That one is Mr. Coston's eldest daughter.

Miss Coston is going to keep her secret. So she said yesterday in West Brighton, S. I. She appears to be less than twenty years old, but an inquiry as to whether she was experienced enough to take up the management of her father's business was met with a scornful laugh.

"I can't tell you just what I'm going to do with the business," she said. "But I know all about the lights. For a long time I've been the only assistant of my father in his laboratory. He taught me all he knew himself, or as much as I had time to learn, and now, even if I should lose the formulae he gave me, I could write them off from memory."

Miss Coston's grandfather, Benjamin Franklin Coston, invented the light signals. His son perfected the system greatly. It was through his efforts and those of his aged mother, Mrs. Martha J. Coston, to whom a share in the business had been left by the inventor, that the system was adopted in this country and abroad, various National authorities putting the lights in their Weather Bureaus, signal stations, light-houses, and life saving stations.

Mrs. Martha J. Coston, now more than seventy years old, lives in the old family home, Beaman Avenue, West Brighton. She, too, knows something about the formulae for making the lights, but young Miss Coston said yesterday that the formulae possessed by her grandmother were not complete. Yet the grandmother owns part of the business that the young woman alone knows how to keep going.

Within the last few months the Coston family has been in the public notice several times. There was trouble between Mr. Coston, his wife, and his mother. The elder Mrs. Coston originally owned the property on which was situated the family home in West Brighton. The younger Mrs. Coston had a claim to a dower right in the place. A disagreement arose on this account, and gradually the household became divided.

The daughter-in-law went to Greenwich, Conn., to live. Mr. Coston came to New York. But his laboratory, in which he had been accustomed to work regularly, was an outhouse in the back yard at West Brighton, and so he went there often. He also visited his wife, in Greenwich. In fact, contrary to the general idea, he kept on the good side of both the contesting sides of the household.

This was the state of affairs when Mr. Coston was badly burned by the explosion in his laboratory on Aug. 7. Two servants who were in the building with him had a narrow escape. There was talk of incendiarism in connection with the accident, and until yesterday there had not been made public by a member of the family any account of the occurrence.

"I know exactly how the explosion took place," said Miss Coston. "My father was simply mixing a compound of chemicals, in which alcohol was the principal element, when he accidentally rubbed against the compound some of the laboratory apparatus. The friction resulted in the explosion of the compound. Father stopped to try to save the building, and that was the reason he got burned."

It was learned that Mr. Coston's death on Saturday in the New Brighton Infirmary was not considered to be directly due to the accident. It was caused by cerebral meningitis, which may possibly have arisen from a bruise received by falling timber in the explosion, and hemorrhages from the lungs.

The funeral will take place to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock in Trinity Church, Manhattan. Afterward the body will be taken to Philadelphia, to be interred in Laurel Hill Cemetery. The last ceremonies there will probably be Masonic, as Mr. Coston was a member of a lodge in Philadelphia.

## NO TRACE OF SWIFT & CO.'S MISSING TREASURER.

### Hayden's Shortage Now Said to be About \$15,000—Had Been Playing the Races.

It was admitted yesterday by an official of Swift & Co., the Chicago meat dealers, that a warrant had been issued for John T. Hayden, the Secretary and Treasurer of the New York branch of the firm, who has been missing since Tuesday last. It was admitted, also, by the same official that the inspection of Hayden's books by the auditor, John Chaplin, had revealed a shortage of about \$15,000.

Hayden's shortage is now said to be due to the fact that he had been playing the races recently. All the money which is missing was taken within the last few weeks. Before that time, covering a period of five years or more, Hayden's transactions were strictly honest.

No less than \$25,000,000 in cash, it was said, passed through Hayden's hands annually. His salary is said to have been a "comfortable one" by one official, while another hinted at a possible reason for Hayden's shortage in the fact that his remuneration was not adequate for the work he had to do.

Hayden is said to have taken the money which he is accused of embezzling in large lumps. He drew the check upon which the warrant is based for \$10,000. The others were for smaller amounts. He then deposited the money in a bank in the city, from which he is said to have drawn it.

Neither W. H. Noyes, the Vice President of the company, nor John Chaplin, the auditor, cared to be interviewed at length on the subject of Mr. Hayden's disappearance. Mr. Noyes simply said that he and Mr. Hayden had joined the Swift Company about the same time, and that he had never heard the slightest intimation against the Secretary and Treasurer until Tuesday last. Mr. Chaplin said:

"Personally, I do not know much about Hayden. He is under bonds, but I do not care to name the concern or person that will have to make good the loss. I can say that the bond is sufficient and that the company will not lose a dollar."

At Hayden's residence it was said that nothing had been heard of him.