

# The automobile brought excitement to Bloomington

When the automobile came to Bloomington as a means of transportation, it brought changes with it. Apart from the awkwardness of buggy and automobile drivers having to learn to look out for each other, a series of novel things began to happen.

The City of Bloomington bought a genuine fire truck to replace the department's horse-drawn pumper, and the new vehicle immediately proved its worth at a quarter-block fire in 1913. But there were those local residents who could not resist the thrill of jumping into their own new motor vehicles as soon as they heard the Bloomington fire alarm.

In September 1913, Bloomington Police Chief Joseph B. Hensley used the local newspapers to express his displeasure



## Looking back

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2-27-1988

about the "traffic jams" at fires. In some cases drivers had reached the sites before the fire truck and blocked access to the burning buildings. On Sept. 21, 1913, the Bloomington *Star* had its own solution to the problem. The newspaper suggested that the fire department merely quit sounding the public alarm bell.

Then there was the day that the chauffeur of Bloomington theater-owner Robert Harris took his employer's car on a joy see **Automobiles, Back page**