

Man deters train wreck: Was he hero or swindler?

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the situation and was about to question them when he heard the train whistle to the south."

Trabue said he knew there was no time to lose and was headed in the direction of the train when he was hit on the head by one of the men, who thereafter fled. He begged

to be let on the train, lest the men return to finish the job of doing away with him. Continued the *Telephone*:

"The track was cleared and the stranger was placed under guard in the smoker, and brought here, where he was placed in jail."

Trabue didn't "take kindly" to Bloomington's brand of hospitality,

The newspaper noted that the young man was 36 years old, "of good appearance and has evidently been well-raised."

Despite the favorable impression Trabue made, he declined to give his name, lest it be published. He also "thought it a great injustice to be locked up in jail after doing what he had to save the train and its passengers, and voluntarily giving himself up to the conductor."

The Monon officers had other ideas about what actually happened on that stretch of track between Bedford and Bloomington. So suspicious were they that they dispatched one of their own detectives to look into the matter.

What had caused the Monon officials to doubt Trabue's story? What they feared was that the man had laid the crossties and given the

signal in the expectation of being handsomely rewarded by the company.

And their suspicion was not without foundation. According to the *Telephone*, "The situation is much like that on the B&OSW, near Mitchell about a year ago, when a man stopped a passenger train with a signal, giving virtually the same story."