

## Unique Accidents Happened in This Area

The unusual accidents that I am sharing with you today were recorded in the Monroe Evening Times between 1908 and 1912, whether they took place in Green County or some other place. Each was an unfortunate mishap, but some might make you gasp.

The first was from April 3, 1908. August Peterson had been the score keeper for a card game in Rhinelander on Christmas Day. He had placed a 6.5 inch long pencil in his mouth before yelling, "I pass." The pencil then slipped down his throat. He suffered intense agony for four days. The lead pencil had lodged in his stomach and later in his colon. It was surgically removed at Winona. He then went to his home in Rhinelander to recuperate.

"The pencil was rubber tipped, with a brass sheath, but only a little paint was removed during the journey through Peterson. The point was not even broken off."

The following work accident was described in the paper the next day. Eugene Spangler came near losing his life at the Oakley sawmill a few days earlier. In attempting to reach for a stick which was caught in the machinery, he became caught in it himself. He was drawn through a place that wasn't more than two feet square and whirled about the shafting once or twice. His clothing was nearly all torn off; he was unconscious when rescued. He was fortunate that he escaped with his life and had no broken bones!

Another incident was recorded in the November 23 issue. Henry Hagedorn, who was an engineer employed by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul railroad, living at Freeport was "recovering from an attack of blood poisoning which affected his tongue and which nearly cost him his life."

Mr. Hagedorn had been picking his teeth with a wooden toothpick when the pick accidentally slipped between two of his teeth and punctured his tongue. After a short time his tongue began to swell up, continuing until he could no longer eat, drink, swallow, or articulate. Drastic measures were used when he was scarcely able to breathe. He rapidly improved after that.

The next article about Albert J. Smith appeared on December 8. Mr. Smith was a glove cutter, probably in the glove factory that had just been built the previous year on the south side of 12th street between 13th and 14th Avenues. He stumbled while walking across the floor at his home and suffered a broken leg, both bones being fractured above the ankle. Mr. Smith had lost his other leg at the knee about five years before. Since that time he made use of an artificial limb. The recent accident was caused by stumbling over the wooden member.

Another article appeared in the January 12, 1909 issue. The body of H. H. Pratt was brought to Monroe on that day from Cherokee, Iowa so that it could be buried in Greenwood cemetery. The widow, his brother F. G. Pratt, and two ladies, Mrs. J. Jones and Mrs. J. Gingereck, all accompanied the body from Cherokee. Mr. Pratt had been employed as a railway express messenger. While taking a nap on one of his runs, he swallowed a portion of a plate and two false teeth. An operation was performed to remove the teeth from his stomach and his death resulted. He was 40 years of age. No other information was given.

Of course children seem to be more prone to accidents than adults. Little Eva Worley, daughter of William, swallowed a pin on Sunday night, May 22, 1910 while playing; the pin became lodged in her throat. Her parents took her to Janesville to have it removed. I saw no follow-up to this in the paper, but it is hoped that she did not suffer any serious injury.

On Saturday, March 30, 1912, Will Klassy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Klassy, Monticello, injured his left eye badly while taking the hoop off of a barrel. It was doubtful at the time that the eye could be saved. Rust from the hoop struck him in the eye and the substance could not be removed. He was taken to Janesville two days later for examination. The paper on Tuesday said that the specialists believed there was little help of saving the eye. The other eye was also affected, but it was thought that he would not lose the sight of it. Klassy underwent the operation on Thursday morning in Janesville to remove one eye. It was still thought that the other eye could be saved and the sight fully restored. My guess is that is what happened as I saw no further articles about him.

R. B. Gorham cut a deep gash in his right foot on the afternoon of August 21, 1912 while he was erecting benches at his grove east of Monroe. He was using an ax as he was preparing for the band picnic



Monroe Evening Times headline from April 3, 1908.

to be held there the following week. He was swinging the ax down when it caught the branch of a tree and struck his foot as it came down. The skin was opened across the foot and two toes were gashed. Fortunately, Mrs. Gorham was at the grove with him that day and was able to assist in getting him home.

Mr. Gorham was very disappointed as he had intended to go to Brodhead the following day with the Monroe Concert Band for the firemen's tournament. Gorham had been drilling the band boys to march and helped in various ways to promote the organization, but was unable to watch them there.