

# Ted's Accident Suspends His Driver License

EDGARTOWN (Mass.) — (AP) — The five girls who stayed behind at the party which preceded Sen. Edward Kennedy's auto accident last weekend on Chappaquiddick Island didn't know about the accident until the following morning, one of the five was quoted as saying today.

And in a related development, the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles made a preliminary ruling of "serious fault" against Kennedy in the accident and suspended his driver's license.

The wreck occurred either late Friday night or early Saturday morning as Kennedy was driving a sixth girl at the party — Miss Mary Jo Kopechne, 28, of Washington, D.C. — to catch a ferry.

The car skidded off a narrow bridge and landed upside down in a tidal pond.

## Minor Injuries

Kennedy escaped with a mild concussion and strained neck muscles. Miss Kopechne drowned.

In a copyright story in today's Worcester Gazette, Miss Esther Newburg, 26, one of the five young women who remained behind at the party, was quoted as saying that she and the other girls weren't told of the accident until Saturday morning.

She said they learned about it from Joseph Gargan, Kennedy's first cousin and a close political and personal friend, as he was driving them to the ferry.

Gargan was the one who rented the small cottage where the party was held.

## About 8 A.M.

Miss Newburg said her watch wasn't working and she wasn't certain what time it was when Gargan told them of the accident.

Asked whether it could have been 8 or 8:30 a.m., she said:

"It could have been. I really don't know."

Kennedy is accused of leaving the scene because he didn't report the wreck until almost 10 a.m. Saturday, more than eight hours after it happened.

In a police statement the senator said he returned to the cottage after the accident, climbed into the back seat of a car parked outside and asked "someone" to return him to his hotel on Martha's Vineyard, a larger is

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land adjacent to Chappaquiddick.

Kennedy did not say what time he got back to the Vineyard or who took him. But he did say he recalled walking around in Edgartown, where he was staying. He said he went to the police when he realized fully what had happened.

## 12 Persons

There were 12 persons at the party—Miss Kopechne, Miss Newburg, Miss Rosemary Keough, Kennedy's secretary, and three other girls, Sen. Kennedy, Gargan and four other men.

It was Miss Keough's purse that was found in the back seat of Kennedy's car after it was pulled from the water. That, among many other things, remains unexplained.

In the Gazette story, Miss Newburg was quoted as saying that during the early morning hours, Gargan and the four other men were "in and out of the cottage." But she said she wasn't aware that anything was wrong and did not know what was going on outside.

## Until Hearing

The Registry of Motor Vehicles, in a statement released in Boston, said suspension of Kennedy's license would remain in effect until a hearing is held in the case.

"If the hearing results in a finding of no serious fault on Sen. Kennedy's part," the statement said, "his driver's license will be reinstated. If the hearing confirms the preliminary finding of serious fault, the license suspension will be exchanged to a revocation, which by law must remain in effect for at least six months."