

# Editors didn't always do their jobs in following up

Back around the turn of the century, Monroe County was so small that most everyone either knew everybody else or, as the saying goes, "knew of them." For that reason, local newspapers had a habit of printing news about an event and sometimes neglecting to follow through on it in later editions. Maybe the editors believed that word would get around and no follow-up was necessary.

Here are several cases in point.

■ The *Bloomington Evening World* reported the death of Tyson Sherrill, an 84-year-old Civil War veteran, on May 12, 1904. The newspaper noted that the elderly man had been a member of Company G of the Indiana 31st Regiment.

Before the regiment could muster enough members to conduct a graveside service for Sherrill, they received some contradictory information. The *Evening World* of the following day (May 13) reported: "Tyson Sherrill, 82 years old and an old soldier living five miles



## LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

southeast of the city, may live to read his own obituary. Yesterday's daily papers announced that he had died at noon."

According to the *Evening World*, it just wasn't so. An explanation about the mistake followed. "Mr. Sherrill's son, Noah Sherrill, came to this city shortly after noon yesterday and ordered a local undertaker to go out to the Sherrill home and take charge of the body."

When Noah and the undertaker arrived at the Sherrill house in the country, they discovered that the undertaker's visit was premature. "Both men were surprised when informed at the door by Mrs. Sherrill that her husband had revived and was still living."

The article ended with a sad little note.

"Mr. Sherrill revived considerably and talked with his family. He told them he would bid them good-bye today."

■ Emsley Bunger lived two miles west of Ellettsville, but he commuted to Bloomington High School every day on the train. On May 27, 1904, he returned on the midnight train. Explained the *Evening World*: "The midnight train does not stop at Ellettsville unless there are passengers to get off or on, and Mr. Bunger was the only passenger last night for that point."

Though the train arrived at Ellettsville at 12:20 a.m., Emsley Bunger was missing until 5 a.m. The editor of the *Evening World* speculated about what happened. "The train had slowed up as the station was reached and Mr. Bunger is thought to have alighted before it stopped. No one was at the depot as the station is not a night office."

When Bunger finally arrived at home, he was considerably dazed, his face was cut and his clothes looked as if he had been dragged

by the train. Continued the newspaper: "The young man's school books, pocketbook and a revolver he carried were found this morning on the depot platform."

There was no explanation about the gun.

■ John Stevens decided to take a short cut to seeing the Indiana University baseball game firsthand. The *Evening World* of June 3, 1904, reported that the young man, who was 22 years old, climbed up a tree to watch.

Unfortunately, he lost his balance. The newspaper informed its readers: "The boy was picked up for dead. An ugly gash three inches long was cut on the top of his head, and all last night he was unconscious."

It was a quick-thinking police officer who gently picked up Stevens and found a doctor in the bleachers. Continued the article: "His condition is serious. He was removed to his home on north Morton Street."

Did he survive? He must have, because his obituary did not appear in the *Evening World*.

H-T

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