

Indiana University's birth touch and go

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been difficult for the Monroe County physician to contain himself.

It was left to Indiana's first governor (who was a close friend of Maxwell), Jonathan Jennings, to remind the senators and representatives that they were *obliged* to do something about a seminary. On Dec. 11, 1819, the governor told the assembly: "It is believed that the Seminary Township, situated in Monroe County, would afford a site combining the advantages of fertility of soil with a healthy climate, as well as a position sufficiently central to the various sections of the State."

There is little doubt that the fine hand of Maxwell

Mobile home destroyed by fire Friday

H-T Report

Fire totally destroyed a mobile home Friday, but no one was injured in the blaze.

The Bloomington Township Fire Department responded to the fire at 12:30 p.m. The mobile home was owned by Jack Drake of Greenwood. It was located at 6695 N. Shore Drive.

The fire department said the mobile home was a total loss, but no estimate on the value was reported.

was in the governor's suggestion. Actually the federal government had already provided that the proceeds from the sale of acreage from a whole township be used for a seminary, but it did not stipulate where the seminary was to be located. (Perry Township was originally called Seminary Township and as the land was sold by the federal government the money went into a fund for the new school.)

Despite Jennings' suggestion, it was not until Jan. 11 that the subject came up again at Corydon. Other pressing matters got in the way. For example, the legislators had to deal with a grievance of the sheriff of Wayne County, a divorce for one Sally Griffiths, a charge of malfeasance against the clerk of the court of Washington County, a request for a new road and the setting of a tax for corn millers.

Once the legislators got around to focusing their attention on the reality of a seminary there was the tedious process of reconciling the two separate versions of the bill. The Senate bill mandated funding from the sale of seminary lands in both Gibson and Monroe counties. It nearly failed on the floor when the vote was tied at five. The pro-seminary tie-breaking vote was cast by Lieutenant Gov. Ratliff Boone.

Finally passed on Jan. 20, 1820, (the official birthday of the university) the act

not only located the seminary in Monroe County, but named the following trustees to work out the details of organization: Charles Dewey, lawyer, and Jonathan Lindley, mill owner, both of Orange County; and Maxwell, surveyor Jonathan Nichols and lawyer William Lowe of Monroe County. The good and simple reason for a majority of the trustees being local men was the expediency of their being on the spot for a lot of early decisions about the site and buildings.

Twenty more months dragged by before the trustees came to a decision about the first buildings. One, a professor's house, was 31 feet long and 18 wide and cost \$891. The other, a chapel and classroom building, 61 feet long and 31 wide, was built for \$2,400.

There is some justifiable controversy about what year classes actually began. A fire in 1883 destroyed the modest university records office, and such IU historians as James A. Woodburn, Samuel Harding and Thomas Clark had the monumental task of piecing together a relatively accurate history of the early years of IU from elder faculty members' recollections and notes, student letters preserved by their families, and the proceedings of the state legislature.

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