

Grace Brown to Chester Gillette

Woman's Simple Documents That Made a Criminal Case Famous and Virtually Sealed the Fate of a Murderer When Read to the Jury That Tried Him for His Life.

Herkimer, N. Y.—Printed below are letters which, within the past few weeks, have become known almost from one end of the country to the other as "Grace Brown's letters." They need no introduction, save perhaps the statement that these are the letters which were read at the trial of Chester Gillette.

They formed the most remarkable feature of that case. The whole structure of the prosecuting attorney was built upon them. It passes understanding why the murderer of the girl should have preserved a series of documents which, it is safe to say, spelled his doom from the moment they were placed in the hands of a jury of 12 men. It is inconceivable that Gillette kept them for their pathos, or the gentleness of character which they revealed, for he is not the kind of a man to whom such things appeal. It is utterly improbable that he ever recognized in them a simple literary beauty, although such they do possess in an unusual degree—the more unusual when it is remembered that Grace Brown was a country girl of plain education, who had worked as a factory hand.

Yet somehow Gillette kept them, and the American public has come into the possession of one of the most remarkable series of documents that ever appeared in a criminal case. As a revelation of character, as the written record of a tortured soul, they have already taken a place unique in the annals of real life tragedies.

Here are the letters:

"I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN"

"But Somehow I Have Trusted You More Than Any One Else."

South Otselic, June 21st, 1906, Wednesday Night—My Dear Chester: I am just ready for bed and am so ill I could not help writing to you.

Chester, I came home because I thought I could trust you. I don't think now I will be here after next Friday. This girl wrote me that you seemed to be having an awfully good time and she guessed that my coming home had done you good, as you had not seemed so cheerful in weeks. She also said that you spent most of your time with that detestable Grace Hill. Now, Chester, she does not know I dislike Miss Hill and so did not write that because she knew it would make me feel badly, but just because she didn't think I should have known, Chester, that you did not care for me. But somehow I have trusted you more than anyone else. Whenever the other girls have said hateful things to me of you I could not believe them. You told me—even promised me—you would have nothing to do with her while I was gone.

Perhaps, Chester, you don't think or you can't help making me grieve, but I wish things were different. You may say you do, too, but you can't possibly wish so more than I. I have been very brave since I came home, but to-night I am very discouraged. Chester, if I could only die. I know how you feel about this affair and I wish for your sake you need not be troubled. If I die I hope you can then be happy. I hope I can die. The doctor says I will, and then you can do just as you like. I am not the least bit offended with you, only I am a little blue to-night and I feel this way.

I miss you. Oh, dear, you don't know how much I miss you. Honestly, dear, I am coming back next week unless you can come for me right away. I am so lonesome I can't stand it. Week ago to-night we were together. Don't you remember how I cried, dear? I have cried like that nearly all the time since I left Cortland. I am awfully blue.

Now, dear, let me tell you. You will get this Monday some time. Now you please write me Monday night and be sure and post it Tuesday morning and then I will get it, or ought to, Wednesday morning. I just want to see what the trouble is why I don't hear from you. I was telling mamma yesterday how you wrote and I never got it, and she said: "Why, Billy, if he wrote you would have received it."

She did not mean anything, but I was mad, and said: "Mamma, Chester never lied to me, and I know he wrote." If you were only here, dear, how glad I would be.

Don't you think I am awfully brave? I am doing so much better than I thought I should. I think about you, dear, all the time and wonder what you are doing. I am so frightened, dear. Maude has invited me down for next Tuesday, but I don't think I can go. Oh, say, if you post a letter to me Tuesday morning I will get it Tuesday night. Well, dear, they are calling me to dinner and I will stop. Please write or I will be

crazy. Be a good kid and God bless you. Lovingly,

P. S.—I am crying. THE KID.

"COME AND TAKE ME AWAY"

"There Isn't a Girl in the World as Miserable as I Am To-night."

South Otselic, June 20th, 1906, Tuesday Night—My Dear Chester: I am writing to tell you that I am coming back to Cortland. I simply can't stay here any longer. Mamma worries and wonders why I cry so much, and I am just about sick. Please come and take me away some place, dear. I came up home this morning and I just can't help crying all the time, just as I did Saturday night.

