

**LLOYD EYER (1885-1951)** served as physical director of the Bloomington YMCA for twelve years from 1905 to 1917, was manager of Read’s Sporting Goods (then known as W.B. Read and Co.) from 1922 to 1948, and was employed as Assistant Business Manager at Illinois State (Normal) University from 1948 until his death in 1951. Described as a “joiner with a capital ‘J,’” he was a man who seemed to have “had a finger in the making of nearly every civic pie.” What Eyer is most recognized for is his uncanny ability to have seemingly been involved in close to every activity or organization in Bloomington-Normal at some point during his lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Though this assessment is somewhat exaggerated, the record of Eyer’s life is the record of a man notably dedicated to the success of a range of public programming in the twin cities. As noted by an article published in *The Pantagraph* following Eyer’s death, “Any record of any public event or private project with public significance from the early part of [the twentieth] century... has Lloyd Eyer’s name and his personality indelibly scrolled upon it.”<sup>2</sup>

Eyer was born on December 14, 1885 in Darlington, Indiana. One of four children born to parents Jacob and Laura, Eyer grew up with two sisters, Hazel and Iris, and one brother, Lyle. When Lloyd was just two weeks old his family left Darlington and settled in McLean, Illinois. In 1887, when Lloyd was two years old, the family moved again and permanently settled in Bloomington.<sup>3</sup> Eyer’s father Jacob held a variety of jobs in Bloomington during his lifetime including that of a clerk for multiple clothing companies—Pixley and Co. in 1889 and E. Gantz in 1891—as well as that of a driver for Mrs. Jennie Wickizer’s Bakery from 1899 to 1904.<sup>4</sup> He spent the last year of his life employed as a milkman. In similar fashion to Jacob’s ever-changing employment, the Eyer family is known to have moved houses approximately every two years—though the family never left the Bloomington city limits. According to Jacob’s listing in the Bloomington-Normal city directories, the Eyer family held six different addresses in Bloomington prior to his passing in 1905.<sup>5</sup>

In 1902, Lloyd Eyer’s own foray into the business world began when, at the age of sixteen, he began work as a paper carrier for the Bloomington newspaper *The Pantagraph*.<sup>6</sup> Keeping in mind that this claim was made by the very paper that employed him, Eyer’s determination and loyalty to his position was reportedly made evident when in June of that year Eyer was forced to brave the streets the morning after a cyclone had caused damage to the town’s residential landscape. It was reported that despite it being a slow and laborious task, he delivered 334 papers that morning.<sup>7</sup> A fact worth noting is that Eyer is listed as a student in the

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<sup>1</sup> “Hobbies: Who Rides Them—and How!”; “Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines; City’s Most Tireless Organizer Of Civic Events ‘Benched’ By Illness—Recalls Big Shows,” *The Pantagraph* (November 30, 1947).

<sup>2</sup> “Lloyd Eyer One of City’s Great,” *The Pantagraph*, undated, Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives.

<sup>3</sup> “For Three Year Terms, Three to be Elected: Lloyd E. Eyer,” *The Pantagraph*, undated

<sup>4</sup> *Bloomington City Directory 1889* (Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co.).

<sup>5</sup> *Bloomington and Normal City Directory for 1889, 1891, 1893, 1895, 1897, 1899* (Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co.).

<sup>6</sup> “Career in Business Started When He was a Pantagraph Carrier,” *The Pantagraph*, undated, Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

city directory of the same year (1902) suggesting that he was working for the *Pantagraph* while enrolled in classes, most likely in high school. There is no evidence however, that Eyer ever received a college degree.<sup>8</sup>

On August 25, 1910 Eyer married Josephine Rae Armstrong at the First Methodist Episcopal Church in Bloomington. The reception that followed the ceremony was held at the future home of the newlywed couple, 213 E. Mulberry Street. Like Eyer's parents, the couple called multiple houses in Bloomington home during their time together. These addresses included: 213 E. Mulberry Street, 1012 E. Olive Street, 1812 S. Fell Street in Normal, 1117 E. Grove Street, 1417 Fell Avenue, 207 Florence Avenue, and 917 N. East Street.<sup>9</sup> Eyer and Armstrong had three children—Harold, Lois, and Howard.

