

Lawyers at picnic name trees for police officers

"A highly enjoyable time was enjoyed by the members of the local bar at their annual picnic yesterday at the Miers grove north of the city."

— *Bloomington Weekly Courier*, July 25, 1919.



LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

Honorable Guy Humphreys.

If the planned public speaking whetted the participants' appetites, they were obliged to wait for a considerable length of time for their food. After all, one address at a lawyer's picnic would seem paltry, under the circumstances.

And so, the oratory continued with addresses by Judge Hutchinson, James B. Wilson and Lt. Allen Buskirk and a reading by Frank J. Regester. The formal part of the program was concluded with the singing of "The Star Spangled banner," led by Mrs. George Henley, whose husband happened to be an

attorney also. She played an organ brought out to the picnic site by the social committee.

When it was announced that the dinner was ready, 80 persons sat down at benches and tables set up in the grove. The menu consisted of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, peas, tomatoes, corn, beans, salad, ice tea, coffee, ice cream and cake.

The *Weekly Courier* noted that at the 1918 lawyers' picnic seven trees were named in honor of members of the local bar who were in service. They were Capt. Joseph K. Barkley, Lts. Allen Buskirk, Roy Buckley, Henry Miller and Frank Farris and Sgts. Edwin East and Roger Lee and Cpl. Glen Woodward.

Nine years later the Bloomington Police may have been thinking seriously about hiring one or more of those local lawyers to press a claim

that didn't seem to be going very well. It concerned arrests made by the officers.

The *Evening World* of Jan. 8, 1927, was sympathetic. "Local police officers believe they are entitled to the full amount of \$1,000 for arresting the Elizabethtown bank robbers here several weeks ago."

Actually, it was the Bloomington police who made the arrests without assistance from any other agency. Yet the "bankers protective association" divided the money among several parties."

The *Columbus Republic* explained it this way: "The reward problem presented to the bankers protective organization was a peculiar one in that the lives of none of the claimants with the exception of the Bloomington police officers were in jeopardy as far as the yeggs were

concerned ... but the others, Mr. Arbuckle who was sheriff at the time, and Mr. Chandler, the Columbus chief of police, were in no danger in going to Bloomington and arresting the four men when they were behind the bars in the Monroe County jail."

There were other persons mentioned as reward recipients — E.S. Collier who reported the attempted robbery, and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest who were held up and reported it.

So the Bloomington Police were pretty disgruntled about sharing the \$1,000 reward with so many others who didn't really have anything much to do with the actual apprehension of the criminals. The only satisfaction was that the four men the local police arrested were sentenced to serve a total of 37 years or an average of nine years apiece.

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