

Henley lived a long life without modern medicines

Bloomington businessman Henry Henley survived to the age of 85, without benefit of penicillin, sulfa and a wide variety of antibiotics and medical diagnostic equipment. His obituary, which appeared in the Feb. 19, 1912, edition of the *Bloomington Evening World*, did not reveal whether he smoked cigars or ate cholesterol-rich food.

Health matters aside, what was unusual about Henley was his full life. The details can be found in newspapers and the county history.

Born at Paoli in Orange County on Oct. 25, 1826, Henley must have received a solid elementary and secondary education, since he was admitted to Earlham College in Richmond. It is not known whether he graduated from the college. At some point thereafter he acquired a wife, Lydia Margarette Patton, who was born in North Carolina in 1829. According to the *Evening World*, Henley and his wife moved to Bloomington to educate their children, Laura J., Joseph E., and George W.



LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

Prior to his move to Bloomington, he had served in the Union Army during the Civil War. The newspaper gave a description of his service. "He was made captain of Company A, 17th Indiana Volunteers on April 14, 1862, and served more than two years. He was commissioned a Major at Louisville, November 17, 1864. He took part in the following engagements: Mumfordsville, Hoover's Gap, Peach Tree, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Shelbyville and Farmington, Tenn, Kenesaw Mountain, Mariette, Flat Rock and Selma, Ala."

Henley had another Civil War achievement which was not particularly well known,

perhaps for good reason, perhaps his own safety. The *Evening World* reported that "As an officer of the Civil War, his most notable service was rendered when he communicated to Governor Morton and the adjutant general, the secrets of Knights of the Golden Circle and sent his soldiers to arrest the conspirators, thus breaking up that organization."

Later, back in Bloomington, he worked as a civil engineer for the city and owned a mill at Gosport. But the budding limestone industry became his main business interest. The county history indicates that Henley opened the first stone quarrying effort in Hunter Valley in 1891. He later sold it in 1895 to the Consolidated Stone Company for \$125,000. Other stone companies he was associated with were the Crown, New York, Clear Creek, and George W. companies. There was also a Henley Stone Company.

At the time of his death, he was living with one of his sons on West Kirkwood Avenue.

The newspaper obituary mentioned that he had been in failing health for several months.

His funeral was attended by two sets of pallbearers plus dignitaries in the local G.A.R. and the Masons. Commented the *Evening World*, "No man in Bloomington was more loved or respected by the general public than Capt. Henley. He had a kindly disposition which won him friends everywhere. As a pioneer stone man he had a great deal to do with the upbuilding of the stone industry in the Bloomington district which has made this city known all over the country."

There is a little glimpse of his life in the *Evening World* in August of 1906. Henley had an automobile and was driving it on the Randall hill (wherever that was). The auto frightened the horse pulling a buggy carrying two women. Reported the newspaper, "Henley got out of his machine and stopped the horse. The injuries were a sprained thumb and badly lacerated hands."

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