

Bodine, Capt. Hiram D. d. 18 Nov 1884 47 yrs. **R15/145**

Bodine. Suddenly on Tuesday, November 18, 1884, Capt. Hiram D. Bodine of Plainsville, Ohio and residence of Washington for the last 5 years. Funeral from late residence, 11 Grant Place, Thursday, 20th inst.

The Evening Star, November 18, 1884

Shot Himself at His Desk

A Tragedy in the Sixth Auditor's Office--Capt. Bodine Shot and Instantly Killed--A Difference of Opinion as to Whether it was a Suicide

Capt. H.D. Bodine, a third-class clerk in the Sixth Auditor's office, was found today, shortly after 1 o'clock, seated in his chair before his desk, dead. The smothered report of a pistol was heard by several clerks in the lower part of the room, and looking towards Capt. Bodine they saw him seated with his head on his breast. Then he straightened himself up, but when his associates reached his side he was dead. His vest was unbuttoned and the cartridge box was lying on the table. It is supposed that the captain took the pistol out of his pocket to load it, and in putting it back in the inside pocket of his vest it was accidentally discharged. Messrs. Burbage, Edson and Brady were in the room at the time, but with the exception of these facts described they could throw no light on the matter. Some of his associates were of the opinion that he shot himself on account of depression of spirits, but Dr. Dobson, who was out to lunch with him a few minutes before, said that Captain Bodine was laughing and joking with him.

Coroner Patterson reviewed the remains, and gave a certificate of death from accidental shooting. The ball, which was a .44 calibre from a Derringer, had gone through the fifth rib above and to the right of the left nipple, and was found just under the skin in the back, and was taken out. Death must have been almost instant.

Capt. Bodine was about 47 years of age, and was from Plainfield, near Cincinnati. He served during the war and commanded the 2d Kentucky regiment. He then engaged in business and some five years ago received an appointment under the government. About a year ago he married a Miss Johnson, and at the time of his death was living with her parents at 11 Grant Place.

He is spoken of as having been a genial companion and a man of sterling qualities. The general impression seems to be that he was depressed in mind about his mother's illness and other matters, but the clerks who were in the room believe the shooting was accidental.

Coroner Patterson's Opinion

A Star reporter saw Coroner Patterson and asked: "Could it have possibly been an accident?" The coroner struck his head significantly, and added: "No; Oh, No. The muzzle of the pistol was jammed right against his breast, and the discharge burnt both his upper and undershirt."

Subsequently the reporter talked with Mr. James Talty, a brother of Mrs. Bodine, who insisted that the discharge must have been accidental. He said Bodine was one of the jolliest men he ever knew, and that he had, up to the moment of the shooting, been in the best spirits. The chief of Bodine's division shared the belief that the shot was accidental. He said Bodine took his pistol when he went to Ohio to vote and on his return he went direct to the department where he placed the weapon in a drawer of his desk.

What Bodine's Sister-in-Law Says

Bodine's sister-in-law, who was seen by a Star reporter shortly after the shooting, said that Bodine had been worrying about his mother's illness ever since last month's illness ever since last month, when he went to his home in Cincinnati to vote, and since the election he has seemed to worry a great deal more, as he was a good republican. She says he left home this morning as usual, and nothing strange was noticed in his conduct.