

# Theophilus Wylie: unsung hero of IU

In the histories of Indiana University much has been made of the extraordinary contribution of the first president, Andrew Wylie, who weathered the storms of faculty squabbling, budget crises, and other problems that go with the actual establishment of an institution of learning. But the relating of IU's history would not be complete without mention of some of its unsung heroes.

Theophilus Wylie, Andrew's cousin, was one of them. His allegiance to the fledgling school came at a price — one that he paid through months of agonizing soul-searching.

After he had been granted permanent status on the faculty, he confided in his diary that he was not as sure of himself as he ought to be. It should be noted that Theophilus was originally headed in the direction of the ministry in the Reformed Presbyterian denomination. His study of the classical languages — Latin and Greek — was standard fare for any college grad-



## Looking back

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uate, but had an additional purpose — to make it possible for him to read the Bible in the early texts.

His acceptance of a teaching position at IU was, therefore, a departure from his original goal. On Oct. 1, 1837, he wrote, "When reading a treatise on a theological subject, or listening to a sermon, often I will find myself thinking on those topics which are more interesting to me, solving some problems or contriving some illustration. If there was a person, and there are many such, who delight in other studies, who think there is nothing to be compared to a discussion on some religious point, and to mak-

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