I can't stay here, dear, and please don't ask me to any longer. Do you miss me much? I am so lonesome without you. I don't know how I am going to manage about going to Uncle Charles'. I presume I will have to write you to meet me in Cincinnati, now we don't know anyone there. Chester, there isn't a girl in the world as miserable as I am to-night, and you have made me feel so. Chester, I don't mean that, dear; you have always been awfully good to me, and I know you will always be. You just won't be a coward, I know. My brothers and sisters are at a social reception to-night, but they can't get over my crying.

I do wish you were here. I can't wait so long for letters, dear. You must write more often, please, and, dear, when you read my letters, if you think I am unreasonable, please do not mind it, but do think I am about crazy with grief and that I don't know just what to do. Please write to me, dear.

Lovingly, you know whom. South Otselic, June 19, 1906.

"THERE ARE SO MANY NOOKS"

"I Have Been Bidding Good-bye to Some Places To-day."

South Otselic, July 6, Thursday Night—My Dear Chester: If you take the 9:45 train from the Lehigh, there, you will get here about 11. I am sorry I could not get to Hamilton, dear, but papa and mamma did not want me to, and there are so many things I have had to work hard for in the last two weeks. They think I am just going out there to Deruyter for a visit. Now, dear, when I get there I will go at once to the hotel, and I don't think I will see any of the people. If I do, and they ask me to come to the house, I will say something so they won't mistrust anything—tell them I have a friend coming from Cortland and that we were to meet there to go to a funeral or wedding in some town farther along. Awfully stupid, but we were invited to come, and so I had to cut my vacation a little short and go. Will that be O. K., dear?

You must come in the morning, for I have had to make you don't know how many new plans since your last letter, in order to meet you Monday. I dislike waiting until Monday, but now that I have to, I don't think it anything but fair that you should come up Monday morning. But, dear, you must see the necessity yourself of getting here and not making me wait. If you dislike the idea of coming Monday morning and can get a train up there Sunday night, you would come up Sunday night and be there to meet me. Perhaps that would be the best way. All I care is that I don't want to wait there all day or half a day. I think there is a train that leaves the Lehigh at six something Sunday night. I do not know what I would do if you were not to come. I am about crazy. I have been bidding good-bye to some places to-day. There are so many nooks, dear, and all of them so dear to me. I have lived here nearly all my life.

First I said good-bye to the spring house with its great masses of green moss; then the apple tree where we had our playhouse; then the "Beehive," a cute little house in the orchard, and, of course all the neighbors that have mended my dresses from a little tot up to save me a thrashing I really deserved.

"Oh, dear, you don't realize what all this means to me. I know I shall never see any of them again, and mamma, great Heaven, how I do love mamma! I don't know what I will do without her. She is never cross and she always helps me so much. Sometimes I think if I tell mamma—but I can't. She has trouble enough as it is, and I couldn't break her heart like that.

If I came back dead, perhaps, if she doesn't know, she won't be angry with me. I will never be happy again, dear.



I wish I could die. You will never know what you have made me suffer, dear. I miss you and want to see you, but I wish I could die. I am going to bed now, dear. Please come and don't make me wait there. If you had made plans for something Sunday, you must come Monday morning.

Please think, dear, that I had to give up a whole summer's pleasure and you surely will be brave enough to give up one evening for me. I shall expect and look for you Monday forenoon. Heaven bless you until then. Lovingly and with kisses, THE KID.

P. S.—Please come up Sunday night, dear.

"CAN'T YOU COME TO ME?"

"Chester, I Need You More Than You Think I Do."

South Otselic, June 26, 1906, Monday Night—Dear Chester: I am much too tired to write a decent letter or even follow the line, but I have been uneasy all day, and I can't go to sleep because I am sorry I sent you such a hateful letter this morning, so I am going to write and ask your forgiveness, dear. I was cross and wrote things I ought not to have written. I am sorry, dear, and I shall never feel quite right about all this until you write and say you forgive me. I was ill and did not realize what I was writing, and then this morning mamma gave my letters to papa before I was down. I should not have had it posted but it went long before I was awake. I am very tired to-night, dear. I have been helping mamma sew to-day. My sister is making me a new white Peter Pan suit, and I do get so tired having it fitted, and then there are other rides and tired. I never liked to have dresses fitted, and now it is ten times worse. Oh! Chester, you will never know how glad I shall be when this worry is all over. I am making myself ill over it. Maybe there is no use to worry, but I do and I guess everyone does. I am quite brave to-night, and I always feel better after I write you, Chester, so I hope you mind the hateful things I say and I hope you won't mind my writing so much. Where do you suppose we will be two weeks from to-night? I wish you would write and tell me, dear, all about your coming. I am awfully afraid I can't go to Hamilton, Chester.