The new Mrs. Eyer was a graduate of Bloomington High School and a member of the 1904 graduating class at Illinois State Normal University. Prior to marrying Eyer, Armstrong was a teacher for seven years—six of which were spent teaching second grade at Franklin School (1101-1107 N. Park Street in Bloomington) from 1904 to 1910.<sup>10</sup> Armstrong was once described as “highly accomplished” and “one of the most charming young ladies of this city (Bloomington).”<sup>11</sup> She, like her husband, was personally invested in the community. One example of her investment is her role as president of the Friendship Club at the First Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>12</sup> That said, Armstrong, and arguably no other contemporary Bloomingtonian, could compete with Eyer in regard to the number and range of community projects to which he was committed.

With a career largely dedicated to “physical culture,” Eyer was “Bloomington’s leading inspiration in the achievement of useful and healthy bodies.”<sup>13</sup> Ever since coaching gymnastic classes at the old YMCA (located at 1302 N. Main Street), Eyer served an integral role in the day-to-day activities of the “Y.” Eyer served twelve years as physical director of the “Y” from 1905 to 1917.<sup>14</sup> In those years he was considered “one of the chief factors in making the ‘Y’ so popular” after the organization constructed a new building at the intersection of East and Washington Streets.<sup>15</sup> Eyer’s continued effort to popularize the “Y” complements the fact that he

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<sup>8</sup> *Bloomington-Normal City Directory*, 1902, (Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co.).

<sup>9</sup> *Bloomington and Normal City Directory* for 1911, 1915, 1917, 1919, 1920, 1930-1931, (Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Co.).

<sup>10</sup> “Armstrong-Eyer Wedding in Church Ceremony,” *The Pantagraph* (August 25, 1910).

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> Catharine Lane, “Church Group Has Luncheon, Installation; Friendship Club Quits Until Fall,” *Society and Clubs* (1945).

<sup>13</sup> “Today’s Useful Citizen: Lloyd Eyer,” *The Pantagraph* (September 15, 1929).

<sup>14</sup> As physical director, Eyer was responsible for organizing numerous events, tournaments, and competitions, “ranging from grade school games for small boys to state championship contests for college teams,” as well as the popular YMCA Circus. Eyer also founded the McLean County High School Boys Basketball Tournament in early 1911. “Community Service Award Won by Sport Goods Man; Fellow Citizen’s Honor Lloyd Eyer for his ‘Outstanding and Unselfish’ Activity in Interest of Town,” undated. Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives; Fred Young, “Basketball,” *Home Town in the Corn Belt: A Source History of Bloomington, Illinois 1900-1950* vol. 2, ed. Clara Louise Kessler, 103.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

was one of the major proponents of constructing a new building to properly meet the evolving needs of the organization and the community.<sup>16</sup>

The Bloomington-Normal YMCA had occupied at least five separate locations before a campaign was launched in June of 1906 to secure a permanent location for the organization.<sup>17</sup> \$108,000 was raised in a matter of thirty days in order to fund the project and on September 22, 1907 the cornerstone of the new building was laid at 200 E. Washington Street.<sup>18</sup> Likely due to Eyer's heavy involvement in the organization, the Young Men's Club was heavily involved in canvassing the city and soliciting donations to the YMCA's cause.<sup>19</sup> Members of the club were divided into ten teams with the collective goal of raising \$30,000 (\$30,000.00 in 1907 would be equivalent to \$718,000.00 in 2010). Eyer was assigned to team number ten. By the end of the men's twenty-four working days, the ten teams had surpassed their goal by over \$18,000—raising a total of \$48,048 (or \$1,150,000.00 in 2010).<sup>20</sup> In terms of money raised, Eyer's team placed sixth out of ten.<sup>21</sup>

The “Young Business Men's Club of Bloomington, Illinois” (today known simply as the Young Men's Club) officially came into being on October 24, 1916. The first meeting was held at the Hills House (later the Tilden Hall Hotel) located at the corner of Washington and Madison Streets. The club was established in an attempt to counteract the aging nature of Rotary International, the only other service club in Bloomington. Eyer was a charter member and one of the ‘original eight’ who first met and decided to extend the first invitations to forty-five fellow young men who were thought to be interested in joining the club. Eyer also served as the club's Secretary-Treasurer for 19 years. The club was active in various local charitable ventures including war benefits, capital campaigns, public drives, etc. Eyer was one of five club members who were granted honorary lifetime membership. He was “affectionately” referred to as “dictator” for his service as Chief Marshal and Generalissimo for every club led city parade.<sup>22</sup> While the meeting location has changed, the Young Men's Club has continued to meet every Tuesday at noon since its founding.

