

# 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 paths, 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 Otselle, 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, THE KID.

P. S.—I am crying.

"COME AND TAKE ME AWAY"

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

South Otselle, 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 just what to do. Please write to me, dear. Lovingly, you know whom. South Otselle, June 19, 1906.

"THERE ARE SO MANY NOOKS"

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

South Otselle, 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 go 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 Otselle, June 26, 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 ried 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 yoke. 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 the first of the week? Chester, I need you 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.

"MY LITTLE SISTER CAME"

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

South Otselle, June 23d, Sunday Night—My Dear Chester: I was glad to hear from you and surprised 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 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.

## COL. MOSBY'S GIFT

GUERRILLA LEADER SENT LOCK OF HAIR TO LINCOLN.

President Accepted it as a Sample, But Wanted More—How Federal Prisoner Saved Life by His Quick Wit.

Col. John S. Mosby, the famous guerilla leader, who attended a G. A. R. banquet in Boston a few nights ago, was delighted with the cordiality and good will of his hosts. "Whatever doubt there was in my mind about the war being over disappeared while I was in Boston," he says. "They simply overwhelmed me with kindness. At the banquet I sat next to a man whom I had captured during the war. When I first sat down I was rather proud that I had captured him. We had not been together a half hour before I began to be sorry that I had captured him, and before the last speech was made I was genuinely sorry that he had not captured me."

Col. Mosby, who is now an assistant attorney in the department of justice, has always been noted for his sense of humor. It went a long way once towards saving a man's life. Col. Mosby and his men lay all night in ambush near a railroad waiting for a federal supply train. It finally came along, and was captured by the confederate, who, however, lost two or three of their men. This did not please Col. Mosby, and he showed it by some of the things he said to the federal prisoners. "As for you," he said to one of these men, "I am going to hang you the moment I see the sun rise tomorrow morning."

"I hope it will be a cloudy day," said the Yankee. The reply so pleased Col. Mosby that he did not hang the man who made it or anybody else. Instead, the prisoners were confined and later exchanged.

It was about the same time in Col. Mosby's career that he made his famous gift to President Lincoln. His headquarters were at a Virginia farmhouse, and one day the guards brought to him a man who said he was a farmer and was on his way to Washington to sell some produce. "What reason have I to believe that?" demanded the confederate leader. "How do I know you are not a spy? How do I know that you will come back if I let you go?"

The man's manner was so earnest that it impressed Col. Mosby, who finally told him that he might go. "Now that I have done something for you," he said, "I want you to do something for me. I want you to take a present from me to Abe Lincoln." Thereupon he borrowed a pair of scissors, clipped off a lock of his own luxuriant hair and gravely handed it to the farmer. "You give that to Abe with my compliments," he said. The man took it and started for Washington, promising earnestly to return on the second day following.

He was as good as his word. He presented himself promptly on time and informed Col. Mosby that the present and the compliment had both been delivered.

"And what did he say?" demanded the guerilla leader. "Oh," said the farmer, "he just laughed and said that if he ever caught you he would not be content with one lock of your hair. He would take the whole of it. But I am sure he did not mean that literally."

Worse Than Losing Money.

A new form of freak election bet is detailed in the following story from a Biffen, Utah, correspondent of the Chicago Chronicle:

"Jules Verne Hall, the famous globe trotter, in order to pay an election bet must refrain from talking during the next three months. Violation of the agreement means a loss of \$2,500 posted as a forfeit.

"Twice during the last four days has Hall been within an ace of losing. On Wednesday night while absent-mindedly gazing across the sage brush an enemy carelessly inquired: 'Will you have a drink?'

"The word 'Yes' was on his lips, when Hall with a powerful effort restrained himself and merely nodded assent. Then an argument was started as to the relative merits of the English and Russian navies. Hall is a native of the British Isles and when everyone present agreed that Rojstevsky could have defeated the English home fleet, poor Hall spluttered until he grew red in the face.

"The doors were locked and he could not escape, so to save his \$2,500 he gagged himself with a blanket. He is suffering as few men have suffered. Because he dare not speak he has been living on ham and beans, and he cannot protest when his companions lock him outside the cabin."

Marriage in Afghanistan.

Among the Afghans marriage is a case of purchasing the bride. A rich Afghan marries early, simply because he can afford to pay for a wife, while the poor one often remains single until middle life on account of his inability to purchase. If the husband dies and the widow wishes to marry again she or her friends have to refund the purchase money to the friends of the dead husband. A common custom is for the brother of the deceased to marry the widow. No other persons would think of wedding her without first asking the brother's consent.

