



THE
SUNFLOWER
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Carbolic Acid Poisoning

Carbolic Acid, also known as Phenol, was often used in pioneer days as a disinfecting cleanser and general antiseptic. The powder was mixed with a considerable amount of water before using, and in any empty bottle that was available. The danger was that people would grab the bottle of Carbolic Acid, thinking it was something else, and being aromatic, children would easily uncork the bottle and get into it. It was also used by many people as a poison to end their own life, which would have been a convenient, although very painful, means of suicide.



THE WRONG BOTTLE

An infant child of Mr. and Mrs. **Anthony Dull**, residing on the farm of County Clerk Morris, near Haven, was brought near death's door last Monday by being given a dose of carbolic acid through mistake.

The little child had been seriously ill for a number of days and the parents becoming alarmed at the condition of their little babe, called in Dr. Adams of Haven, who prepared medicine to be given to the patient. After the doctor had left the house the mother gave her babe a dose of what she, at the time, supposed was the drug prescribed by the physician, but which was in fact carbolic acid. The two bottles were placed on a stand near by

and the mother unknowingly gave the child a small dose of the acid, believing at the time that the drug was taken from the bottle left by the doctor.

The cries of the little child soon convinced the mother that all was not right. Picking up the bottle from which she had just emptied the drug, what was her horror to discover that instead of containing the medicine the doctor had prepared the bottle embraced carbolic acid. A servant was dispatched in great haste for Dr. Adams who answered the summons as quickly as possible. The necessary remedies were applied and the life of the little child, which for a time was despaired of, was saved. The child was frightfully burned about the mouth and throat.

Only a small quantity of the drug entered the child's stomach. At last accounts the little one was in a fair way for complete recovery. *The Hutchinson News. Thursday, Jan. 30, 1890, p. 3.*

BABY SPILLS CARBOLIC ACID

Ralph Willis Noyes, the 2-year-old son of George R. Noyes, 116 South Maple street, overturned a bottle of carbolic acid which stood on his mother's dresser this morning and was so badly burned that he may not live.

Mrs. Noyes was in the kitchen ironing and Mr. Noyes was playing with their younger baby on the back porch when the little boy spilt the acid. The little one is burned on his arms, chest, and legs. The accident occurred about 11 o'clock.

Mr. and Mrs. Noyes rushed into the bedroom in response to the baby's shrieks and then summoned Drs. G.R. Gage, C.A. Mann, J.E. Foltz, and M.C. Roberts. When the doctors arrived the baby's body was almost blue in color. It appeared that it had not drank of the poison but the physician fear it will absorb enough to cause death. *The Hutchinson News. Thursday, May 12, 1910, p.1.*

THIS ISSUE: POISON IN RENO COUNTY

DRANK ACID FOR TONIC

When **Ollie McNeally**, proprietress of the West Side Rooming House, 27 First Avenue West, started to take a dose of tonic last night, about 10 o'clock she poured out a medicine glass full of carbolic acid instead of the usual dose.

Placing a small glass to her lips, she filled her mouth with the acid before she realized her mistake. She spat out the fiery fluid, but not until it had burned her mouth severely. Her lips and chin were also burned when she sputtered with the acid in her mouth.

Dr. Schoor, city physician was immediately called and he treated Ollie McNeally with alcohol to counteract the effect of the poisonous acid. It is not believed that any acid was swallowed.

The injured woman was taken to the Stewart Hospital where she is today. She is very much improved.

A report that the acid was taken with suicidal intent was denied by Ollie McNeally. She said that the acid bottle was about the same size as her tonic bottle, and she made the mistake and took the acid and did not know it until it burned her mouth.

Her condition is not serious and she will probably leave the hospital today. *The Hutchinson News. Saturday, May 17, 1913. Page 2.*

BURNED BY CARBOLIC ACID

A family quarrel, in which a bottle of carbolic acid played an important part, caused doctors to hurry to No. 107-1/2 South Main street this morning to give aid to **Jack L. McGraw**, a Santa Fe employe.

In some manner the two got to scuffling over a bottle of carbolic acid, and finally McGraw jerked it out of his wife's hands and pulled the cork. He started to drink some of it, but his wife struck his hands. The acid burned his face and mouth, but he did not swallow any.