Eyer's involvement in the athletic community of Bloomington-Normal extended far beyond his time as the physical director of the YMCA. Over the years, Eyer was responsible for organizing various high school and intercollegiate basketball tournaments (including the first

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<sup>16</sup> “Armstrong-Eyer Wedding in Church Ceremony”

<sup>17</sup> Before a permanent location was secured, the “Y” was temporarily located at various sites through Bloomington and had experienced intermittent periods of inactivity. Meetings were initially held in churches. Other locations that the organization occupied include 214 N. Center (1882-1887), 219 W. Washington Street (1887), 414 N. Main Street (1887-1896), and 108 E. Front Street (1896-1907). “YMCA to Celebrate 85 Year Service to City Feb. 5 with Anniversary Dinner,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (February 3, 1940).

<sup>18</sup> “Successful Campaign Closed on Saturday; The Total Amount is \$108,000 . . . .,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (July 2, 1906); “YMCA to Celebrate 85 Year Service to City,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (February 3, 1940). A parking lot now stands at 200 E. Washington Street, adjacent to Withers Park in downtown Bloomington. The current address for the Bloomington-Normal YMCA is 602 S. Main Street in Bloomington.

<sup>19</sup> *The Young Men's Club 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary* (1966), 7-10, 20.

<sup>20</sup> “Successful Campaign in Church Ceremony,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (August 25, 1910).

<sup>21</sup> “Successful Campaign Closed on Saturday; The Total Amount is \$108,000 . . . .,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (July 2, 1906).

<sup>22</sup> *The Young Men's Club 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*, 7-10, 20, 30.

McLean County Basketball tournament in 1911, as well as the “first college all star basketball game held in Bloomington in 1912) and numerous track meets.<sup>23</sup> He was founder of the Community Baseball League and was secretary of the Illinois Tennis Association. Eyer also managed the YMCA basketball team, the Beavers, and was a member of the YMCA Board of Directors.<sup>24</sup> He served as general chairman for a financial drive and a membership drive for the “Y,” as well as assisted with other YMCA related campaigns. One of the more popular events associated with Eyer’s efforts is that of the YMCA Circus—for which he served as director for four winter performances during the years 1909 to 1915.<sup>25</sup>

After leaving the “Y” in 1917, Eyer began work at W.B. Read and Co. (Read’s Sporting Goods).<sup>26</sup> Though the business is now known for its selection of sport and athletic equipment, at the time that Eyer began his employment the business was engaged in the sale of books, stationary, and school supplies.<sup>27</sup> It was not until 1926, four years after Eyer was named manager in 1922, that W.B. Read and Co. expanded their business to include the sale of sporting goods.<sup>28</sup>

In 1948, Eyer was forced to leave his position at Read’s Sporting Goods due to health complications.<sup>29</sup> That same year, he took a position at Illinois State Normal University as the assistant business manager and worked there until he passed away in 1951.<sup>30</sup>

Also in 1948 Eyer filed a suit against W.B. and Howard Read demanding back-pay to compensate for commission that he apparently was promised but not paid during the course of his employment.<sup>31</sup> According to a 1950 report by the *Pantagraph*, Eyer claimed that he and W.B. Read agreed that Eyer would be paid an annual commission in addition to his salary. However, an exact commission percentage was never officially agreed upon. Eyer admitted that each year he was paid “something,” but that the amount he was paid only partially covered what he was owed.<sup>32</sup> Read claimed that he considered these payments to be loans and that Eyer was the one who owed the company money—a supposed debt amounting to approximately \$14,000.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> “Young’s Yarns: L. E. Eyer,” *The Pantagraph*, undated, Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives

<sup>24</sup> “Today’s Useful Citizen: Lloyd Eyer”

<sup>25</sup> Steve Gossard, “Life in a Circus Town: Walt Graybeal’s Bloomington,” *Bandwagon* (November-December 1989), 37.

