

THE ISLAND LIBRARY & WORKS OF GOOD DEEDS – Part 2

“Although to many of the hearers of the *Islander* our Library Association may have seemed dead, yet we assure such that it still liveth and is in flourishing condition.

This Association was organized Feb. 21, 1864 under the direction of Messrs. M. K. Holbrook and E. C. Barnard, admitting young men over the age of 16 and young ladies over the age of 14 years of age. Admission fees for gentlemen being \$1 and for ladies 50¢. Having raised \$23 from admission fees, \$14 more were added by taxation, \$6 from persons drawing books by the year, \$5 presented by Mr. A. S. Kelley, and \$5 by Mr. Geo. C. Huntington; leaving us at the close of the year with 32 members and three honorary members enrolled, 32 books in the library and \$11.05 in the treasury. During the succeeding 12 years, funds were raised by keeping up the annual taxes of its members and of its yearly subscribers for drawing books, and by entertainments, lectures, and ‘Calico Apron Parties.’

Our Library now consists of nearly 400 volumes, comprising a good selection of histories, biographies, travels, poetry, fiction &c, for which about \$600 have been expended.

The bookcase was purchased at no low price, its actual cost being \$123. The oil paintings of Washington and Lincoln, which have decorated the walls of Kelley’s Hall for years, were also procured through the efforts of this Association. And last but not least, it should not be forgotten how many have been the desperate if not painful struggles of ridding our Cemetery of stumps and poison ivy. We say, all honor to our brave young men who have done so nobly. (Still we think there is a little ivy left yet.)

So much has been accomplished for public benefit, saying nothing of the benefits which have come to each individual member. There have been its social gatherings. In the beginning originating in the bible class (mainly if not entirely consisting of young people), afterward at private residences, where we were always greeted with welcome and there was no lack of enjoyment.

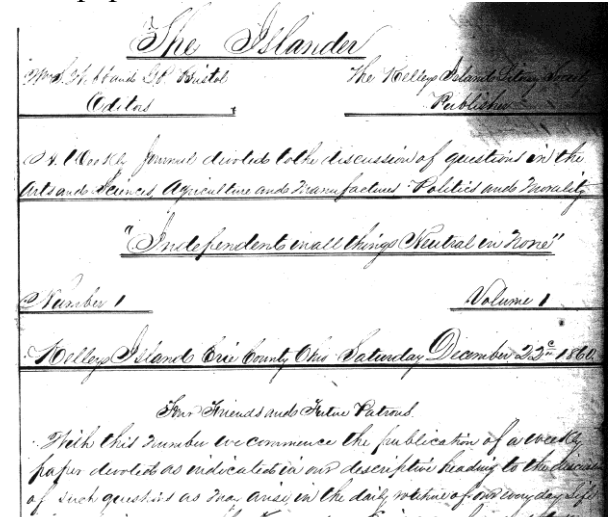
Before Kelley’s Hall was built in 1860, the community met in the stone school house.



Being nurtured up to this point, we suppose from a desire to be without restraint, free and independent in speech and debate, the meetings were appointed to be held in one of the rooms of the stone school house, District no. 1. Here we were ‘Independent in all Things,’ but we cannot very truthfully quote ‘Neutral in None,’ for there were diversities of opinions and many were the contests loud and long.

But these were only the little seeds sown and struggling for the mastery, that today are bearing fruit in hundred fold in the ‘strong debates’ of the parliamentarians of our Lyceum. One of our members has distinguished herself [Belle Webb] in a debate at one of the universities of the West by having a prize awarded her, and is it not gratifying to know that she attributes her rudimentary knowledge of the art to the experience she had in The Young Peoples Library Association? *Belle Webb, mentioned here was being honored, attended college in Illinois, and*

This was the banner of the *Islander* newspaper.



was considered to be among the most gifted alumni of the Women's College. The college was known by various names, Northwestern Female College in 1855, Evanston College for Ladies in 1870 and finally the Women's College of Northwest University in 1873. Isabella B. Webb married Rev. Dr. Edward Parks on July 28, 1879.

Who of our members shall be the next to win the prize? Up to the year 1869, 70 persons had availed themselves of the opportunities of drawing books, including both members and subscribers. Since then four have died and many have removed from the Island, while among those that married, some have lost their interest. Still we have six members that are married.

Although our Library has been out of sight before the last year, it has not been out of the minds of 39 persons, 20 ladies and 19 gentlemen, who have drawn books. Shall not our numbers be increased by members not forgetting to pay their annual taxes and by the renewing of subscriptions? Now is your time.

\$25 worth of new books will be added to the Library very soon. Save your money from buying books to read, when you can have the reading of them comparatively for a trifle. For further information, inquire of the Librarian."

From the book KELLEYS ISLAND - 1877-1884 - The fire, the Great Grooves & a mysterious disappearance