

# War between the states split up Indiana youths

**M**onroe Countians held several shades of opinion as the nation split apart in the spring of 1861. There were those who believed in keeping the North and South together with force, if necessary. At the opposite extreme were people who had roots in the South and sympathized with their relatives in Virginia and the Carolinas.

When news of Fort Sumter reached Bloomington, Southern sympathizers were courageous enough to "involve their neighbors in hot-headed arguments," according to Indiana University historian Thomas Clark.

The arguments were serious enough to attract the attention of the *Indianapolis Daily Journal*. "Several disturbances of the peace have recently occurred in Monroe County, occasioned by the violent language of some sympathizers with the secession and the rebel government of Jefferson Davis." The first verbal fights led to the clubbing of a Southern sympathizer and the killing of one of them by a veteran of the Mexican War.

In spite of the turmoil downtown, classes continued as usual at the university at the end of College Avenue. Nevertheless, the *Bloom-*



## LOOKING BACK

By Rose McIlveen

*ington Republican* reported that some of the all-male student body had a new interest — military drill.

As weeks and months went by and the war was conducted on a larger stage, the university seemed to be unaffected. As Clark put it in his book, "Not even John Hunt Morgan's scare raid north of the Ohio in July, 1863, disturbed the monastic complacency of the professors, or stirred students to unusual action ... Courthouse square brawling was left to the unwashed masses."

But the war involved former students with ties of memory and affection to their alma mater. Clark wrote that at least 66 graduates and professors served on one side or the other.

It was IU Professor Theophilus Wylie who compiled biographical sketches of former stu-

dents for his book "Indiana University: Its History from 1828 to 1890."

Here are a few of the accounts:

James Wilson Dunn, class of 1830, a born Kentuckian and adopted Hoosier, served as a Lieutenant Colonel in an Indiana regiment of volunteers sent to Tennessee.

William McKee Dunn, a Hoosier, class of 1832, was an aide to General McClellan in West Virginia and was brevetted in 1866 as a brigadier general for "faithful, meritorious and distinguished services."

William B. Custis went back to his home in Virginia after his graduation in 1834 and acquiesced in his state's secession from the Union. After the war, Custis served two terms in Congress.

James Glass McPheeters, also of the class of 1834, served as a surgeon in the 33rd Indiana Regiment and on the staffs of Generals Beard, Whitaker and Stedman.

Parker Campbell, class of 1835, born in Pennsylvania, headed South after graduation and owned a sugar plantation in Louisiana. During the Civil War he was a major in the Confederate Army.

John Dale of the class of 1837, was chaplain of the 75th Indiana Volunteers at the battles of Chattanooga, Tenn.

Hugh Thompson Reid, a Hoosier, class of 1837, had the distinction of defending the Mormon leader Joseph Smith before the latter's murder. At the battle of Corinth Reid received a fatal wound in the neck.

Richard Taylor Allison, class of 1841, a Kentuckian, had served as paymaster in the U.S. Navy. He resigned that position on April 20, 1861, and headed South to become paymaster of the Marine Corps of the Confederate States.

It is not entirely clear which side of the war Jesse Ianthus Alexander (class of 1845) of Gosport took. Wylie recorded that "Colonel Alexander served with his command in the Army of the Tennessee and for one year in command of the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, 17th Army Corps.

Ivory tower or not, the war was a lot closer to the university than anyone — students and professors alike — wanted it to be.

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