

1937 SCRAPBOOK, IMAGE 055

(Handwritten date: Thursday, October 21, 1937)

BUYS SCHWARTZ FARM

The Menno E. Schwartz farm of 72 acres was sold at public auction this afternoon. It was bought by Joseph A. Schwartz at \$76 per acre, or a total of \$5472. The farm, located north of Berne, was sold by Michaud and Neuenschwander.

(Handwritten: Monday, 1937)

TWO KILLED ON CROSSING AT DECATUR

Richard and Wm. Durbin , Sons of Former Berne People, Killed

DECATUR, Oct. 25 - Two Decatur youths were killed Saturday morning at 3:38 o'clock when the truck in which they were riding was struck by the new Southland, through passenger train on the Adams street crossing of the Pennsylvania railroad.

They were:

Richard George Durbin, 20, who died of shock in the Adams County Memorial Hospital before he could be treated.

William Max Durbin, 14, Richard's brother, who died instantly of a skull fracture. The Durbin family formerly lived in Berne and the two boys were well known here.

The older boy was a driver for the Blue Creek Dairy of this city, and he was assisted in the delivery of milk by the young boy. Richard had just picked up his brother at the home of his mother, three blocks from the crossing. The accident occurred immediately after.

NO WITNESSES

There were no eye witnesses, as far as it is known.

As reconstructed by Night Officers Roy Chilcote and Adrian Coffee, the Adams County Coroner Robert Zwick, the boys, driving east, were struck by the northbound train. The truck was lifted into the air and over the steel and cast iron base of the wooden gates, but not touching the metal. The truck came to a rest on a coal pile between the gates and the tower house at the northwest corner of the intersection. Although the truck is a total wreck (Cut off)

...sylvania station here, Walter G??, agent, said the train was traveling between 20 and 25 miles an hour when it crossed Adams street. The train was able to stop in less than a train length.

Dr. M. F. Parrish, formerly of Monroe and now of Sturgis, Mich., was a passenger on the train, and gave first aid to the older boy. He pronounced the younger boy dead when he found him.

The boys were the sons of John Durbin, who died at the Adams County Memorial hospital here December 5, 1936, as the result of an automobile-log wagon accident at Pleasant Mills December 3, 1936.

Richard was married to Nellie Hunt of Monroe, September 24, 1936, and was a father of a four-months-old son. William was a freshman in the Decatur high school.

The crossing is guarded during the day by wooden gates. The watchman quits work at 6:30 p.m. until the next morning.

Adams County Coroner Robert Zwick stated he would investigate the accident for a few days before returning a verdict as to the cause.

FUNERAL TUESDAY

It was decided to hold double funeral services at the home of the mother on 1003 W. Adams St., Tuesday at 2 o'clock and at the Baptist church at 2:30 o'clock. Burial will be made in the Decatur Cemetery. The Rev. Homer J. Aspy, pastor of the Baptist church, assisted by the Rev. C. J. Miner, retired United Brethren minister of this city, will officiate. The bodies were returned from the Black funeral home Sunday morning at 9 o'clock and may be viewed until the time of the funeral at the home of the mother.

Richard Durbin was born in Decatur, September 14, 1917, the son of John and Sarah Roop Durbin. He was a member of the Baptist Church. His marriage to Miss Nellie Hunt took place here September 24, 1936. They resided at 1015 W. Jackson St.

Surviving are the wife; infant son, Calvin LeRoy, four months old; the mother, Mrs. John Durbin and three brothers, all at home, Daniel, 22; John, Jr., 18 and Kenneth Eugene, 6; and two grandparents, Mrs. Nettie Roop and Daniel Durbin, both of Decatur.

He has been employed by the Blue Creek Dairy for the last two years.

William Max Durbin was born in Decatur, November 27, 1922 and had lived all his life in this city. He was a member of the Baptist church. For a few years he assisted (cut off)

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B. F. MILLER COMMITS ACT (cut off) EARLY TODAY Wife Finds Body in Barn at 6:30 O'Clock This Morning

Benjamin Franklin Miller, aged ?, prominent Jefferson township (paper crease)...according to Mrs. Miller, Mr. Miller told his wife that it would be a swell day to 'shuck' corn and that they must hurry up with the chores. Mrs. Miller went to the barn to help her husband milk, and after they had completed this work they returned to the house. A few minutes later Mr. Miller left the house again, presumably to do the rest of the chores before they ate their breakfast. Mrs. Miller saw him going to the corn crib, where he secured a new rope he had bought recently to bind fodder shocks. He took the rope into the barn, but Mrs. Miller thought he was just getting things together to go into the corn field after breakfast.

Mrs. Miller then prepared the breakfast, then went to the barn and called to her husband to come to breakfast. She did not see him at the time, but imagined he was in the stable. She then left the barn and went to feed the chickens, which took several minutes. Then she returned to the barn, and when she entered the feed room of the building, she saw her husband hanging there, dead.

USES WHEELBARROW

Mr. Miller had climbed on a wheelbarrow, and fastened one end of the rope to his neck. The other end he threw over a sill or rafter in the barn. He then managed to kick the wheelbarrow over, and in this manner succeeded in doing the rash act. When found, his feet were almost touching the wheelbarrow, the sill across which he threw the rope being only about 9 or 10 feet from the floor.

Mrs. Miller succeeded in loosening the rope around her husband's neck, but he was not breathing anymore. She then screamed for help and neighbors rushed to the Miller farm, then notified the county coroner.

IN ILL HEALTH

Mr. Miller's rash act came as a shock to his relatives. Although he had made several threats recently, the family did not think that he would kill himself. He is reported to have been very despondent the past summer, being in ill health and crippled, suffering from rheumatism. He had lost much weight the past several months, and was very moody at times. He did not have any financial troubles, relatives said today.

WAS OIL MAN

Mr. Miller was born in Wells county, May 1, 1872, a son of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob J. Miller. He spent his entire life in Indiana, most of the time in the community east of Berne and Geneva, where he was engaged as an oil pumper for many years. The last several years he lived a more or less retired life although he did some farming on his place.

He was married to Miss Elizabeth Flauding on February 19, 1895. She survives and the following children: Homer Miller, living south of the tile mill on Berne R. 2; Mrs. Ermin?? Wall, New Corydon; and Mrs. Charles Reinbold, Fort Wayne. Six grandchildren survive. One son, Casper, is deceased.

The stepmother, Mrs. John Stuck?? of Bluffton, also survives, and the following step-brothers: Grover Cleveland Miller, Enola, Ia.; Arthur Miller, Uniondale; Ervin Miller, California; and Oscar Flauding, Bryant.

The parents and one full brother, Simon Miller, preceded.

The body was taken to the Metzner funeral home at Bryant, and was returned to the Miller home late this afternoon. The funeral will be at 12:30 o'clock Sunday afternoon at the home, and at 1:30 o'clock at the West Liberty church west of Bryant. Rev. George Snyder of Kokomo, and Rev. Studabaker, of Geneva, will officiate. Burial will be in Gravel Hill Cem- (cut off)

Adams County Historical Museum

1937 Scrapbook, image 055

Transcribed by Karin King