

Weekend activity kept police busy at turn of century

Through the years, Saturday night in Bloomington has not provided an opportunity for law enforcement officers to prop up their feet and relax. Just before the turn of the century, local ministers of the gospel may have been preaching morality on Sunday morning, but some people either had short memories or weren't listening in the first place.

As the *Saturday Courier* wryly put it on Nov. 18, 1893, "The hashery de Adams (a reference to the one who ran the jail) did a big business Saturday night. Twenty-one boarders partook of an elegant



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

breakfast there Sunday morning."

What had caused the run on cell space in the jail? Well, according to the newspaper, some of the temporary guests of the taxpayers had been caught while trifling with Victorian virtues. "Officer Gar Reeves drummed up a good deal of

the trade by raiding a house of ill-shape on Maple Heights Saturday night."

One of those arrested during the raid may not have enjoyed his Sunday breakfast all that much. Related the *Courier*, "One fellow went through a window, sash and all, and dislocated his ankle. He was hauled to jail in a patrol wagon, said patrol wagon being then and there a wheelbarrow."

Meanwhile in another part of town, the police caught up with a man who was already on their "wanted" list. The newspaper

shared with its readers the details of the arrest of a man by the name of Ducer. "He was discovered in Pedigo's grocery. Marshal (George) Owens guarded the back door while officer Reeves watched the front, and as the fellow made a break out that way the officer tripped him, consequently there was another cripple taken to jail."

Ducer was joined in captivity by another store thief, James Gray, who used a different approach to appropriating what didn't belong to him. His technique involved walking out the door in broad daylight, wearing a vest he had taken a fancy

to.

Gray's mistake was returning to the store. Explained the *Courier*, "One of the clerks examined a vest that Gray had on, and proclaimed to the others that the vest looked for during the day, when they were trying to sell the suit, had been found."

The customer didn't take kindly to being detained by the clerks, and "a desperate struggle ensued." Fortunately, Marshal Owens appeared and settled the dispute by taking Gray off to jail. Under his arm was a rolled up copy of the *Indianapolis*

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