

'Good old days' were full of hazards

The merest scanning of newspapers of the early 1900s indicate that living back in the "good old days" was a real hazard to one's health.

Take, for example, the case of Mack Bougher, a 15-year-old "water carrier" at the National quarry near Smithville. In April of 1902 he was knocked down by a guy rope and suffered a skull fracture. In the absence of a hospital emergency room, he was taken to a nearby house, where he was subsequently examined by Drs. C.W. Weir and J.E. Luzadder. Another consultant, Dr. L.T. Lowder hoped to perform surgery, presumably in his office.

Imagine the plight of Monroe Countians in outlying areas when there was an emergency. Today, we take the telephone for granted, but it was not the case near the turn of the century. The April 11, 1902, edition of the *Bloomington Telephone* contains the following little news item: "The wires for the Unionville



Looking back

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telephone line are being put up and the boxes and switch board have been ordered. It is expected to have the line in operation within four weeks."

On the political front, Monroe County Judge Martin urged the grand jury to remember that they were not supposed to play favorites when it came to pending indictments. Furthermore, in that April of 1902, the judge was concerned about vote-buying. The April Fools Day edition of the *Telephone* for that year contained the following: "The judge then referred in strong terms to vote buying. He request-

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