

Laborers, locals clashed

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ington. They had gone to the house of a farmer by the name of Arthur Young and demanded flour. Monroe County Deputy Sheriff Davis enlisted the help of John Buffo, an Italian who operated a tavern on West Kirkwood. According to the *Courier*, Buffo "soon quieted the rioters," who had already filed 55 suits against Cendella for some \$8,000 in back wages.

An enterprising Cincinnati, Sherman Hirsch, set up a store at a labor camp between Bloomfield and Bloomington. On Feb. 2, 1906, his inventory was spread over a wide area by a stick of dynamite. The *Courier* speculated that since Hirsch sold a considerable amount of liquor, the destruction of the store could have been the work of temperance believers.

More serious was the case of the railroad laborer who grabbed 14-year-old Nora Thrasher on the family farm near Stanford. According to the *Courier*, she was being choked by "an Italian fiend" when the family dog intervened. The laborer fled in the direction of "Ryan's work camp." Nora and her father inspected the assem-

bled workers there, but they failed to find her assailant.

Brown Countians were less than enthusiastic about having the foreigners around. There was bad blood between farmers and the work gangs after the former began losing chickens. Said the *Courier*, "At one house, where the farmer and family chanced to be absent, thieves plundered his home, carrying off everything of value, even to bed-clothing, provisions, etc."

Inevitably the laborers found some not-so-subtle hints that they had worn out their welcome. Notes left at the camp by persons unknown said in effect — go away or be blown up. The railroad management took the precaution of hiring armed guards at \$2 a day and \$3 for night work. Reported the *Courier*, "Yesterday another notice to vacate was found in one of the tents, and this increased the alarm of the Italians, who believe their lives are in danger."

Despite the guards, many of the laborers deserted their jobs. The Martinsville newspaper reported that 47 of them had arrived on the "Big Four" at six o'clock and taken the interurban to Indianapolis.

Next week: The railroad is completed.