

Trains collided in 1890 on 'Smithville Hill'

Train wreck, from page A1

crew, their locations on the train and injuries were graphically accounted for in the *Telephone*. "Win Brown, the conductor, is perhaps the most dangerously hurt, and will likely not recover. At the time the wreck occurred he was in the baggage car talking to Billy Mitchell, the well-known conductor on the north end of the Monon."

Grant Johnson, a Monon employee who lived in Chicago, had been visiting relatives in Harrodsburg. According to the newspaper, "He was injured about the back and head and his condition is evidently very dangerous, and he will hardly recover."

Others injured were David Warren of Bloomington, very severe injuries; James Myers of Bloomington, pinned down by a car, expected to recover; Jeff Robinson of Clear Creek, brakeman on the freight, cut about the head; Mrs. Ed Pearson of Bedford, formerly of Harrodsburg, back injuries; a Mrs. Patten of Stinesville, back injuries; Andrew Thomas of Bloomington, knee and chest injuries; Alice Walls of Bloomington, chest injuries.

Perhaps the most unusual pas-

senger on the Monon that morning was the person riding with the sheriff of Orange County, who suffered a "dislocated arm." The lawman was escorting an "insane" patient to Indianapolis.

Help from Bloomington was not soon in coming for the injured. The *Telephone* reported, "Word was at once sent back to Harrodsburg, and it was telegraphed to Bloomington what had happened. A special train with surgeons and medicines was put in readiness as soon as possible, but it was 11 o'clock before the scene was reached. By that time the physicians of Harrodsburg and Smithville had the wounded cared for as well as possible."

Passengers later related that they were thrown in every direction by the crash. And the newspaper informed its readers that the impact had such force that it "broke almost every seat in the car."

What was a locomotive doing in the passenger train's path? According to the *Telephone* of July 15, the "cause of the accident is easily explained." But by July 18, the reporter covering the sensational wreck was not so sure.

Next week: The aftermath