

More about cabdriver Will Hayes

It is not known how Bloomington taxi driver Will Hays managed to come up with the first \$500 bond for his release after he was alleged to have assaulted Thomas Breedlove. (Will Hays, cabdriver, is not to be confused with Will Hays, then state Republican chairman.)

Anyway, after Hays' release in May 1914, things didn't look all that good for his case. Being smart enough to know that self-defense makes for a pretty good defense, the cabdriver filed an affidavit with the court — one that stated that one Harley Wright saw the assault and that he was willing to testify that Breedlove started the fight.

Meanwhile, Hays wasn't doing as well as he could have while free on bond. The June 23 edition of the Bloomington *Telephone* reported that he had damaged a local landmark. Said the newspaper in the article on the front page, "The last stone lightpost that was left to adorn the curbing on the north side of the Monon



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

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depot, was knocked over Sunday when Will Hays, with his taxi, backed up against the lightpost and gave it a push which sent it crashing to the sidewalk." The article also noted that Hays was two for two of the three other posts, the other one having been felled by another man, Thomas Huff.

Hays may have thought his "witness," Wright, was a safe "out" for him, but the police took the potential piece of evidence seriously. On June 28 the *Telephone* — under a large headline — suggested that the local constables had some doubts about the veracity of the affidavit. Perhaps the fact that prior to Hays' filing of the document, Wright's name

had never come up in any conversations about the case.

Stated the *Telephone*, "Prosecutor Barclay and the police department do not believe he was a witness and are conducting an investigation. It is likely that within the next 24 hours there will be other developments."

The effect of Hays' affidavit was to delay the hearing on the case. Wright was a very convenient witness, because he was out of town, in Kansas, to be exact. Commented the *Telephone*, "The affidavit stated that ... he (Wright) would testify that Breedlove caused the trouble and that Hays only acted in self-defense and did not use a pair of 'knucks,' but his fists, on Breedlove."

Evidently the police either didn't believe Hays or they were able to get in contact with Wright in Kansas. The result was that Hays was re-arrested, not because of Breedlove's condition, but on a charge of perjury in connection

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