

THE VALENTINE DEMOCRAT.

VOLUME XX

VALENTINE, NEBRASKA, MARCH 9, 1905.

NUMBER 8

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TALK OF THE TOWN

Mrs. Bessie Chandler Commits Suicide.

Mrs. Bessie Chandler committed suicide at the Paxton hotel in Omaha last Friday evening and died early Saturday morning. She was the wife of Lieut. Chandler of Ft. Niobrara from whom she had been separated for six months past on account of her association with Captain Kirkman. Lieut. Chandler had applied for a divorce, which was pending in our district court. About two weeks ago Mrs. Chandler returned from Baltimore, Md., as a witness in the Kirkman trial which was in progress at Ft. Niobrara at that time, he being tried by court martial for misconduct as an officer on a number of charges, one of which connected Mrs. Chandler with the case. It is also believed that Mrs. Chandler tried to effect a reconciliation with her husband, but being again found in company of Capt. Kirkman under compromising circumstances, she finally departed from here Tuesday of last week, going to Omaha where she committed suicide. No reason has been given why she stopped in Omaha, nor for her delay there. The Chandlers, both from prominent families, had been married about four years and were living happily together until Mrs. Chandler succumbed to the influences of Capt. Kirkman which is alleged to have taken place while Lieut. Chandler was at Ft. Riley, during which time his wife remained at Ft. Niobrara where she became associated with Kirkman. Lieut. Chandler went down to Omaha Monday to accompany the deceased back to her people at Baltimore, Md., and will also take the little boy "Reese," who meanwhile was cared for by Lieut. Allen of Ft. Crook after his mother's death until the arrival of Lieut. Chandler. The World-Herald gives the following account of the coroner's inquest:

"Striking testimony was introduced at the inquest held Saturday afternoon over the remains of Mrs. Bessie Chandler, who killed herself at the Paxton hotel Friday night, and the verdict of the coroner's jury was to the effect that she had come to her death by a gunshot wound inflicted by her hand. She shot herself in the breast and the bullet lodged near her heart.

"The most important evidence came from Miss Lucile Phillips, an attractive young woman working at the hotel and whom Mrs. Chandler took into her confidence. The witness announced that she saw the revolver used by Mrs. Chandler as it lay under her pillow.

"At 4 o'clock Friday afternoon I was in the room to tidy it up and I noticed that Mrs. Chandler was extremely nervous. She walked the floor and told me she was afraid. When I asked her what she was afraid of she did not reply, and I assumed that she was afraid of dying suddenly and leaving her little boy without anyone to care for him. I supposed she kept the revolver ready thru a timidity which some women have while remaining alone at a hotel.

"I knew that Mrs. Chandler was in deep distress about something, for she told me as much. In fact, she told me all about her trouble. She said that her life had been ruined by an officer at the fort, a Captain Kirkland. She said her husband would not take her back again and that she had nothing to live for except her little boy.

"In her great desire to talk with someone, perhaps as a relief from her intense mental suffering, she detailed all the facts in connection with her recent life. I retained only a vague impression of what she said.

PITY FOR THE WOMAN.

"I did pity the woman, though,

although she was a stranger to me. She was on such a nervous tension that every little sound disturbed her, and when she clasped me in her arms and cried, she sobbed like a child.

"As I left the room to prepare her bath she asked me if I would do something for her. She wanted me to take care of her little boy in case anything should happen to her. I promised I would, and, after turning on the water in the bath room, I heard a shot fired.

"When I went back into the apartment of Mrs. Chandler I could not see her body, for it was hidden by the bed. I knew that she lay upon the floor, for I saw one of her hands with the fingers clutching at the carpet. I smelled the odor of powder smoke and knew some terrible thing had happened. After going out into the hall I fainted."

"Other witnesses were Drs. F. W. Lake and J. E. Sommers. Both testified as to the character of the wound inflicted by the pistol shot. Dr. Sommers told of the death of Mrs. Chandler at the Clarkson hospital.

"The next witness was Ralph Kitchen, manager of the Paxton hotel. He told about lifting the body of Mrs. Chandler from the floor to the bed and described a picture which she held in her hand. It was the likeness of her little boy, and with the picture was a curl of his hair. On the back of the picture was the written request that those pitiful souvenirs be buried with her. The photograph was spattered with blood.

"On the table was a sheet of paper with these verses copied upon it:

"Ah, Love! could you and I with Him conspire
To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
Would not shatter it to bits—and then
Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!"

"Yon rising moon that looks for us again—
How oft hereafter will she wax and wane;
How oft, hereafter rising, look for us
Through the same garden—and for One in vain!"

Lieut. Chandler is highly esteemed by his fellow officers and everyone sympathizes with him in his trouble.

P. H. Young rode in from his ranch near Simeon Monday night.

Will Piercy from their ranch near Kennedy was seen on our streets Monday.

John Neiss was in from his ranch Friday. He says that his cattle never looked better at this time of the year.

Connie Utterback, from the reservation, was in town Monday. He says the cattle in his vicinity went through the severe cold weather in good shape.

Billie Ritchie was a Valentine visitor Monday. He says out of eight hundred cattle wintered on his ranch, he has only lost three, which we think is very good.

Dave Wishart was visiting friends at Arabia Friday. He went down on the local freight in the evening and returned on the 1:19 passenger. Dave says things look good to him down there.

A. T. Tostevin, Cherry county's surveyor, arrived in Valentine Monday night from Merriman. He says there is enough surveying to be done in this part of the county to keep him busy for about a month.

Henry Flinaux called to hand us a dollar on subscription Tuesday. He had been to a meeting of the stock holders of the Farmer's and Stockmen's Telephone company, and the following officers and directors were elected: R. M. Faddis, pres.; J. H. Bachelor, vice-pres.; C. S. Reece, sec. and treas.; P. H. Young and W. S. Jackson, directors.

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