

Clarence Marcellus Clarke

(1845 – 15 Jun 1890)

Clarke. Suddenly in Washington, D.C. on Sunday morning, June 15, 1890, Clarence Marcellus Clarke, aged 45 years. Funeral private.

The Evening Star, June 16, 1890

Shot Through The Heart

Capt. C.M. Clarke Takes His Own Life in a Fit of Insanity

Capt. Clarence M. Clarke, son of Mr. B.C. Clarke of East Washington, committed suicide yesterday morning by sending a bullet through his heart. The deceased lived at No. 216 5th street northeast, and had been employed in the office of the chief of engineers, United States Army, for nearly ten years. He was relieved from duty about a month ago on account of the lack of funds to run the office, but he would have returned to work at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

About two weeks ago Capt. Clarke did some surveying in Rockville and the hot weather so affected him that he afterward was troubled with insomnia and a couple of days ago his father noticed in him what he thought were evidences of insanity. Dr. Bayne treated him, but he was so ill that the medicine acted slowly, although the doctor had hopes of effecting a cure. Capt. Clarke married a daughter of ex-Representative Hazelton of Missouri and about a month ago she went to visit her parents in Missouri. While she was away the captain lived at his father's house, corner of 5th and C streets, but had his office in his own home.

Complained of Feeling Unwell

Yesterday morning he arose and appeared at the breakfast table as usual, but after the meal he complained of feeling badly and his father told him to lie down on the sofa in the parlor. He did so, but his restlessness caused anxiety on the part of his father.

Shortly after 11 o'clock the son rose, jumped out the window and ran to his own house as though someone had called him in a hurry. His father followed him across the street and when he reached the house his son had entered his office on the third floor and locked the door.

The distressed father rapped on the door and asked to be admitted but the son replied that he was busy and could not open the door. Mr. Clarke then returned down stairs and told a gentleman who lives in the house of his son's strange conduct. Before any plan of action could be determined on the report of a pistol shot was heard.

The Door Opened

The door was forced open. Seated in an easy chair near an open window was the captain with a smoking revolver in his hand. There was a bullet hole directly over the heart and death was almost instantaneous.

When Coroner Patterson was notified he questioned the folks in the house and gave a certificate of death from a pistol-shot wound self-inflicted, while suffering from temporary aberration of mind.

Capt. Clarke was born in Ellsworth, Ohio, in 1845, and was a graduate of Yale College. He was one of the best-known citizens of East Washington, where he was largely interested in real estate.

When only seventeen years of age he enlisted in the Fifteenth Connecticut regiment of the Connecticut volunteer troops, in which position he served throughout the war. The deceased was a member of Burnside Post, G.A.R., which organization will probably take part in the funeral ceremonies.