

Price tag of \$6,042.50 fixed to IU's first home

Stop any 10 persons on the street and ask them if the names, Charles Dewey, John M. Jenkins, Jonathan Lindley, David H. Maxwell, Jonathan Nichols or William M. Lowe mean anything. Chances are the ones polled would flunk the quiz.

Among IU's first trustees, perhaps only Maxwell's name would get a response, because of the campus building named for him. He and his companions had been appointed by the Indiana legislature and met in Bloomington in July of 1820 to select a site for the Indiana Seminary newly authorized by the legislators.

The first board of trustees settled with a consideration practically unheard of today — that of an ample supply of water. Too, the site of the first campus was to be within reasonable distance from the residences and business activity of Bloomington. The trustees settled for 10 acres roughly bounded by First, Second, Monon and Walnut Streets, with the exception of lots #3 and #4, reserved because they were the location of Lowe's Spring. The price was \$6,042.50, and the trustees reported to the legislature that the site selected was "about a quarter of a mile due south of Bloomington on a beautiful eminence and convenient to an excellent spring of water, the only one on the section selected that could with convenience answer the purpose of the Seminary."

The board's next problem was that of erecting some buildings, and they began with what was later referred to as "the Old Seminary Building." In those days the men who made the judgment calls for the first years of the university dispensed with the luxury of an architect. Writing in later years, John Cravens, onetime secretary treasurer of IU, related that the \$2,400 building was patterned after Nassau Hall at Princeton University. The wife of Theophilus Wylie, an early IU professor, recalled that when she saw the building for the first time,



Looking back

By Rose McIlveen
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she thought it was a cotton factory.

In time the trustees provided for other buildings on the Seminary Square property. They were a professor's house (for IU's first teacher, Baynard Hall), 1824; first "College" building, 1836; boarding house, 1838; laboratory building, 1840; first "University" building, 1855; and Science Hall, 1873.

Two records of the buildings and their locations remain. In the 1830s Cornelius Perring, an English emigrant who became principal of the Bloomington Female Seminary, sent a letter to his

relatives on the other side of the Atlantic. Included in the text was a colored drawing of the old campus.

Cravens, whose articles about the Seminary Square property appeared in the *IU Alumni Quarterly*, wrote that he got permission to excavate for the foundations of the old buildings. He continued, "A force of men under the direction of Charles Hays, assistant superintendent of buildings, unearthed the old foundation including part of the entrance steps and also the foundation of the building erected in 1836 and destroyed by fire in 1854. The center of the site of the Old Seminary Building proved to be 154 feet south of the southwest corner of the building erected in 1855, which is now used as a junior high school."

Next week: IU Outgrows Seminary Square

Funding still sought to finish park facelift

H-T Report

Two years ago the Bloomington Park Foundation announced plans to give Seminary Square park a facelift and turn it into a memorial to the origin of education in Bloomington.

But lack of funding has hindered the project. The city is conducting talks with Indiana University about donating funds to the park foundation to help pay the estimated \$100,000 cost, said John Goss, deputy mayor.

It was at Seminary Square, located at College and Second Street, that Indiana University was founded in 1829 and where Bloomington High School stood for 76 years.

Goss said the city has done limited work in implementing the park facelift plan. New curbs and gutters were constructed along

Second St. last year and city employees have been doing some landscape work in the park this year.

However, work has yet to start on building the centerpiece of the project, a monument to IU and BHS. That monument is envisioned to be a low v-shaped limestone wall with an archway in the center. On one flank will be plaques detailing the history of IU while the other flank will contain plaques of the outlining the history of BHS.

Goss said city officials have met with IU officials and plan to meet again soon.

Ted Jones of university relations said IU is receptive to the project. He noted IU President John Ryan announced support of the project when it was announced two years ago.