

## Celebrations of yesteryear reviewed

# 4th of July not always wild

A brief item in the July 6, 1888, edition of the *Bloomington Telephone* reported to its readers: "Bloomington was near depopulated Wednesday (the 4th of July). Harrodsburg, Ellettsville and Bedford each got their share and picnic crowds went in all directions."

ODDLY ENOUGH, the issues of the *Telephone* surrounding the holiday have only a few very brief references to the day. There is, for example, a curious little item regarding the post office hours on the 4th. They were cut back 8-9 a.m., 12 noon to 1 p.m., and 5 to 7 p.m., which must have been somewhat of an inconvenience to some business-as-usual persons.

In another tiny item the *Telephone* readers were informed that the Showers factory employees were having a picnic at the "grove north of town" wherever that was. The announcement slyly added: "...the boys without families are expected to be too gallant to go alone." The *Telephone* apologetically stated

## Looking Back

By Rose H. McIlveen

that its office would be shut down all day "for the first time in 10 years."

IF THERE WAS A CIVIC celebration of the 4th in Bloomington, it was cleverly concealed by the *Telephone* staff, who casually reported in their next edition on the 6th that Joe Warder fell out of a hammock on the 4th and was unconscious for "almost an hour and was very sick all day."

The young people who enjoy Ellettsville's

holiday celebration at the Matthews mansion today and tomorrow may think it is something new. Not so. The *Monroe County Citizen* (published in Ellettsville) was unabashedly excited about the town's holiday celebration in 1887. The June 30 edition proudly announced in headlines: "OUR 4th DESTINED TO BE A DAISY."

THE PAPER REPORTED that J.W. Ray had been chosen chairman of the event, and that he was to be assisted by a master of ceremonies, J.H. Shook. The program as announced in an ad placed in the newspaper by the committee stated that the Ellettsville celebration would be at Worley's Grove located where Kellie Heights is today.

The ad further proclaimed: "Every preparation has been made to have the Best Fourth of July Celebration ever held in Southern Indiana,

(Page 2, col. 1, this sec.)