

Theatrical troupe stranded in Bloomington in 1909

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cancellation of their engagement in a park in that city.

The manager, it seems, was not a total stranger in Bloomington. The *Telephone* informed its readers, "

before leaving (he) told several local 'friends' that he had done the best he could, but could not see his way clear to get any further." He also claimed that he had divided all of his money among the members of the company, saving only \$5 for himself.

The cast, however, told a different version of their circumstances.

"The members of the company are inclined to doubt and are bitter in their denunciations of the departed manager. They say he left town with his pockets lined with several hundred dollars."

Within the same article, which appeared on the front page of the *Telephone*, it was reported that not all of the cast were bitter. "At the Hotel Turner where most of the chorus girls were stopping there was a small panic when it was learned that the manager had faded away during the night, but instead of crying the girls made merry over their misfortune and took the matter generally as a joke."

Somewhere between bitterness and laughter lay a few little human stories about individuals in the troupe. For example, most of the chorus girls had a little mad money stashed away, and were able to leave town right away. Others had to telegraph home for the necessary funds.

Among the men, "some were not near as well fixed as the cherubs. . . . One in particular had a 'really sad story to tell. An 'aged man,' he displayed a letter from his wife in New York City. It said that she and the children were badly in need of money. Generous Bloomingtonians passed the hat to raise money for him."

The *Telephone* concluded with a description of the plight of still another member of the cast. "The piano player was the only one left stranded high and dry as far as the manager was concerned. The pounder of the ivories had created more or less trouble all last week by threatening to quit and leave the company in the lurch, so when the manager left he failed to pay the professor's hotel bill or \$105 back salary."