

**WIFE DEFENDS SELF  
AS TYPHOID CARRIER**

**Accused of Poisoning Four  
Husbands, Mrs. Southard  
Raises Novel Plea.**

**HAS DOCTORS' PROOFS  
Believed to Be Attempting  
Hunger Strike in Oahu  
Prison.**

**LAST HUSBAND CALLOUS  
He Is Dazed by Events in  
Hawaii and Does Not Go  
to Visit Her.**

HONOLULU, May 14.—Mrs. Lydia Southard, alleged slayer of five men by poison, said to-day that she believes she is a typhoid carrier, and that this explains the deaths of four of her husbands and a brother-in-law.

"I am innocent of any wrongdoing, but I do believe that I may be a typhoid carrier," she said. "All of my friends died of typhoid. I have physicians certificates to prove it."

Mrs. Southard is young and pretty. Sitting in a cell in the Oahu jail, the woman who is said to have caused her husbands to insure their lives, then poisoned them and nursed them until death, gazed stonily at the wall when she was pried with questions.

But to-day, for the first time, she spoke freely and announced what her defence would be.

"I believe I am a natural typhoid fever carrier," she asserted.

"All of my husbands died of typhoid," she said calmly, with no manifestation of emotion. "I have physicians' certificates to prove it."

"When Mr. Meyer, my last husband, died I had three doctors hold a post-mortem examination. They found at first that he had stomach poisoning, but that acute typhoid had developed and had caused his death. Other physicians found that my other three husbands had died from typhoid fever likewise."

A typhoid carrier is a person who is immune to the disease, but who carries the germs and innocently communicates the malady to others who are susceptible to it.

Officials of the Oahu Prison, where Mrs. Southard is confined, said she was trying to go on a hunger strike.

she told him she was eating regularly, she had taken no food since her arrest last Wednesday. He immediately ordered eggs and several tempting dishes prepared in an effort to make her eat.

Mrs. Southard said to-day that her present husband, Paul Vincent Southard, chief petty officer of the U. S. Monitor Monterey, did not know that she had had four previous husbands, all of whom died under strange circumstances. Southard appeared dazed to-day by the turn of events. He did not go to see his wife and refused to talk to newspaper men.

Police, on searching Mrs. Southard's baggage, announced to-day they had discovered a blank application for an insurance policy. The name of the company was not disclosed.

Mrs. Southard, it is alleged, married Robert C. Dooley of Twin Falls, Idaho, in 1913. He and his brother Edward took out a joint insurance policy and both died in 1916. Other alleged husbands were William McGaffey, married 1918, died 1918; Harlan C. Lewis, married 1918, died same year; Edward F. Meyer, married 1920, died last September; Paul Vincent Southard, 1921.



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