

In pursuit of criminal Floyd Mantell in 1939

In the 1930s young Floyd Mantell of Bloomington thought he had found a shortcut to the custom of working for a living. He would eliminate the work and take the money. No matter that the formula had been tried by others and found wanting.

The year 1939 found Mantell somewhat at loose ends, having been a seven-year guest of the State of Indiana at its facility in Pendleton. (Using his something-for-nothing formula, at the age of 19 he had held up a garage in Clark County.)

Meanwhile, in the spring of 1939, the Bloomington and Indianapolis police departments were becoming alarmed about a rash of car thefts and armed robberies. Mantell was in Bloomington, and in need of transportation. His habit of glancing at the ignition of cars to look for keys gave him the opportunity to



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen

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"borrow" cars belonging to Chris Donato, Mrs. H.O. Daugherty and Walter Allen.

Mantell's taste ran to Plymouths and Packards, but while he was out of town, he settled for Chevrolets and Fords. The car he stole at Logansport was a Lincoln Zephyr.

On May 3, 1939, Mantell pulled out of a filling station at Paynetown without paying for five gallons of gas. The owner of the station was the father of Bloomington's mayor.

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