Dr. W.H. Williamson, and Dr. Fred A. Forney were called. The man's burns were treated by the doctors. *The Hutchinson News. Saturday, May 23, 1914. Page 13. FINDS PHENOL NOT GOOD AS*

BURNED BY CARBOLIC ACID

Mrs. Lawrence A. Meece, of 404 Sherman West, was seriously burned on the face, neck, and left side by the accidental spilling of a bottle of carbolic acid yesterday afternoon. She was reaching for an electric iron when she jarred the bottle from the shelf. It was corked loosely, and spilled, the deadly acid pouring on her face. Fortunately her eyes were not injured. Dr. C.S. Evans, the attending physician, says she will recover nicely unless blood poisoning should set in. *The Hutchinson News. Wednesday, May 27, 1914. Page 7.*

ACID BURNED FACE

The Cork Slipped and Carbolic Acid Flew

Mrs. C.W. Slinkard, who lives at 304 Second Avenue West, met with a very painful accident this morning about nine o'clock. While removing the stopper from a carbolic acid bottle with the intention of cleaning some porcelain, the cork slipped from the bottle. The acid burned her face and hands badly. Luckily the acid did not get into her eyes. *The Hutchinson News. July 18, 1916.*

DRANK DISINFECTANT

The 2-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. **R.V. Pierson** of 418 Sixth Avenue West got hold of a bottle of disinfectant and drank quite a quantity of it Saturday afternoon. It made her quire ill for some time, but she is improving now. She crawled over a sink to get to the bottle beside which stood a bottle of carbolic acid, but fortunately the little girl took the one containing the disinfectant. *The Hutchinson News. Wednesday, January 3, 1917.*

DRANK ACID BY MISTAKE

Mrs. Marie Casey, who makes her home with her daughter, Mrs. Lola Hatfield of South Hutchinson, was burned about the mouth and throat last night when she accidentally drank some carbolic acid. The acid was diluted with water and as she took lard at milk at once to counteract the effect, was not badly burned. Recently Mrs. Casey has been taking some medicine for nervous trouble and last night before retiring fixed a cup of water, into which she poured the medicine. During the night she arose to take the medicine and secured the wrong cup, drinking its contents before noting her mistake. *The Hutchinson News. June 29, 1917.*

To rid a room quickly of flies, heat a shovel or any similar article and drop 20 drops of carbolic acid on it. The vapor kills flies. The Hutchinson News. Friday, July 6, 1917.

ENDED HIS LIFE

Aged Man Tired of Affairs of This World Calmly Contemplated Death and Chose It in Preference to Life Took Carbolic Acid on Retiring at Night and was Found Dead Soon After

The death of **A.D. Martin**, an aged man who has been a resident here for the past year or two, occurred between 8 and 9 o'clock Saturday evening [April 6, 1901]. He was found dead upon his bed by his daughter and there is no doubt he had taken his own life. For some time past he had been living with his daughter, Mrs. Sarah Morgan, at No. 115 Avenue D West in this city. He came here from Sun City, which is in the northwest part of Barbour county. Just why he decided to take his own life is not known. He received a fall about a year ago which had ever since caused a pain in his head. He was over 70 years old and at times experienced the despondency which often comes with age to those who have been active in life. Some time ago, too, he had some domestic troubles which, while it might have been a little moment to a younger person, seemed to weigh upon his mind.

On Saturday night Mrs. Morgan went down town, returning home about 9 o'clock. She found her father dead and from appearances he had taken a potion strong with carbolic acid. He left a note behind giving instructions for his funeral which he desired should be conducted by the Odd Fellows, "unless," he wrote, "they should not want to conduct my funeral on account of the way in which I am leaving."

Mr. Martin was down town on Saturday and while he did not show any despondency in his conversation, those with whom he talked can now see that he was thinking of his funeral, and in fact making arrangements for it. The news of his suicide was a shock to his friends and lodge brethren who had the most kindly feeling and friendship for him.

The last wishes of Mr. Martin will be carried out by the Odd Fellows. The funeral arrangements were made yesterday to be held from the house this afternoon at 2:30 o'clock conducted by the lodge. *The Hutchinson News, Hutchinson, Kansas. Monday, April 8, 1901 p. 8.*

MRS. DANELL A SUICIDE

Mrs. **Hannah Danell**, who lived at 500 Avenue C West, committed suicide at 11:30 o'clock this morning by drinking a good sized dose of carbolic acid. That she had taken the acid was known before she had lost consciousness but this was not known in time to save her life.

Miss Nellie St. Clair, a telephone operator, is the person who first knew of the suicide. She was to have taken dinner with Mrs. Danell today and just after 11:30 o'clock called up Mrs. Danell on the phone to ask what she might bring out for dinner. Mrs. Danell answered the phone and told Miss St. Clair that she "had taken poison." Miss St. Clair immediately called up several doctors on the phone and Drs. Fred Forney and C.A. Mann arrived at the house ten minutes later. Mrs. Danell was still alive but just barely so and died just after the doctors had arrived. She was unconscious when they reached the house. A two-ounce bottle labeled "carbolic acid" was found in the room and it is supposed that the bottle was full before she took the drink. No cause for the suicide has as yet been found.

