

Couple had almost married before violent end

During the 17 years of their friendship, Caroline Payne, business manager of the *Bloomington Telephone*, and Charles Mattingly, an attorney working for the Indiana Public Service Commission, talked about marriage. That relationship ended violently on July 5, 1941, when Payne shot him through the kitchen window of a house on South Walnut Street.

In an interview with reporters after her arrest, Payne told them that during all of those years she had considered herself engaged to Mattingly. The *Bloomington Evening World* of July 9 shared the highlights of the interview with its readers.

On the subject of marriage, the newspaper article said, "She and Mattingly went to Paris, Ill., to be married, but she changed her mind. 'I had taken the new job at the *Telephone*. He was not working, and I didn't know how marriage would affect my job.' " There was another problem. Explained the *Evening World*, "The question of Mattingly's religion entered into their desire to marry. At that time he was in the Catholic Church, and he told her that he was asking a special dispensation from the bishop in order to marry her, a divorced woman, the



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

accused woman."

In spite of their indecision, the relationship continued. Mattingly commuted to Indianapolis for work on the Public Service Commission and sometimes stayed there several days at a time. In January of 1939, Mattingly and Payne were involved in an automobile accident. She was more seriously hurt than Mattingly, having a facial cut which left a scar, spinal injuries and a broken foot. Her foot was in a cast for six weeks, but the damage to her nerves was more serious.

On July 10, Mattingly walked out the door of Payne's house on north Lincoln Street and drove to Indianapolis for work. Said the woman, "I had no idea he was not coming home."

Time dragged on, and still she did not hear from him. Finally, Payne drove to Anderson and found Mattingly at the home of his parents. She told the reporters, "I asked him where he had been, and he said he had been in a sanitarium, that he had had a nervous breakdown."

Still, Mattingly did not break with her, according to Payne. The newspaper explained, "Although he did not return to her home any more, even to secure his clothes and belongings he had left there, she was not aware there was a definite break until November 1939. She had driven to Indianapolis and Anderson many times to find out the trouble, and was told always by Mattingly that there was nothing wrong, that he was 'just trying to get on his feet.' "

Finally, Caroline Payne heard something definite. The *Evening World* interview with her concluded with, "In November, George W. Henley, local attorney and a state senator, came to her as Mattingly's representative and said that Mattingly wished to make a settlement. This knowledge that the affair was over resulted in her entering the Stern sanitarium in Indianapolis for treatment."

The *Telephone* article of July 7 added one other little piece of information about the break. "At the end of this month (beginning July 10, 1939) he broke off their relationship with the message that he thought it was best for both of them."

Caroline Payne was unable to accept the break. The *Telephone* described the period afterward. "From the time Mr. Mattingly severed his connections here, Mrs. Payne made innumerable auto trips to Indianapolis and to Anderson, the Mattingly home. For a time she called daily at the State House and often she waited outside the State House for hours merely to watch Mattingly come out. She spent a considerable amount of money in this manner."

Payne told the reporters in her interview that she sometimes waited for him in the lobby of the Claypool Hotel and was asked whether he was surprised to see her there. "No, I don't think he was."

Meanwhile, Mattingly married his secretary, LuRayne Oberholtzer, in May of 1940, in spite of the fact that he had told Payne he was not interested in the young woman.

Next week: The murder.

H-T 10/11/93