<sup>26</sup> Read’s Sporting Goods began in the mid-1880s under the name “Read and White”—a name reflecting the identity of co-founders William B. Read and Clarence M. White. As stated above, the business initially sold books and stationary, eventually adding school supplies to its regular stock in 1909. In 1913, nine years before Eyer began working for the company, the business changed its name from Read and White to “W.B. Read and Co.”. At that time the store was located at 210 N. Center Street. During Eyer’s tenure, an annex was opened in 1920 at 211 W. Washington Street. This annex served as the primary location for the sale of sporting goods after 1926 while the original location on Center Street was still dedicated to the sale of books and stationary. In 1930 the company was briefly involved in the sale of fireworks. In 1946, still while Eyer was employed with the company, office equipment was added to the list of products available at W.B. Read and Co. at a new store located at 216 W. Jefferson Street. Chad Hutson, “Read’s Sporting Goods,” *Marketing Channels* (December 9, 1994).

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>29</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Takes Position at University,” *The Pantagraph* (1948).

<sup>30</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Dies Suddenly at Home.”

<sup>31</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Sues Read Company,” *The Pantagraph* (July 8, 1948).

<sup>32</sup> “Lloyd Eyer May Get Back ‘Pay’ From W.B. Read,” *The Pantagraph* (August 5, 1950).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

Eventually, in early January, 1951 Eyer's request for \$7,995.06 in back payment was dismissed by Circuit Judge William C. Radliff in light of Eyer's failure to "prove that there was ever a commission contract, real or implied."<sup>34</sup> (In 2010, these figures would amount to \$127,000.00 and \$72,000.00 respectively). In November of the same year, about six weeks following Eyer's death on September 23, the Third District Appellate Court reversed Judge Radliff's action based on the opinion that "evidence established an implied agreement by the defendant to pay commissions" and Lloyd was awarded the requested amount posthumously.<sup>35</sup>

As listed in his obituary published in *The Pantagraph*, Eyer was "a member of the official board of Wesley Methodist Church and church school secretary for 20 years, secretary of the Young Men's Club for 19 years, a member of Bloomington Masonic Lodge 43, Bloomington Consistory and Mohammed Shrine of Peoria, a member of the Board of Education for six years, board of directors of the Association of Commerce four years, director of the YMCA 32 years, was very active in local Boy Scouts and was president of the Corn Belt Boy Scout Council from 1943-1946, and secretary of the Illinois Athletic Officials Association for 30 years."<sup>36</sup> Eyer was also officer of the state and district Athletic Officials Association since its organization in 1924, a volunteer parade and campaign worker for the Red Cross, and a member of the central committee for Fell Park in Bloomington in the late 1920s.<sup>37</sup> In a letter to the editor submitted by a reader of *The Pantagraph*, and evidently a personal fan of Eyer's, it was stated, "Not only at the YMCA but in the work of the Boy Scouts, the board of education, civic clubs and what have you, wherever you see a hard job to tackle for the good of the community, there you see Lloyd Eyer. Bloomington is fortunate to claim him as her own."<sup>38</sup>

Despite his evident involvement in a number of diverse events and organizations in Bloomington-Normal, Eyer's most notable local claim to fame is his organization of over sixty Bloomington parades.<sup>39</sup> It was said that no organization in Bloomington-Normal ever thought of putting on a parade without Lloyd Eyer.<sup>40</sup> One parade among the sixty holds a particularly significant place in the history of Bloomington and the surrounding county—that is, the 1930 Centennial Parade of McLean County.

The four-day celebration of McLean County's centennial took place August 27-30, 1930. The incorporation of a "grand historical parade" into the weekday festivities was agreed upon early in the planning process. Not only did Eyer, along with Mark Ethell, Harry Hall, Edward P. Butler, and Edgar Lebkuecher, serve on the parade's planning committee, but he also served on

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<sup>34</sup> "Eyer vs. Read Suit Dismissed by Court; Judge Sets Aside Report of Special Commissioner," *The Pantagraph* (January 5, 1951).

<sup>35</sup> "Eyer v. Read et al.. Gen. No. 9782," *102 North Eastern Reporter 2d Series*, 754.

<sup>36</sup> "Lloyd Eyer Dies Suddenly at Home; Veteran Parade Employee Was ISNU Employee," *The Pantagraph* (September 24, 1951); "Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines," *The Pantagraph* (November 30, 1947).

<sup>37</sup> "Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines;" "Playground on Fell Avenue to Be Opened on Monday, June 4," *The Pantagraph* (May 27, 1928).

