



Brighton City Museum

The Tragic Story of Daisy Lytle

Among the many burial locations in Brighton, Colorado, none are more shrouded in mystery than that of the Black “Pioneer” Cemetery. This cemetery, located a half mile west of Elmwood, contains the remains of approximately eighteen former Brighton residents. Some of these people were pioneers, others were veterans, but most were average citizens trying to make a living. Still, after they left this world, their lives remain a mystery.

One of these mysteries surrounds the life of Daisy Lytle. Daisy was a schoolteacher from Union, Colorado. The newspapers described her as a “pretty, twenty-year-old, blonde, of medium stature.” It was reported that she attended school in Brighton and high school in Fort Morgan; where she achieved “first honors.”

No one really knows the details which led to her demise. However, on the 5th of November 1904, it was reported that she was extremely ill after trying to perform some “doctoring on herself.”

At the outset, two doctors were called by Mrs. Minnie Byers, Daisy’s landlord. Mrs. Byers was informed that “a married man was responsible for her (Daisy’s) troubles.” No further information was made available regarding the “troubles” that the lady was referring to.

Daisy Lytle had rented a room previously, from Mrs. Byers, when she was in Denver to take a teacher’s certification exam. According to Mrs. Byers, at that time, Daisy introduced herself as “Lizzie Williams.” Obviously, Mrs. Byers had no reason to doubt the validity of her name or why she would misrepresent herself.



Initially, Daisy was examined by Dr. E. F. Lake, who thought in this case, a second opinion was necessary.

Dr. Arthur Hamilton was called to assess the young lady's condition and concurred with Lake's evaluation. He further concluded that an operation was imminent and necessary to save the young lady's life.

While Dr. Lake prepared for surgery, Dr. Hamilton administered the anesthesia by using chloroform. In 1904, chloroform was an indispensable and widely used form of anesthetic, which was made popular during the American Civil War. Unfortunately, because of the anesthesia, Daisy Lytle succumbed to her injuries on Sunday, November 6th, 1904.

It was decided that her funeral arrangements would be managed by Daisy's sister, Mrs. Belle Lytle Throckmorton. Mrs. Throckmorton also arranged for her remains to be transported to Brighton for internment.

Her father, F. B. Lytle, of Blackfoot, Idaho, along with family and friends, attended the funeral at the Brighton Methodist church. Her funeral was said to be "a very touching and beautiful service."

The coroner, Mr. Horan, determined that no criminal action would be necessary in the case. It was also noted that unless it can be proven "nothing can be attributed to a criminal operation."

This young teacher took many secrets to her grave. Who was the "man" that was the reason for her problems? Why did she identify herself as Lizzie Williams when she first met Mrs. Byers? We can only speculate as to why this story is still cloaked in mystery and how a young intelligent woman lost her life in the process.

References:

Rocky Mountain News - November 8, 1904