

Andrew B. Davidson

(- 3 Feb 1905)

The Evening Star, February 3, 1905, p. 5

Bullet In His Heart

**Andrew B. Davidson Commits Suicide Today
Shoots Himself at the Hotel Johnson --
Ill-Health Said to Have Caused Act.**



A. B. Davidson.

Marine Corps since 1902.

Andrew B. Davidson, a member of the United States Marine Corps committed suicide this morning in a room in the Hotel Johnson by shooting himself through the heart. He was seated on a Morris chair at the time and death came so suddenly that his body did not move a particle.

A chambermaid in the hotel heard the report of the pistol. She declared she heard the reports of two shots, but there was only one empty chamber in the weapon and the bullet from this chamber had done effective work. The revolver was found on the floor where it had dropped from the hand of the marine.

As soon as the chambermaid heard the report of the weapon she told the boy on the elevator and he found the dead body of the guest in the Morris chair.

Coroner Nevitt was notified and he visited the hotel before 11 o'clock. He examined the body and read notes that had been left by Davidson. There could be no doubt as to the circumstances under which the act was committed and the necessary death certificate was given.

Notes written by Davidson this morning shortly before he fired the fatal shot, and a letter he had received from his sister "Sue" indicated that he had been feeling badly and had contemplated a trip west for his health. He had been in the

Registered Yesterday

Davidson registered at the hotel yesterday and was in the dining room last night. He attended one of the theaters and returned to the hotel at a late hour. This morning he was up early and appeared in the dining room at the breakfast table. Shortly after breakfast he returned to his room and was seen by one of the guests engaged in letter writing. The door of his room was closed shortly afterward and a few minutes before 10 o'clock the fatal shot was fired.

Relatives of the deceased live in Baltimore and Hagerstown, Md., and Hampton, Va. In the letter found in his room that he had recently received from his sister he was advised not to leave the Marine Corps and go west. He was told that he might be taken ill in the west, where he would be without friends or funds and might be caused unnecessary suffering. His sister dwelt upon the necessity for his keeping better hours and suggested that such a reformation might result in the restoration of his health. She also said she hoped his prospective visit to Hagerstown would benefit him.

Davidson had his photograph taken one day this week and received the proofs this morning. He paid for the photographs this morning. Shortly before he killed himself he had the bell boy mail several letters for him. These letters were probably addressed to relatives who will receive them this afternoon or tomorrow.

On the table in his room was a photograph of his sister, on the back of which she had written: "To my death brother Harry: only a snap-shot dear, but thought you would like it. "Fannie."

The brother had added: "Fannie: To make you happy I will take my life.

"Andrew."

Another Letter

A letter addressed to the "person who finds it" reads:

"You will kindly notify Miss Fannie Davidson, 1429 McCalloh street, Baltimore, of my death, and Miss Annie G. Davidson, National Soldiers' Home, Va., also. The phone number of my sister in Baltimore is Madison 397-W.

"My suit case and keys will be given to John A. Christian, room 603 Mills building, when he calls for them. Other expense involved will be charged to the United States Marine Corps. Commandant notified.

"Very truly. A.B. Davidson."

In another note he directed that the government revolver be turned over to H.C. Owen, hospital steward at the barracks.

Davidson's appearance indicates that he was a consumptive and that he was about thirty years old. He had only his suit case and cane with him when he registered at the hotel. This morning he went to the office and paid his hotel bill in full. Capt. Boardman notified the Baltimore relatives of his death and some of them are expected here later in the day. It is likely that his body will be taken to Baltimore for interment.

It is said Davidson had many friends in this city. He had recently boarded with friends on Morgan avenue.

The Washington Times, February 3, 1905

Commits Suicide After Careful Preparation

Private A.B. Davidson of the United States Marine Corps

Shoots Himself at Hotel Johnson Today

Despondent because he believed himself to be in ill health, A.B. Davidson, a private in the U.S. Marine Corps stationed at the Marine Barracks, sent a bullet through his heart at the Hotel Johnson this morning and died almost instantly.

Davidson got leave last night and was due to return to the barracks this morning. He went from the barracks to the hotel where he registered as A.B. Davidson, Lexington, Va. His only baggage was a suit case. He was assigned to a room and went out after dinner for an hour or two. Returning to the hotel he retired and was seen no more until this morning when he came down to breakfast.

Wrote Several Letters

After breakfast he returned to his room, where he wrote a number of letters. He called a bellboy, Council Nixon, and sent him on an errand. When the boy returned, some time later, he found Davidson fallen back in his chair, dead. On the floor by his side was a 38-caliber pistol, and his shirt was stained with blood. The bellboy called for help and the police were informed.

Coroner Nevitt was called in, and after a thorough examination of the room, ordered the body removed to the morgue. There it was identified later in the day by members of the marine corps and sent to an undertaker.

On a table in front of which Davidson was sitting when he fired the fatal shot was a photograph, on the back of which was written, "To my dear brother." Under this the man had written in a firm hand, "To make you happy I will take my life."

Sister in Baltimore

One of the letters was to the hotel clerk asking that Davidson's sister, Annie Davidson, 1429 McCollough street, Baltimore, be notified of his death. Another letter was intended for the police making the same request. The third note asked that the revolver with which he shot himself be returned to a comrade at the Marine Barracks. Davidson's uniform was found in the suit case.

Davidson was formerly detailed as a messenger at the headquarters of the Marine Corps in the Bond Building. He had an excellent record, but was continually laboring under the hallucination that he was in a bad state of health. This the officers at the barracks say was not the case, as he was an unusually robust man.