At the Races.

Upon—I just won ten dollars on a horse that didn't have any tail. Downs—I just lost ten dollars on one that didn't have any head.—Detroit Free Press.

## 300 MILLIONS OF CHINESE.

Yellow Empire Has About One-fifth of Globe's Population.

The interesting question of the population of the Chinese empire has often been discussed, but it is still impossible to say with any degree of certainty what the figures are.

At the beginning of the Christian era it is tolerably certain that there were at least 80,000,000 inhabitants, and it must be remembered that the empire then was much smaller than it is at the present time. Most of the censuses taken in China during the last 2,000 years, says the North China Daily News, have not professed to take in the whole population. Young children and old men, for instance, were sometimes omitted, the main object of the census being to ascertain the number of taxable persons.

By common consent the most reliable census ever taken in China was that of 1812. This gives the figures as more than 362,000,000. In 1868 the population was estimated nearly 408,000,000; but in 1881 it had fallen to 38,000,000, the great Taiping rebellion, in which so many millions of people lost their lives, being one of the principal causes undoubtedly for this great decline.

Travelers, missionaries and others, who have visited the region devastated at the time of the Taiping rebellion, express the opinion that the loss of life during the great convulsion has generally been estimated at too low a figure, and it is a question also whether the terrible famine more than a score of years ago in the provinces of Chihli, Shansi, Shensi and Honan, with a population of 70,000,000, is not responsible for the loss of more lives than it is usually credited with.

It is still more certain that the Mohammedan uprising in the northwest destroyed more lives than it is generally supposed to have done. A very moderate computation of the loss of life incurred in these three calamities makes it to be fully 60,000,000. And in this connection it would be well, perhaps, to remind ourselves that the habitual use of opium by such a large number of the people has tended to act injuriously on the recuperative power of the nation.

Loose Wording Cost Money.

Little Chip, the dwarfish comedian, can tell stories all day. His assortment of hard luck tales of his own experiences is especially large.

"The fourth night after I opened in New York last season, I broke my left arm in a fall from my famous horse in the first act," said Chip. "I played through the next two acts without telling anyone of my injury. I played with my arm in splints after that and couldn't do my falls for 12 weeks. Then when I got to Boston I lost my voice for a while. I certainly had a lot of trouble. But everything is going nicely now."

"While in Boston," continued Chip, "I noticed that Harry Bulger of the 'Man From Now' was playing at one of the theaters. I wrote him a note saying 'I would be pleased to have your company at supper.' Well, after the performance here came Bulger, followed by the whole troupe, some 35 or 40 people.

"What do you mean?" I demanded. "You can't ring anything like this on me."

"Well, here's your note," said Bulger. "What are you going to do about it?"

"I read the note over. The supper's on me all right," I said.

Were Mighty Hurdlers.

Farmer P., in Barre, Mass., a generation ago was a crafty cattle dealer and had a handsome yoke of oxen he warranted to be good, faithful workers. One day a man came in search of just such oxen and Mr. P. showed the pair. They were sleek and well matched, and seemed versed in all the variations of the language of "haw and gee."

But the stranger noticed the "nigh" one's roving eye, and his suspicions were aroused.

"Are they peaceable? That nigh one acts breachy. Jest's lives jump over anything, hadn't he?"

"My good man," answered Mr. P., "I tell ye what 'tis, one rail's jest's good as five!"

The stranger paid the price and took the oxen, but the next day he returned very angry.

"What d'ye mean by telling me their oxen are peaceable? When I got home I put them in my pasture where I kept oxen for 20 year—and I've had all kinds of cattle, too—and this morning they're in my best clover field. What kind of Christian are ye, any way, to lie like that?"

"I didn't lie," returned Mr. P. calmly. "I said 'one rail was jest's good as five,' and 'tis so, they'll jump over five rails jest's quick's they will over one."

On the Right Side.

"Hello, old man. Haven't you seen anything of you since you got married. How goes it?"

"Thanks, fairly well. But marriage is a costly job. If you only knew what the dressmakers charge!"

"So I suppose you regret it?"

"Oh! no, I married a dressmaker!"

—Translated for Tales from Meggen-dorfer Blaetter.

She'd Keep It.

"But can you keep house?" he asked, doubtfully, for he was, above all things, a practical man.

"If you get a house and put it in my name," she replied, promptly, "I'll keep it all right enough."

Matters being thus satisfactorily settled, their engagement was announced. —Judge.