

Brawlers received public punishment

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tack on Mr. Read was, under all the circumstances, brutal, and cannot be justified by any code of honor, much less by the rules and regulations of college discipline, or the requirements of Christian ethics."

ACTUALLY, THE FACULTY committee met promptly to deal with the situation and as a result, both students were reprimanded. Read was sopped with the comments that though the provocation was indeed strong, his conduct was unjustified. He was further obliged to acknowledge his fault and promise not to repeat the offense. Evans got a reprimand in the University chapel in front of faculty and students. He was also charged with the responsibility of using his influence to head off any other brawls in the future.

The punishment of misbehaving students was meted out by the whole faculty. In this instance, Professor Read disqualfied himself, since his son was involved.

Preparatory students Thomas J. Spitler of Rensselaer and James Watkins of Washington, Ind., found themselves in a similar predicament that got out of hand. In their case no witnesses were called, and the faculty based their decision solely on the statement of the two prep students themselves.

DUELS AS A MEANS of settling disputes in Indiana had been outlawed. According to Woodburn, Spitler went to Wilkins' rooms to demand if the latter had made certain statements about him. Wilkins would neither confirm nor deny whatever may have been said. As Woodburn continued: "The next day Spitler sent a written challenge to Wilkins offering to fight him in any way or with any weapons

Wilkins might choose, Spitler to be allowed to fix the time and place for the fight."

The evidence of the letter — produced at the faculty hearing — in the opinion of the faculty, certainly looked like a challenge to a duel.

Wilkins apparently ignored the letter. Spitler then accosted him in his room and demanded satisfaction. When none was forthcoming, Spitler took off his coat, pulled out a knife and called Wilkins a "liar and a villain." Seeing that Wilkins had no knife, Spitler threw his aside and attacked the former with his fists.

Interestingly enough, the faculty wasn't the least bit interested in the provocation. They decided that such an offense could not be "tolerated among students of a literary institution and must be met with the penalties of a well-regulated university." Spitler's association with the university was terminated.

What became of IU's brawling boys of the 1950s? It is not known where Spitler and Wilkins went, but neither graduated from IU. Read and Evans are a different story. They were, apparently made of "finer stuff."

Both of their lives were cut short under different circumstances. The only thing coincidental about their deaths was that both involved violence.

After graduation, when the Civil War began, Read managed to get a commission in the Union Army. He was wounded three separate times and recovered, only to be killed at the very end of the war at Appomattox Bridge in Virginia.

Evans, who was the valedictorian of his class, took a law degree from IU and set up a practice in Bedford. At age 31 he, as Woodburn stated it, "suffered a violent death at the hand of a man who charged him with other offenses."