

Maxwell founded IU

In the spring of 1813 two men, who were destined to play major roles in the history of Monroe County, met at the crude frontier stockade known as Fort Valonia in what is now Jackson County.

ONE WAS JOHN KETCHAM, a native of Maryland, who in time was to earn the title of a founding father of Monroe County. The other man, David Hervey Maxwell, had been born and educated in Kentucky and had moved his young family to Madison (Ind.) where he was practicing medicine.

The occasion for the meeting of the two men was that the War of 1812 and the influx of white settlers into the Indiana Territory had stirred up the Miami and Plankeshaw Indians to the extent that scattered bands were raiding white settlements, stealing horses and killing some of the inhabitants.

FOUR GROUPS OF MOUNTED rangers had been recruited by the federal government to make a show of force that would impress the In-

Looking back

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By Rose McIlveen

dians that the white man was in Indiana to stay. Ketcham and Maxwell were in different companies of mounted rangers that had been summoned to Fort Valonia in response to some alarming Indian raids along the sparse settlements on the forks of White River.

The companies rendezvoused at Fort Valonia and went downriver to Strawtown in Hamilton County. Maxwell's medical services were needed on several occasions during the campaign, which consisted of raiding such Indian villages as Strawtown.

WHEN THE SMOKE of the War of 1812 had cleared, Maxwell returned to practice medicine in Madison and

when the Indiana Territory became the State of Indiana in 1816 the young surgeon was elected to the convention that wrote the state constitution.

Unlike Maxwell, many of the framers of the state constitution had only the barest of backwoods, log schoolhouse educations. Small wonder then that Maxwell with his medical education stood out among his fellow legislators. The biography of the young surgeon in Pop Hall's *Historic Treasures* states that he (Maxwell) was the author of the state constitution. The portion of the document which provided for: "a regular system of education, ascending in a regular gradation from township schools to a state university" was taken to heart by its author.

MAXWELL MOVED HIS family to Monroe County three years after Col. Ketcham had settled in the south part of the county and built his mill. Maxwell bought the piece of land between Walnut and Washington streets along the north side of Kirkwood Avenue and settled his family there.