<sup>38</sup> "Letter to the Editor: Lloyd Eyer," *The Pantagraph* undated, Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives

<sup>39</sup> "Lloyd Eyer Dies Suddenly at Home;" "Veteran Parade Employee Was ISNU Employee," *The Pantagraph* (September 24, 1951).

<sup>40</sup> *The Young Men's Club 50th Anniversary*, 10

the general executive committee that was largely responsible for organizing the Centennial Celebration as a whole. Eyer was made the marshal of the parade.<sup>41</sup>

The parade, consisting of “an afternoon pageant in which the history of the county was represented in pictorial fashion by a procession three miles long consisting of floats and other forms of historical or allegorical representation,” marked the second day of the celebration.<sup>42</sup> According to J.L. Hasbrouck’s account of the event, “[t]he procession had the color and splendor of a gigantic circus parade, with added attractions of numerous kinds.”<sup>43</sup> Included among these attractions were musical performances by five different bands, a drum corps, and a bugle corps. Various floats designed by local businesses and groups (including *The Pantagraph*, State Farm, the McLean County Farm Bureau, Clay Dooley, the Illinois Power and Light Corp., and others), as well as floats designed to represent the unique qualities of the towns and villages of McLean County outside of Bloomington-Normal were also included. These displays—showcasing locales such as Anchor, Arrowsmith, Blue Mound, Dale, Danvers, Dawson, Downs, Dry Grove, Funk’s Grove, Gridley, Mt. Hope, Old Town, and Towanda—were said to have been the “prettiest and most striking.”<sup>44</sup> Composing “fully one-third of the entire line of the parade,” interspersed among the floats were examples of “every form of transportation” from ox-drawn carts, to steam powered cars, to bicycles, to fire equipment (both antiquated and modern).<sup>45</sup> Though the “streets of the Downtown district were lined with people long before the scheduled hour of the afternoon procession,” the entire procession lasted approximately two hours. It included one-hundred floats and attracted roughly fifty thousand onlookers.<sup>46</sup> For the first time in Bloomington history, the entire stretch of Main Street from Front Street to Locust Street was blocked off for an event.<sup>47</sup> To document the occasion, *The Pantagraph* dispatched its airplane, aptly named “Scoop,” equipped with a photographer in order to best capture the magnitude of the festivities from the air.

In a summary of the centennial celebration published in *The Pantagraph*, Eyer is quoted as saying, “Certainly the men in charge of the Centennial and the other hundreds who cooperated with them wholeheartedly made it possible for us to provide a ‘real show.’ We [the persons involved in the planning of the Centennial] not only gave the public a real show but we

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<sup>41</sup> J.L. Hasbrouck, “McLean County Centennial Celebration, August 27-30, 1930, Bloomington, Illinois,” 6, 24.

<sup>42</sup> There was another parade on the evening of Friday, August 29. Despite the presence of light rain showers, the parade was held as scheduled. Featured in the Friday night parade were the Mystic Shriners of Peoria, as well as various floats, decorated vehicles, and musical performances in similar fashion to those that appeared in the parade on Wednesday. *Ibid.*, 9, 20-22.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>45</sup> “Mile of the Old Leads the New,” *The Pantagraph* (1930); Hasbrouck, “McLean County Centennial Celebration, August 27-30, 1930, Bloomington, Illinois,” 11. The inclusion of the ‘Prairie Bird,’ Bloomington’s old fire engine that took part in fighting the great Chicago Fire of 1871, was a highlight of the event.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 13; “Spectators Line Streets; Three Miles of Floats and Marchers Wend Way Through City,” *The Daily Pantagraph* (1930).

<sup>47</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines”

gave it to them on time. Bloomington should be a proud city because it was privileged to be the scene of such a celebration.”<sup>48</sup>

Along with the carefully planned spectacles that characterized the centennial celebration, Eyer provided his own impromptu means of entertainment for the crowds gathered in downtown Bloomington. He inadvertently performed an aerial somersault after being thrown from the sidecar of a motorcycle—his parade vehicle of choice—when he asked the driver to turn around after noticing that the parade line was beginning to tangle.<sup>49</sup> Eyer apparently landed on his back, unharmed, following his unanticipated acrobatic performance. Reflecting back on the incident Eyer said, “I guess I’ve put on a lot of sideshows in my time. Somebody was always wanting me to ride a horse too.”<sup>50</sup> This incident also serves well to support Eyer’s claim that “People are harder to manage than floats. You get them lined up and turn around for a second. First thing you know, they’re all over the place and nobody’s in line.”<sup>51</sup>

