

# Suicide in Wylie family blamed on deranged mind

There was no way that the circumstances of the death of Redick Wylie could be concealed from the public. Many newspapers in 1916 couldn't resist the circulation-value of a suicide.

Although one of Wylie's claims to public notice was that he was a grandson of Indiana University's first president, he had managed to make a good name for himself.

The *Bloomington Daily Telephone* of Sept. 30, 1916, indicated that the 40-year-old Wylie was "a graduate of both the literary and law departments of Indiana University and a Phi Delta Theta and a Republican."

Wylie was living with his wife and children on what the newspaper called the family's home place on South Walnut Street Pike. There were three children, one only three months old.

The article indicated that Wylie had said that he was going to commit suicide, but then recanted. Whether the latter was to keep anyone from becoming suspicious is not clear.



## LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

The bare facts are that he claimed he couldn't sleep and didn't want to disturb the baby. Then "Mr. Wylie got up about 5 o'clock not waking any one and saying nothing, but nothing out of the ordinary was thought of this as such was his usual time of arising, until suddenly the report of a shot rang through the house from the library room."

It was his wife who got to the library first, but she could not open the door. The police were called, and they gained entrance to the room.

Wylie had planned his suicide. That much was obvious, since he had locked the door and used a device to carry out his plan.

Explained the *Telephone*, "Close by also was a small section of lath, and it was plain

that this had been used with which to pull the trigger.

"The gun had been kept in the closet by the room in which the deed was committed, and it is also quite evident that Mr. Wylie had planned his final end ..."

Why the man was so depressed is not clear. He owned a 300-acre farm, a substantial home and had just sold a crop of wheat.

The *Telephone* article stated flatly that "Financially Mr. Wylie was in the best condition, not in debt, and he owns the 300-acre farm adjoining the town on the south, so there was no reason why he should worry about anything other than that his mind had become affected for the time being."

So that was the direction the newspaper took in depicting the whole affair. In fact, the headline read "MIND DERANGED, REDICK A. WYLIE ENDS HIS LIFE WITH SHOTGUN."

Toward the end of the article there were more details. A Miss Lillian Allen, who lived in the Wylie home, had also been up that early.

She apparently asked him what he wanted for breakfast, but his answer was not recorded in the article.

It was Miss Allen who heard not only the shot, but the sound of breaking glass when his feet went through the door of the bookcase as he fell. Also, apparently one shotgun shell did not explode.

The funeral of Redick Wylie was held in his home with the Rev. John R. Newall of the First Presbyterian Church presiding.

The service included a quartet led by Wallace Pauley, who was described as a life-long neighbor and friend of Wylie's.

The pallbearers were John P. Fowler and Stacey Harrell from the Masons; Rober G. Miller and Lewis Hughes from Phi Delta Theta, and B.F. Elrod and Frank Johnson, personal friends.

Wylie was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery where can be found the grave of his grandfather, Andrew.

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