

Grave in Rose Hill

Local man on Titanic

One of the more ostentatious tombstones in Rose Hill Cemetery bears the name of J. B. Crafton.

The impressive monument — made of two colors of granite with ornamental carving — is, in reality, only a memorial to the man. He isn't buried beside there or anywhere near there, for that matter.

Looking Back

By Rose H. McIlveen

Like many Indiana residents, the parents of John B. Crafton were settlers who came here from Kentucky. They lived on a farm in the southern part of the county, and their son, John, attended school there.

THE YEAR HE WAS BORN — 1853 — the tracks of the brand new New Albany and Salem Railroad (later the Monon) were being laid on a northward course through Monroe County. It was also the era of the founding of some of the area's limestone companies.

It may have been the romance of the railroad's little pufferbelly engines that captured young Crafton's fancy. When he left the farm to come to the "city" of Bloomington, he started hanging around the Monon station.

In time he learned to operate their telegraph, but the trains were more to his liking. Crafton was eventually promoted to conductor and trainmaster. His obituary in the *Daily Telephone* indicated that he was a good friend of W. R. Woodward, onetime superintendent of the Monon.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE middle of Crafton's life is rather scarce. The 1900 census for Monroe County indicates that in that year he was 47 and living in Bloomington Township with his wife, Sarah (nee Alexander) and son, Harry, 14.

At some point Crafton began speculating in real estate