

Less common

# Divorce once major news

Treatment of divorce — 1920s style — in the *Bloomington Evening World* was a far cry from the tactful avoidance of that particular legal matter today.

Only a casual glance at the front page of the *Evening World* indicates the difference in page make-up style and editorial policy. It was, admittedly, a different time, when divorces were far less common.

Sandwiched in between large advertisements on the front page

were vital statistics, which, if printed at all today, are found elsewhere in the newspaper.

## Looking Back

By Rose H. McIlveen

**TAKE, FOR  
EXAMPLE,**

one case where the male plaintiff alleged that his wife failed to keep "his" house in order and would not cook or mend his clothes. She also "treated him cruelly," whatever that meant.

Another front page item in the *Evening World* stated that a wife had a violent and ungovernable temper — that she would call him mean names and leave him for periods of time.

A female complaintant had told her attorney that her spouse would not provide a home for her and did not talk to her and was "sullen." That particular item appeared under the simple headline, "Divorces Filed," which was — remember — on the front page and just under two other news stories informing the reader about the temperature in Wisconsin and the predicted price of a bushel of Georgia peaches.

**UNFORTUNATELY, SOME VIOLENCE** was also the alleged reason for divorce filings. One wife complained that her husband, who, she said had been convicted of larceny in another state, struck her with "knucks and at one time shot at her." Still another wife claimed that her spouse struck her and called her vile names.

In some respects the front page of the *Evening World* contained almost everything you ever wanted to know about Bloomington marriages, but were afraid to ask — licenses, wedding accounts and births as well as divorce cases.

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