Papa can't take me and I am nervous about going alone. You see I would have to ride quite a distance before I could take the train and then there is a long wait, and, Chester, I am getting awfully sensitive. If I can't go up there what shall I do? Do you think it would be wise to come back there? Could you come to Deruyter and meet me? I have relatives there, but perhaps I could arrange it somehow. I was pleased yesterday morning. You know I have a lot of bed quilts—six, I guess—and I was asking mamma where they were and saying I wished I had a dozen, when my little sister said: "Just you and someone else will not need so many." Of course my face got crimson and the rest of the family roared. Mamma is so nice about fixing my dresses; she has them all up now in nice shape. You remember the white dress I wore and you once asked me why I didn't have a new one. Well, she has almost made a new dress out of that. I am afraid the time will seem awfully long before I see you, Chester. I wish you would always post your letters in the morning after you write them or the same night. They are a day later here if you wait until noon. Of course I will be glad to get them, only I dislike waiting for them.

Oh! dear, I do get so blue, Chester. Please don't wait until the last of the week before you come. Can't you come more than you think I do. I really think it will be impossible for me to stay here any longer than this week. I want to please you, but I think, Chester, it would be very unwise. If I should stay here and anything

should happen I would always regret it for your sake. You do not know papa as well as I do, and I would not like you to be disgraced here. We have both suffered enough and I would rather go away quietly. In a measure I will suffer the more, but I will not complain if you will not get cross and will come for me. I must close. Write me Wednesday night, dear, and tell me what you think about everything. Let's not leave all our plans until the last moment, and, above all, please write and say you forgive me for that letter I sent you this morning. I am sorry and if I were there I know you would say it would be all O. K.

Lovingly, THE KID.

"MY LITTLE SISTER CAME"

"I Told Her I Guessed My Fortune Was Pretty Well Told Now."

South Otselic, June 23d, 1906, Sunday Night—My Dear Chester: I was glad to hear from you and surprise^d as well. I thought you would rather have my letters affectionate, but yours was so businesslike that I have come to the conclusion that you wish mine to be that way. I may tell you, though, that I am not a business woman, and so presume that these letters will not satisfy you any more than the others did. I would not like to have you think I was not glad to hear from you, for I was very glad, but it was not the kind of letter I had hoped to get from you.

I think, pardon me, that I understand my position and that it is rather unnecessary for you to be so frightfully frank in showing it to me. I can see my position as keenly as anyone, I think. You say you were surprised, but you thought I would be discouraged. I don't see why I should be discouraged. What words have I had from you since I came home to encourage me?

You write as though I was the one to blame because the girls wouldn't come. I invited them here because I thought I wouldn't be so lonesome. I am sure I cannot help it because mamma is away. As to the financial difficulty, I am the one who will be most affected by that. You say "your trip." Won't it be your trip as well as mine? I understand how you feel about the affair. You consider me as something troublesome that you bothered with. You think if it wasn't for me you could do as you liked all summer and not be obliged to give up your position there. I know how you feel, but once in awhile you make me see these things a great deal more plainly than ever.

Chester, I don't suppose you will ever know how I regret being all this trouble to you. I know you hate me, and I can't blame you one bit. My whole life is ruined, and in a measure yours is, too. Of course, it's worse for me than for you, but the world and you, too, may think I am the one to blame, but somehow I can't, just simply can't think that I am, Chester. I said No so many times, dear. Of course, the world will not know that, but it's true all the same.

My little sister came up just a minute ago with her hands full of daisies and asked if I didn't want my fortune told. I told her I guessed it was pretty well told now. I don't want you to mind this letter, for I am blue to-night and get so mad when the girls write things about me. Your letter was nice, and I was glad to get it. I simply feel "out of sorts" to-night.

