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Tabloid Newspapers Reported Local Affair Old Tales Retold

by Ken McCutchan



Back in the 1920s, Lynch Road between Oak Hill Road and U.S. 41 was nothing more than a lonely, narrow dirt track that ran between dense woods and cornfields. Because of its isolation, it was a popular lovers' lane.

There was in Evansville at that time a prominent, handsome young attorney with a reputation of being quite an ardent ladies' man.

His first wife divorced him when she discovered he was having a dalliance with his secretary. Subsequently he and his secretary were married.

As time passed it became common knowledge among his close associates that he was involved in another affair, this time with his current secretary.

On the night of Sept. 14, 1928, this unmitigated Lothario and a woman were parked on a desolate stretch of Lynch Road when they were accosted by two men who apparently were intent on robbing them.

A shootout followed in which one of his assailants was killed. His body was found the next day, lying in a ditch beside the road. The attorney received a mortal wound. Semiconscious, he was driven home by his companion, who pulled up in front of his house, blew the car's horn frantically, jumped out and ran away into the night.

The noise attracted the attorney's wife, who came out to find her husband dying in the front seat of the car. He was rushed to a hospital but succumbed a few hours later.

Next morning an intensive investigation was begun. Since his affair with his secretary was known by several of his colleagues, it was assumed that she was the woman involved.

However, upon questioning, it was learned that she could not possibly have been with him. She had spent the entire evening at a party with friends who all testified that she had never left them for a moment.

The next shocking development in the case occurred the following day when the secretary committed suicide by taking poison. An autopsy revealed she was pregnant.

All the lurid details of the case were spread across the front pages of scandal tabloids in several large cities.

The identity of the mysterious woman who ran away in the dark was never learned (at least not revealed), but a few people in the know suspected that she was the wife of a local judge.

The "First" wife referred to was Clara Mae (Whitehead) Bohannon, and the young attorney was William O. Bohannon.

He is buried in McCutchanville cemetery.