

Books and Bytes

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A Newsletter of the Hiram College Library

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Ancestry Library Edition is Now Available

The Hiram College Library is pleased to announce the availability of *Ancestry Library Edition*, a new database provided through the Libraries Connect group grant. *Ancestry Library Edition* is a collaboration between Ancestry.com and ProQuest, a major database producer. If you have done any genealogical research in the past ten years, or just seen the commercials during such programs as *Who Do You Think You Are?*, you have heard of the Web site Ancestry.com and may be wondering if this is the same thing. The answer is, "Sort of."

The *Library Edition* has many of the essential databases that the home edition has in federal Census records, 1790-1930 [FYI: 1940 will be released in April 2012], military records, and court, governmental, and criminal records.



The biggest differences appear in areas of family trees provided by genealogists for public and private viewing and newspapers and publications. While individual data collections of birth marriage and death information provided by families and genealogists can be found in the library edition,

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Library Hours for Fall-12 Exams and Interim Period

As always during 12-week exam times, the library will offer extended hours. Hours, however, will be reduced during the interim period that follows the exam schedule. Library hours will be:

Sunday, November 20	Noon – Midnight
Monday, November 21	7:45 a.m. – Midnight
Tuesday, November 22	7:45 a.m. – Midnight
Wednesday, November 23	7:45 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Thursday, November 24	CLOSED
Friday, November 25	CLOSED
Saturday, November 26	CLOSED
Sunday, November 27	CLOSED
Monday, November 28	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Tuesday, November 29	8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Coming to the Library in November

Library Forum – Wednesday, November 2, at 4:15 p.m. in the Pritchard Room of the Library. Professor David Anderson and Ms. Christine Borkan will speak.

Library Forum – Wednesday, November 9, at 4:15 p.m. in the Pritchard Room of the Library. Dr. Tina Dreisbach, Associate Professor of Music, will speak.



National Gaming Day – Saturday, November 12. Look for more information to come.

Friends of the Library Book Sale – Monday, November 14, through Friday, November 18, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. The book sale is located just inside the entrance and all books are 50¢.

Library Hours for Exams and Interim Break - Sunday, November 20 through Tuesday, November 29. The hours are printed elsewhere on this page or may be found online at <http://library.hiram.edu/hours.html#Fall-12>.

SearchOhio: A New Borrowing Resource for Hiram College Library Users

As of October 3, Hiram College Library users have had access to borrowing some 10 million items via the SearchOhio link in the OhioLINK catalog. SearchOhio is a consortium of 18 Ohio public libraries, including Portage County (plus Kent Free Library and Reed Memorial Library in Ravenna), Akron-Summit County, Warren-Trumbull County, Cuyahoga County Public Library, and Youngstown Public Library. SearchOhio facilitates sharing materials among its members, much the way OhioLINK does for academic libraries.



You can use SearchOhio for books, music, and videos whenever copies of an item are not in the Hiram College Library or available through OhioLINK. You can also go directly to a SearchOhio library to check out materials.

Hiram History

Almeda Booth

When we read or talk of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute period of Hiram College's existence, we often talk of Hayden and Garfield. Some speak of J. H. Rhodes and Norman Dunshee. Often overlooked, however, in the discussions is one of the most important people in the success of the school – Almeda Booth.

Almeda A. Booth was born August 15, 1823, in Nelson, Ohio, the only child of a circuit rider Methodist minister. The family moved to Mantua Township in 1835 and Almeda was educated in area public schools, plus one year at a private academy in Chagrin Falls. At 17, she was teaching in the Mantua area while continuing to study Greek and Latin on her own.

In early 1850, the Eclectic was looking for teachers and Amos Sutton Hayden, the newly appointed first principal, offered Almeda a teaching position. She first taught English but by the following year, she was also the Ladies' Principal and Governess. She would eventually teach mathematics, classics, and ancient languages.

Students and her fellow teachers considered her one of the best teachers at the Eclectic. In addition, through her efforts the Olive Branch Literary Society became an important part of the education of women at the Eclectic.



Almeda A. Booth, ca. 1853 – a member of the faculty of the Western Reserve Eclectic Institute (Courtesy of Hiram College Archives)

Almeda was always studying and learning. Her desire to improve herself and her teaching abilities led her to leave the Eclectic for one year in 1854 and enter Oberlin College. The course of study she needed for her degree took on average two years to complete. She was determined to finish in a year and did so to the detriment of her health, which would be much more delicate the rest of her life. However, once her work at Oberlin was completed, the Eclectic was overjoyed to have her return.

She was a close friend and mentor to James A. Garfield. Eight years his senior, Almeda first was his English teacher in 1851 but then shared many an evening studying classical literature and history. Later, they were colleagues and it was Almeda who encouraged Garfield on one side and the Board of Trustees on the other to name him the second Principal of the Eclectic after the retirement of Hayden. She was also one of the people who encouraged him to start a political career and supported his campaign for the Ohio Senate in 1860.

During the Civil War, with students leaving to fight, as well as some faculty – Garfield included – the one constant at the Eclectic was Almeda Booth. No matter who came or went, the students and administrators knew that they could count on her.

In 1866, one year before the Eclectic became Hiram College, Almeda Booth resigned. The complete reason has never really been known. The only reason she gave was that she wanted to care for her parents. Shortly after resigning, she moved with her parents to Cuyahoga Falls where for about a year she gave private lessons as a tutor before Virgil Kline, a former student and great admirer of her work, offered her a position in the Cuyahoga Falls Schools. In 1871, she became the Superintendent of Schools.

In 1873, her father passed away and Almeda's health worsened to the point that she had to resign as Superintendent. In 1875, she moved to Cleveland, it is believed to be closer to doctors. However, there was little that they could do and she died in December of that year. She was buried in Oakwood Cemetery in Cuyahoga Falls.

At the memorial for her at Hiram College the following spring, Garfield said, "...as long as high qualities of mind and heart are honored and loved among men and women, so long will the name of Almeda A. Booth be here remembered, and honored, and loved." (*The Life and Character of Almeda A. Booth*)

For more information about Almeda Booth or any other Hiram history subject, please contact the Archivist at morrowjs@hiram.edu or x5361. The Hiram College Archives is open Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. – noon and 1-4 p.m. Appointments are strongly recommended.

By Jennifer Morrow, College Archivist

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the family trees and their attached documents cannot. Nor will you be able to use the extensive newspaper collection found in Ancestry.com. [since the newspaper collection has always been a bit difficult for many people to use, it's probably not that big an issue.]

The bottom line is that Ancestry Library Edition with more than 10,000 record collections is a great starting point and will help anyone doing local history or genealogical research get started on many projects and will assist in opening other venues of research. Access is limited to on-campus only.