

Strange death stirred Bloomington's curiosity

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Then the police had to sift and sort through the accounts of Ed Hupp and Mrs. Robert Seward. Hupp, who had encountered the victim on April 30 in the Indianapolis Southern freight station, said the man had told him about "two buddies" with their heads mashed, up the tracks a piece.

Mrs. Seward, at 10th and Morton Streets, had overheard two men — one matching the description of the victim — having a conversation in front of her home. The one dressed like the victim was talking about somebody "getting even" with him.

Understandably, Officer Johns took the tidbits of evidence seriously. Though the whole matter looked like a suicide, there were some contradicting details. There was a very sharp cut on the side of the throat of the victim — a cut that could not have been caused by a train wheel. And as for the blood found at a distance from the tracks, where presumably the victim was stabbed, there was entirely too

much blood to correspond with the superficial stab wounds in his chest.

The Bloomington *Evening World*, more preoccupied with the case of the trial of a blind tiger operation, fairly early dismissed the decapitated man case as one of suicide. Not so the *Telephone*. Although the latter seemed to accept that theory also, the newspaper could not let go of the story.

On April 6, the *Telephone* ran another news item headlined "People Hold to Murder Theory." It said in part, "Despite the verdict of the officials, the press and the police, there is a very strong feeling among the public that the man was murdered, and there are some grounds for such a belief. The very mystery of the thing has attracted scores of people to the scene of the tragedy. Yesterday hundreds of people visited the Rogers street cut, looked at the different blood spots and examined carefully the place where (the victim) either committed an unusual suicide or was murdered by men who have covered up their tracks well."

Next week: The victim's identity.