Mrs. Danell lived alone although sometimes some friends stayed all night with her to keep her company. She remained alone last night. Mrs. Danell was formerly the wife of Constable Charles H. Shirk, but about two years ago sued for and secured a divorce. It is said that difference over money matters was the cause of the divorce. Those best acquainted with her say that she was an extremist in regard to handling money. She was a rather queer sort of woman and for several years is said by her friends to have appeared to be unsound in mind.

Mrs. Danell had no relatives in this country, all of her people being in Sweden. During the past two years she had lived in the small cottage in which she ended her life. Coroner Schoor was summoned by the other doctors and after making a thorough examination had the remains taken to the Johnson Undertaking parlors. An inquest will probably be held either late this evening or tomorrow. *The Hutchinson News, Friday, December 18, 1908 p.1.*



**Are There Pioneers In Your Reno County Ancestry?
Tell Their Stories Here!**

YOUNG MAN A SUICIDE

After telling his mother, Mrs. Mary Metcalf, that he was tired of life and that he intended to kill himself, **Arthur Metcalf**, 26 years old, committed suicide about 3:30 o'clock this morning at his home, 206 Avenue F East. He drank the contents of a three-ounce bottle of carbolic acid and died before the physician who was summoned, could reach the house.

What was the direct cause of his despondency is unknown to the members of his family. Several months ago he got into trouble after having stolen a number of pairs of shoes from the Star Clothiers. He pleaded guilty in the district court and was sentenced to the Reformatory. He was paroled by Judge C.E. Branine, however. Metcalf was a painter by trade but lately had had very little work to do. According to his mother he had threatened to take his life a number of times but only when he was under the influence of liquor. For this reason she did not take him seriously when he remarked last night that he would kill himself before morning. Metcalf was down town last night and came home about 1:30 in the morning. His mother says that from the way he talked she believed him to have been rather badly intoxicated. The two talked together for about three-quarters of an hour and then retired. The son went to a shed in the rear of the house and it was there that he took the poison.

"The first I knew of it," said Mrs. Metcalf, "was when I heard Arthur cry 'Mother.' I went to the shed, which is really a part of the house, and found him lying upon a bed. He told me that he was dying and I ran to the house of a neighbor and telephoned for the doctor. My boy was dead before the doctor got there." Mrs. Metcalf telephoned Dr. J.E. Foltz. The latter found the young man had died shortly after he had taken the carbolic acid. Coroner W.F. Schoor

was summoned. When told of the circumstances surrounding Metcalf's death he said it would not be necessary to hold an inquest. It was learned that the young man purchased the poison at the store of Dr. J.S. Allen, a negro druggist. Arthur Metcalf's father is dead, but beside his mother he leaves two sisters and three brothers. *The Hutchinson News. Saturday, May 28, 1910. Page 7.*

FINDS PHENOL NOT GOOD AS PERFUME

A mistake might have proven serious for Miss **Madeline McCune**, 17, of 223-1/2 Second Ave. East last night when she raised a bottle containing carbolic acid to her lips thinking it was a bottle of perfume. The deadly poison seared her lips and mouth and a small portion ran down her throat. She dropped the bottle, spilling more of the contents on her arms and hands. A physician was called and administered first aid to her burns. It is said Miss McCune was getting ready for a date when the accident occurred. Mrs. Addie Nichols, owner of the house where Miss McCune stays, refused to allow anybody to see Miss McCune or give any information regarding her condition. "This is my own house and I'll call an officer if you don't get out," she told a reporter in a fit of rage. *The Hutchinson News. Friday, July 23, 1926. Page 11.*

SMALL BOY DRINKS PHENOL

Clifford Frisk Jr., the 3 year old son of Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Frisk of 332 Second Avenue West, narrowly escaped death from drinking carbolic acid about 4 o'clock Saturday afternoon. His mother had been using the carbolic acid and sat the bottle down for only a minute while she went to do something else. She returned to find the child with the bottle to his lips. A physician was called and quick use of a stomach pump saved the child's life. His mouth and lips were badly burned by the acid but he is recovering nicely today. He was able to take a drink of water this afternoon. *The Hutchinson News, Hutchinson, Kansas. Monday, May 21, 1923, p.8.*

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RENO COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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