In November, 1931, Eyer was awarded *The Pantagraph*’s Community Service Award. Nominated along with twelve of “Bloomington’s most prominent citizens,” Eyer was chosen as the most “deserving” recipient for his role in “providing ‘good, sound, wholesome recreation’ for Bloomington” through his involvement in various clubs and activities. Eyer was the sixth recipient of the *Daily Pantagraph*’s Community Service Award. The annual award was created to recognize “the citizen who performed the most meritorious public service to that community.” The person receiving the award was notified of their nomination but was kept unaware of whether they had won until the award was presented at a celebratory banquet. The 1931 banquet was sponsored by the American Legion.<sup>52</sup>

Rarely was there an opportunity to participate in the community that Eyer failed to seize. Inevitably Eyer’s apparently incessant enthusiasm was not enough to compensate for the natural toll that age takes on even the most youthfully minded persons. In 1947, at the age of sixty-two, Eyer witnessed his first parade (the Thanksgiving Day Corn Bowl parade) from the “sidelines.”<sup>53</sup> In September of that year Eyer effectively removed himself from the public sphere after suffering a “severe heart weakness and general physical breakdown that...left him 30 pounds thinner and with face deeply lined and shadowed.”<sup>54</sup> In an interview with *The Pantagraph* concerning his then recent health failures and his subsequent limited activity, Eyer stated, “If I’d more sense, I’d quit some of it long ago. But I always got a big kick out of doing things and it never bothered me like it did some of the others. It’s going to be hard to keep out of things now.”<sup>55</sup> As evidenced by a number of recorded responses by members of the community,

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<sup>48</sup> “Four-Day Centennial Is Called County’s Biggest Celebration; Fact That 50,000 Stood in Rain to See Parade Evidence Enough, Says Smith,” *The Pantagraph* (1930).

<sup>49</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines”

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> “Community Service Award Won by Sport Goods Man; Fellow Citizen’s Honor Lloyd Eyer for his ‘Outstanding and Unselfish’ Activity in Interest of Town,” no source, undated, Eyer, Lloyd – Newspaper Articles Vertical File, McLean County Museum of History Archives

<sup>53</sup> “Lloyd Eyer Sees First Parade From Sidelines”

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

including James P. Lannon's 1947 letter to the editor of *The Pantagraph*, Eyer's need to limit his further civic activity did not go unnoticed. In the words of Lannon, "Lloyd Eyer, if he has to slow down, will be missed by everyone. His alertness, push and popularity, no doubt, have made him old too early in life."<sup>56</sup>

Four years after that interview was published, Eyer died of a heart attack in his home on East Street on September 23, 1951.<sup>57</sup> He was sixty-five years old. Instead of flowers, Eyer's family requested that sympathizers contribute to a memorial at Wesley Methodist Church (formerly First Methodist Episcopal Church and First Methodist Church).<sup>58</sup> As mentioned previously, Eyer was actively involved in the operations of Wesley Methodist Church having served as a board member and as church school secretary.<sup>59</sup> At the time of his death, Eyer was survived by all members of his immediate family apart from his father who died in 1910. Eyer left behind his wife and his three children, three grandchildren, his mother, and his three siblings.<sup>60</sup> Eyer also left behind an entire community of people on which he affected a permanent impact. As claimed by *The Pantagraph*, for "the measure of unselfish community service done with a stroke of genius, Lloyd Eyer deserve[d] a place at the top of Bloomington's great men."<sup>61</sup> Eyer is buried at Evergreen Memorial Cemetery in Bloomington, IL.

By: Hannah Johnson, 2013

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<sup>56</sup> James P. Lannon, Letter to the Editor, "By the Public: Praises Eyer, Fred Young," *The Pantagraph* (1947).

<sup>57</sup> "Lloyd Eyer Dies Suddenly at Home"

<sup>58</sup> "History of the First Methodist Church of Bloomington, Illinois," by Louise A. Lange 1950, 20-21; Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> "Lloyd Eyer One of City's Great," *The Pantagraph*.