When you are cross, just think I am sick and can't help all this. If you were me, you couldn't help finding fault, I know. I don't dare think how glad I will be to see you. If you wrote me a letter like this I wouldn't write in a long time, but I know you won't tease me in that way. You will just forget it and be your own dear self. You know I always am cross in the beginning. It was that way Saturday night, so don't be angry, dear. Lovingly, KID.

THIS IN NEBRASKA

EVENTS OF INTEREST OF MORE OR LESS IMPORTANCE.

State University's Great Work in Cattle Breeding—Prizes That Its Entries Have Won.

Nebraska Cattle Exhibit.

All Nebraskans will be interested to know that the exhibit of fat cattle sent to Chicago from the State University farm was again successful in winning several of the highest prizes offered by this, the largest live stock show in the world. Of the nine steers exhibited by our university, six were prize winners, one of them a nine-months calf, bred on the University farm, winning the Grade Angus Championship over all ages exhibited by the various state universities and agricultural colleges. Had Mr. Turner, who came from Herefordshire, England, to judge the grade steers and award the Grand Championship, judged the pure-bred steers, the University would have won on "Ruby"—a two-year-old Angus (pure bred)—the same honor that came to Challenger in 17903, viz., the Grand Championship plum. "Ruby" under the English judge in the College Classes was placed ahead of the two steers that had defeated him under a Chicago judge and was pronounced by the English judge the best steer in the show. This, however, was after the Grand Championship had been awarded to a breeder from Illinois. "Ruby" was sold to "The Fair" department state at fifteen cents per pound live weight, the top price of the show for single individuals, bringing for beef \$273. On the yearling steers entered in the carcass contest, the University of Nebraska won both first and second prizes, which is a strong testimonial for the system of feeding practiced at our State Farm.

The exhibit this year, nine head, was the largest ever made by the University of Nebraska and a total of \$450 in prizes was won, to say nothing of the high prices received for the beef. One of the prize winners was selected from a carload of calves at the South Omaha stock yards nearly two years ago when a party of students were being instructed by Prof. Smith on the selection of feeding steers.

During the past few years the University has won \$1,500 in prizes at the International Stock Show on fifteen steers, one of the number, Challenger, winning \$430 in 1903. The high prices received for the beef have more than paid the expenses for exhibiting and the prize money has therefore been net profit to the state.

Charities and Corrections.

OMAHA—The tenth Nebraska state conference of Charities and Corrections met at Creighton institute for a two days' session.

Rev. Father Joseph Reusing, president of the conference, delivered the annual address, in which he emphasized the need of awakening, intelligent co-operation and the revision of certain state laws. He declared that there had existed in the organization a general apathy and that there were not two dozen genuine, active members. He reviewed the objects of the organization, which embraced the best methods of disbursing charity among the needy.

He said the State Conference of Charities and Corrections was a species of clearing house for all charitable activities. He reviewed the different work which can be and ought to be done by the organization.

Referring to the statute creating the State Board of Charities and Corrections, he said:

"Often we have been indignant and disgusted at the wording of the law creating that board. The law must be revised. The State Board of Public Lands and Buildings is responsible for all state buildings. Why, then, should the plans for such buildings be referred to the State Board of Charities and Corrections? They never are so referred and that part of the law is a dead letter. The four advisory secretaries have to pay their traveling expenses out of their own pockets and then wait months before being reimbursed. This is due to a blunder made in enumerating the items for which the \$4,000 state appropriation should be used. The secretaries should go about visiting the state institutions, investigating the manner in which they are conducted. Had the secretaries been in a position to do this, the abuses at the Norfolk asylum could never have occurred."

Levy for State Fair.

The State Fair board decided to introduce a bill in the legislature asking for a levy of 1/4 of a mill for the benefit of the state fair. No other appropriation will be asked for. Secretary Mellor was authorized to send out a circular letter over the state calling attention to the needs of permanent buildings on the fair grounds and to the work of other states along this line.

Free Postage for the Blind.

Senator Burkett of Nebraska introduced a bill providing for carrying free of postage in the mails reading matter for use of the blind. The bill provides that all reading matter in Embest type whether in Braille, New York point or Moon type, shall be carried in the mails free of postage to or from any blind person desiring to read the same. Such matter shall be forwarded and exchanged free with Canada and other countries where free postage for the blind is now or may be granted.

NEBRASKA BRIEFS.

