

Bill collecting a main ad topic

As the first year of publication of the *Bloomington Post* unfolded, newcomer editor/publisher Marcus Deal got better acquainted with Monroe County. He even discovered the Indiana College at the south end of College Avenue.

Did Deal not run a respectable article about the spring exhibition of the junior class at the college? Indeed he did, complete with the subjects of the young orators' "original addresses." The student speakers on that evening in April of 1836 had come to Bloomington from Salvisa and Bellevue, Ky., Hellena, Ark., Terre Haute and Madison. They talked to their audience in the College building about history, internal improvement, ambition, "Politics Dangerous to Literature," "Present Condition of Our Country," resistance to tyrants and American enterprise.

On another day of publication of the *Post*, what female could have resisted Deal's headline: "Advice to Unmarried Ladies?" A few samples: "If you have blue eyes, languish. If you have black eyes, leer." Or, "If you have a pretty foot, wear short petticoats. When you are a little advanced (in age), sit with your back to the window."

That Deal was a "liberal" in his day and had a soft spot in his heart for the ladies is evident in his folksy account of "Female Exhibition" in the College chapel on March 29. Remarkd the editor, "The prejudices against female education, which existed some fifteen or twenty years ago, are almost entirely removed and science and literature are now stretching forth their wide and extended arms to the fairest portion of our globe . . . In closing this notice, it is but justice to the young ladies, to say that they all performed with honor and credit to themselves and their instructors."

Of the letter-to-the-editor writ-



Looking back

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2-8-1986

er of some slander, who signed his name merely W.O.W., Deal commented in an editorial, "The subject is one of a very delicate nature and should not be suffered to go abroad, especially in the agency of the press."

History buffs will be interested in the ad in the *Post*, placed by one of Bloomington's most prominent citizens, David A. Maxwell. It announced to anyone interested that as he was busy as a member of the State Board of Internal Improvements, he would be suspending his practice of medicine and turning his patients over to a relative — I.B. Maxwell. His son, J.D., was to be responsible for collecting old accounts.

Bill collection could be a tedious business, as seen in another classified ad in the *Post*. Under the simple headline of "NOTICE," Eli P. Farmer announced, "All persons indebted to me are requested to come forward and make payment. I will attend at Hardesty's Store in Bloomington each Saturday in February. After that I must push."

Legal ads were bread and butter to a struggling publisher like Deal. On March 4, 1836, he ran one that surely caused a bit of gossiping among the courthouse habitués. R.P. Conn, James C. Harsh, Hutson McCormick and Zacharias Phillips, who hadn't paid their school tax since 1832, were informed that they were about to have their names reported to the State of Indiana by Monroe County School Commissioner I.M. McPhetridge.

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