

Tramp tries to straighten out housewife with iron

"When she failed to give a tramp something to eat at her home at three o'clock yesterday afternoon, Mrs. John Carmichael of Kirksville, eight miles southwest of this city, was attacked by the stranger and badly injured."

— *Bloomington Evening World*, Nov. 6, 1920.

Mrs. John Carmichael had been ironing when the stranger knocked. In fact, she had the hot iron in her hand when she opened the door.

The *Evening World* reported what happened next. She " ... informed him she had nothing ready." It is supposed that the stranger didn't have a three-course meal in mind, and a sandwich would have been acceptable.

Nevertheless, he did not meekly move on to the next available house. Instead, as the newspaper related, "The man seized a hot iron which Mrs. Carmichael held in her hand, threw the woman to the floor and proceeded to brand her in many places. He put the iron to her face and other parts of her body and left her in writhing agony."



LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

When the neighbors learned of the attack, they started an intensive hunt for the stranger. In fact, the search went on all of the rest of the afternoon and into the night. Explained the *Evening World*, "The Bedford bloodhounds were called and followed a scent to the Dixie Highway where it was lost."

Continued the newspaper "Sheriff Bartlett and deputies joined in the search and were scouring the country for the man again today. He was described as middle aged and shabbily dressed."

During December of 1920, some thieves took a novel approach to gathering items on sale on the square. The Dec. 10 edition of the *Evening World* informed its readers that "Operator 24" (surely she had a name?) of the Central Union Telephone Company was on duty at 12:40 a.m., when she heard the unmis-

takable sound of breaking glass. Thinking it was an automobile windshield, she peeked out the front window of the office and saw something entirely different.

The newspaper described what was going on. "The men had broken large plate glass show windows and were helping themselves to the contents inside. They did not tarry but a few moments, however, and hastily ran around the Globe store to Sixth street where they had an auto parked against the curb with motor still running. Jumping in, they hurriedly drove away."

The other store whose window was broken was the Walk-Over Shoe Store. Operator 24 called the night desk sergeant at the police department and then notified the owners of the two stores, Elmer Bender and C.C. Spencer.

Bender lost about \$150 worth of merchandise (suits and accessories), and Spencer's loss was about \$50 worth of shoes. That did not take into account the cost of replacing the windows.

The *Evening World* noted that there were no policemen on the square at the time of the

robbery. "Officer Hays was at the desk at headquarters, Officers Wright and Noel were at the Monon station awaiting the arrival of the midnight train (the reporter didn't explain why), and officers Depew and Knight were at the Monon yards looking for a gambling gang."

It looked like a clean get-away for the robbers. "Mr. Bender found one of his price tags on Sixth street this morning."

POSTSCRIPT - Claude Virt, the Gosport man who liked cars - other people's, that is - escaped from the Jeffersonville reformatory, where he had been a prisoner. He and another prisoner, both "trustees," took off for parts unknown, abandoning the truck they had been driving on the bank of the Ohio River five miles west of Jeffersonville.

Virt had a month of freedom. Acting on a tip, the Monroe County sheriff drove to the McMillan quarry near Bedford. Sure enough, there was Virt, who was promptly arrested. He had been driving a Ford car he said he bought in Terre Haute. Actually, it belonged to J.C. Albertson of the Stock Yards in Indianapolis.

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