

# Hopes for oil boom didn't materialize

**Oil, from page A1**

was found in the Kirby corner well came from the artesian well that is in the Courthouse yard, and found its way through a crevice into the Kirby well. A test yesterday soon put this idea to sleep."

The *Telephone* explained that a "small amount of money" had been raised to pay for the assembly of a pump that was lowered into the Courthouse well. It found no trace of oil.

With or without a "source," the oil was still coming from Kirby's well. In April of 1895, according to the newspaper. "There is a strong feeling that the oil comes from a deposit in the earth, and its purity as pumped out of the well is accounted for by the fact that it is cleansed by making its way through the ground into the well. The material taken from the well yesterday morning was about one part water and two parts oil."

The following day before daylight, people with buckets and pails were lined up by the well, but it was empty. Apparently the curiosity seekers had been to the well once too often.

The *Telephone* account con-

tains a bit of naivete that is indicative of Bloomington's ignorant enthusiasm. "W.H. Troutman has written to a well known oil expert, with whom he is quite well acquainted and sent him a sample of the oil and water with the details as published in the *Telephone*, and he hopes to hear from him in a few days as to his opinion."

One wonders why the services of the university weren't sought when it was so near at hand. Too, Indiana had a state geologist, who would have been helpful.

According to the Indiana Geological Survey records, a well was drilled "east of the Coleman house and west of the Thrasher School House," but no other details are available about the well.

The hopes of Bloomington entrepreneurs for an oil boom didn't materialize. But the *Telephone* told its readers. "It is stated that the average oil yield from the Indiana oil wells is 25 barrels per day. The value of the oil is quoted at about 57 cents per barrel, making the wells yield about \$15 per day, or easily \$100 per week. The reader can see what an enormous source of profit this is to Indiana when we consider the hundreds of wells now in operation in the state."