

Bloomington had detractors

(Continued from page 1)

Female Seminary. In a letter to relatives back in England, the teacher mentioned briefly the grog shops in Bloomington, but found pleasure in his new-found friendships in the community.

As periodic efforts to remove the university from Bloomington waxed and waned, some of the town's most severe critics didn't have the benefit of any first-hand experience. Unabashed by citing heresay or far-fetched evidence of Bloomington's unsuitability, the editor of the *Bedford Star* stated that the (Bloomington) undertaker had buried 1,129 persons in nine years.

In a spirit of one-upmanship, the editor of the

Bloomington Saturday Courier snapped back,

"The preachers can all testify that there is not a better location for the State University than Bloomington." Furthermore, the editor wrote, quoting a visiting minister, "You have a beautiful enterprising little city. I never saw a place of its size with better streets nor better behaved people. I have been here six days and have not seen a drunken or disorderly person."

What was Bloomington really like in those days? Taking into consideration the motives and varying experiences of those who commented about the town, the answer probably lay somewhere between the extremes.