

Collection #  
BV1972  
F0609

## UNION LITERARY INSTITUTE RECORDING SECRETARY'S BOOK, 1845–1890

[Collection Information](#)

[Historical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

Wilma L. Moore  
March 27, 2010

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 bound volume; 1 microfilm roll

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1845–1890

PROVENANCE:

RESTRICTIONS: None

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1981.0825 – Bound volume; 1981.0528 – Microfilm

NOTES:

## **HISTORICAL SKETCH**

The Union Literary Institute (ULI) founded in 1845 is the first known institution in Indiana to promote education in an integrated, classless, and residential environment. A manual labor boarding school, it was located in Randolph County. More specifically, it was in Greensfork Township, northeast of Spartanburg. The log cabin school was built and operated from donations of land, money, goods, and utensils.

Randolph County was the home of three African American rural communities (Cabin Creek, Greenville, and Snow Hill) before the Civil War. They were located in the southern and eastern portion of the county. Greenville Settlement, the site of the Union Literary Institute (on the Indiana side) crossed over into Darke County, Ohio without regard for the state line. Many blacks also lived near Quaker strongholds in New Garden and Newport (now Fountain City) in Wayne County—located to the south of Randolph County, Indiana. Quakers and African Americans established the school. The first meeting of the Board of Managers was held at the Newport Friends Meeting House on September 4, 1845.

The school's constitution made clear that discrimination was not permitted. Article 8 specified that differences in government, discipline, and privileges would not be made with regard to color, rank, or wealth. Article 9 indicated that each student or teacher and all associated with the institution would be free to choose his/her religious preference. Of the thirteen male charter members that served on the Board of Managers, at least two were African American including Thornton Alexander and John Randle. Two early principals were Ebenezer Tucker (white) and Samuel Smothers (black).

ULI opened in June, 1846 and it received its charter from the Indiana legislature during the 1847–48 session. By 1850, total enrollment figures indicate that 131 students—97 black and 34 white had attended the institution. There were 92 boys and 39 girls. The students came from nearby communities, as well as from other states. Upon leaving ULI, many of the students took charge of schools in different locations.

The school closed in 1914. Today members of the Union Literary Institute Preservation Society (ULIPS) work together to preserve the school house that was built in 1860.

## Sources:

Material in the collection.

*African-American and Quaker farmers in East Central Indiana: social, political and economic aspects of life in nineteenth-century rural communities: Randolph County, Indiana.* Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University, Archaeological Resources Management Service, 1998.

James O. Bond *Chickamauga and the underground railroad, a tale of two grandfathers.* s.l.: s.n., 1992.

*The Non-slaveholder.* Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, 1846-1854.

E. Tucker. *History of Randolph County, Indiana : with illustrations and biographical sketches of some of its prominent men and pioneer: to which are appended maps of its several townships.* Chicago: A.L. Kingman, 1882.

Union Literary Institute Preservation Society, <http://www.ulips.org/ULIPS.html>, accessed March 10, 2010.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains an original and a microfilm copy of the Recording Secretary's Book of the Union Literary Institute that dates from 1845–1890. This almost 300-page book contains the minutes of the Board of Managers. There appears to be no minutes from September 1863 through July 1865; for 1867 and 1868; or for 1872 and 1873. Minutes from August 1865 through November 1874 are very sparse. This was no doubt due to the effects of the American Civil War and its aftermath upon the community. An August 28, 1865 entry in the Secretary's Book states: "On account of the suspension of the school and the distracted condition of our country, the Board has not met since August 24, 1863."

The last recorded minutes in the book are dated March 22, 1890. Toward the end of the book there are jagged edges suggesting that some pages may have been removed. There is also a reference at the end of the book that makes note of several meeting minutes including the ones dated June 10, 1892, which are not included.

The minutes speak to the Board's role in establishing guidelines for the operation, policies, and procedures for the institution. The ULI subjects discussed by the Board of Managers and reflected in the minutes include: school operation; board functions and accountability; physical structures; property acquisition and maintenance; staffing; marketing; development; and finances.

A constitution for the ULI was adopted October 2, 1846 and appears on page 16 of the Recording Secretary's Book. It indicated that the Board of Managers was to be made up of five lifetime trustees serving ex-officio, along with eight persons elected by the contributors of ULI. The minutes identify the first trustees and the Board of Manager members as: Thornton Alexander, John H. Bond, Charles Clemens, William Clemens, William Davison, Jacob Hackett, Eli Hiatt, Daniel Hill, Henry H. May, John Randle, Alfred Smith, Nathan Thomas, and David Willcutts.

## CONTENTS

### CONTENTS

Union Literary Institute Recording Secretary's Book,  
1845–1890

### CONTAINER

BV1972

Union Literary Institute Recording Secretary's Book,  
1845–1890

F0609

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, BV1972).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.