

Cause of dynamite explosion in 1906 was never discovered

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hinted that the blast was caused by dynamite.

If indeed it was the origin of the blast, who put it there? One possible explanation was Buffo's little "business on the side." He imported foods from his native country and sold them to Italians on the work gangs laying the tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad.

There had been friction between the foreigners and the not-so-cosmopolitan Monroe countians. A workman had killed his foreman; a young rural girl claimed that one of the workmen had tried to assault her; and one of the workmen had been accused of robbing a local

businessman.

The explosion at Buffo's saloon could have been a warning to him by, on the one hand, one or more local persons who didn't like foreigners; on the other hand, it could have been set off by one of Buffo's countrymen who had some grudge against him.

Dynamite was easy to come by in Monroe County in 1906. It was used in two very specific ways — to dislodge limestone in the quarries and to blow away ledges of stone to make cuts for the railroad.

Bockman's body was claimed by his sister who lived on East Tenth Street. Speeks, a long-time resident of the area called "the levee," was buried in Rose Hill Cemetery.

As for the cause of the explosion, it was never discovered.