

Clayton Elgin Paxson

(- 19 Mar 1906)

Paxson. Suddenly on Sunday, March 18, 1906 at 9 p.m. at 624 D street southeast, Clayton Elgin Paxson, aged 20 years and 5 months. Funeral Wednesday at 2 p.m. strictly private. Interment at Congressional cemetery.

The Evening Star, March 19, 1906, p. 3

Fatal Dose of Acid

Clayton E. Paxson Takes His Own Life

Despondent because he had been out of work since the Christmas holidays, Clayton Elgin Paxson, twenty-one years old, who lived with his parents and sisters at 624 D street southeast, committed suicide last night by taking carbolic acid. His body was found in the shed in rear of the family home this morning about 6:30 o'clock by his mother. It was lying upon the floor of the shed, an empty bottle on which was pasted a carbolic acid label being found near by on the floor. Mrs. Paxson was greatly shocked by the discovery. She hurried to the house and notified her husband, Mr. Westwood F. Paxson, and the latter went immediately to the shed, only to find his son was dead. The presence of the carbolic acid bottle near his body and burns about his mouth told the story. Mr. Paxson was terribly agitated over the affair. His son had never intimated that he intended to commit suicide.

A note was pinned on the lapel of the young man's coat. On the envelope he had written enough to show that the note inside was intended to be read by his parents and sisters.

His Last Message

After writing "Nearer, My God to Thee" on the piece of note paper he told his last message, as follows:

"Forgive me, mamma, papa and sisters, for this rash act. I have been despondent because I could not find work and decided to end it all. I trust I will meet you hereafter."

The police were notified and an officer was sent to the house to take care of the body until the arrival of the coroner. That official gave permission for the removal of the remains from the shed to the house, and later Undertaker Lee prepared them for burial. The deceased had been employed in one of the department stores during the Christmas holidays, but, as stated, had been out of employment since then. He made several efforts to get work during recent months, but failed. He was about the house last night until after 8 o'clock. What he did after that time his relatives have not yet learned. It is thought he wrote the note while in the house with his parents and sisters and that he afterward went to a drug store and bought the poison.

No member of the family saw him when he returned home last night. It was not necessary for him to pass through the house to reach the shed, as there is a narrow alley at the side of the residence. Clayton, it is believed, tiptoed through this alley last night when he returned, and proceeded to the shed where his body was found. The fact that he was not in his room last night was not discovered until his mother found his remains this morning.

Coroner Nevitt visited the house later in the day and viewed the remains. He heard the statements of members of the Paxson family, and gave a certificate of suicide.

The funeral will take place Wednesday afternoon from the family house. The interment will be in Congressional Cemetery.