Mrs. Lillie is seeking a pardon from Gov. Mickey.

In the revival at Fremont there were 550 conversions.

Several new cases of diphtheria are reported at Clearwater.

The district court of Cuming county will convene January 7th.

Postmaster McNally of Edgar has resigned and will remove to Iowa.

Work is to be started at once on the new Catholic parsonage in Beatrice.

Sioux City, Ia., and Dakota City, Neb., are to be connected by interurban.

Bogus ten dollar bills were passed in Fremont and a half dozen or more numerichants are losers on account of them.

John Close of Columbus charged by Josie Sturek with being father of her child, has been bound over to the district court.

George Meyer of Platte county was injured in a runaway accident, and his leg has been amputated to prevent blood poisoning.

Measures are being taken to organize an anti-tobacco league among the young men who are students in the normal at Peru.

Nebraska has no outstanding bonds and has \$2,022,881 invested in the bonds of other states and \$2,616,747 in bonds of Nebraska counties.

The new state bank at Rosalie, a new town on the Great Northern extension, located a few miles from Bancroft, opened for business last week.

A man was found a mile from Greenwood, lying in the road with his throat cut. He was taken to a city hospital and it is thought he will recover.

Andrew Arnold of Red Cloud was so badly injured by the horse on which he was riding falling with him that very small hopes are entertained for his recovery.

Columbus is jubilant over the expectation of a \$45,000 appropriation for the new public building. Sealed offers have been put in by a number of people who have sites to sell.

Thieves entered the Burlington tool house in Wymore and stole a wagon load of valuable tools. Bloodhounds were put upon the trail, which was lost before proceeding very far.

E. J. King, sentenced to the penitentiary for two years and six months for burglary from Douglas county, was discharged by the governor, who commuted his sentence to a term something over nine months.

The Board of Supervisors of Butler county has employed John Streeter as superintendent of the county poor farm for another year at a salary of \$800. He has held that position for several years and has made a good superintendent.

Jay O'Hearn, a Omaha boy murderer under sentence of death sentenced for the killing of Nels Lausten, a saloon-keeper, has filed a brief in support of his petition in error in the supreme court. The brief is filed by attorney James P. English.

The semi-annual school apportionment which has been made by the state treasurer gives Antelope county \$2,176.32. The amount will be at once apportioned to the different school districts by Superintendent Ward and the directors notified.

The Nemaha county fair grounds, located at Salem, were sold at sheriff's sale in Falls City, to satisfy a mortgage held by the Salem Interstate Chautauque association. The property was purchased by the Richardson County Fair association.

A conference is now on whereby eastern capital figures to install an electric light and power plant in Alliance, in case proper arrangements can be made. The town for some time has been considering the feasibility of establishing such a plant.

A check for \$24,955.84 was received by County Treasurer Troupe of Buffalo county from the Union Pacific Railroad company in payment of a part of the taxes of the company for the year 1906. The total amount of the tax is \$37,112.25, leaving a balance of \$12,156.54 unpaid.

A campaign has been instituted to do away with the orthopedic hospital at Lincoln, and to distribute the crippled children among the general hospitals of the state, using them for clinical demonstrations and keeping them at the expense of the state. This movement meets with strong disapproval on the part of most physicians.

Governor Mickey has informed Dr. F. M. Sisson of the Omaha child saving society that he will not commute the death sentence of Jay O'Hearn of Douglas county, to life imprisonment. Dr. Sisson visited the governor to intercede for the young prisoner. Mrs. O'Hearn visited her son at the prison and an affectionate interview followed.

State Oil Inspector Ed. A. Church broke the monthly record for the year during the month of November by turning into the state treasury a balance of \$1,434.67, as the surplus of receipts over expenditures. He received \$2,520.40 and expended \$1,095, including salaries for himself and office force and deputy inspectors and supplies for the office.

He is a candidate for commandant of the soldiers' home. He is one of the oldest residents of the southeastern part of the state and is a prominent member of the Grand Army of the Republic.

Steady improvement in efficiency of marksmanship in the Nebraska National guard is shown in the annual report of Lieutenant E. H. Mulhoney, inspector of small arms practice. The percentage of the first regiment came up from 12.89 to 22.8 per cent; that of the Second regiment from 7.31 to 19.87 per cent.